

Job 30:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

Analysis

My bowels boiled, and rested not (מעי רותחו ולא-דammu, *me'ay rutachu velo-dammu*)—The noun *me'im* (מעי, bowels/intestines) represents the seat of emotions in Hebrew anthropology. The verb *ratach* (רותח) means "to boil, seethe" (Ezekiel 24:5), conveying intense inner turmoil. The negative *lo dammu* ("did not rest") uses *damah* (דמָה, to be still, silent). Job experiences relentless internal anguish. The phrase **the days of affliction prevented me** (קדםני ומ-ענִי) uses *qadam* (קדם, "to come before, meet, confront"). Suffering arrived before Job could prepare.

This visceral language captures embodied suffering—not merely mental anguish but physical manifestation of grief. Lamentations 2:11 uses similar imagery: "my liver is poured upon the earth." Job's suffering is total: spiritual, emotional, physical. This anticipates Christ's Gethsemane: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful" (Mark 14:34), and His cry of dereliction. The Incarnation means God knows suffering from within, not merely as external observer.

Historical Context

Ancient Israelite psychology was holistic, not dualistic. Emotions resided in physical organs: heart (thought/will), kidneys (conscience), bowels (compassion/anguish). "Boiling bowels" wasn't metaphor but literal physiological experience of grief. Modern psychology recognizes psychosomatic suffering. Job's description predates but validates embodied cognition—emotions and body are inseparable.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing the physical reality of emotional suffering affect pastoral care?
2. What does Job's holistic suffering teach about the nature of human personhood?
3. How does Christ's bodily suffering (Isaiah 53:3-5) sanctify our physical pain?

Interlinear Text

מַעַי	רָתַח	לֹא	לֹא	בָּי	לֹא	לֹא	לֹא	לֹא
My bowels	boiled	H3808	and rested	prevented	not the days	of affliction		

H4578 H7570 H1826 H6923 H3117 H6040

Additional Cross-References

Lamentations 2:11 (Parallel theme): Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org