

Job 30:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction.

Analysis

Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave—This verse presents textual difficulties; the Hebrew is obscure. One reading: 'Yet does He not stretch out a hand in a disaster when one cries in His destruction?' The term be-i ('עָד') can mean 'ruin' or 'disaster.' Job may be suggesting that even in calamity (pid, פִּיד), God doesn't extend help when the afflicted cry out.

Another interpretation sees Job acknowledging that God doesn't afflict those already in the grave—death brings cessation of suffering. The phrase **though they cry in his destruction** uses shavah (שָׁוָה), the cry of distress or supplication. Job's point seems to be that God ignores the desperate pleas of the suffering, or perhaps that the dead at least find rest from divine assault. This ambiguity reflects Job's theological confusion—he gropes for understanding through fragmentary, contradictory insights. Like the psalmists' laments, Job's wrestling demonstrates faith seeking understanding in darkness.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern lament literature often accused deities of abandoning supplicants. Job stands within this tradition while transcending it—his accusations contain implicit faith that God should answer, revealing covenantal expectation despite his non-Israelite setting. The verse's textual difficulty may reflect the book's antiquity, preserving archaic Hebrew forms.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you understand prayers that seem to go unanswered during prolonged suffering?
2. What does Job's confusion teach about the legitimacy of not having all theological answers during trials?
3. How can we maintain hope that God hears our cries even when circumstances suggest otherwise?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	אֵנָה	בְּ	עַיִן	בְּ	שְׁלֹחַ	תְּ	אֶת
H389	H3808	to the grave	Howbeit he will not stretch out			his hand	H518
		H1164		H7971		H3027	
בְּ	פִּידְחָה	לֹא	שׁוֹעַלְתָּה				
in his destruction	H3861	though they cry	H7769				
H6365							

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