

Job 31:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.

Analysis

Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin (וְלֹא־נָתַתִּי אֶת־חֶפֶץ לְחַטָּאת), velo-natati et-chiki lachato)—natan (נתן) means to give or allow, chek (חֶפֶץ) literally means palate but represents speech, and chata (אַחֲת) means to sin. **By wishing a curse to his soul** (לְשַׁאֲל בְּאֵלָה נַפְשׁוֹ) —sha'al (שְׁאָל) means to ask or wish, alah (אֱלֹהָה) means curse, and nephesh (נַפְשׁוֹ) means soul or life. Job didn't merely avoid rejoicing at enemies' downfall but actively refused to curse them.

This demonstrates mastery over the tongue—notoriously difficult to control (James 3:2-10). Job guarded not only his heart from schadenfreude but his speech from cursing enemies. Jesus taught blessing those who curse you (Luke 6:28). Paul commanded blessing persecutors, not cursing them (Romans 12:14). Job lived this standard before Christ made it explicit New Covenant teaching. From a Reformed perspective, this shows the continuity of God's moral law—the same ethical standard applies across redemptive history because it reflects God's unchanging character.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern cultures practiced ritual cursing of enemies. Curse tablets and incantations sought divine judgment on opponents. Job's refusal to invoke curses on enemies demonstrated restraint contrary to cultural practice. His ethic reflected biblical teaching that vengeance belongs to God (Deuteronomy 32:35,

Romans 12:19). Blessing rather than cursing enemies appears in both Testaments as divine standard.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Job's control of his tongue regarding enemies challenge our tendency toward bitter or vengeful speech?
2. What does the progression from verse 29 (not rejoicing) to verse 30 (not cursing) teach about comprehensive righteousness?
3. How can we apply Job's standard when we feel justly wronged and want to express our anger?

Interlinear Text

בְּאַל	לִשְׁאָל	לְשָׁאָל	בְּאַל
אַל	לְשָׁאָל	לִשְׁאָל	ה
H3808	H2441	H7592	H423
Neither have I suffered	to sin	my mouth	by wishing
H5414	H2398	H2441	H7592
a curse			

נֶפֶשׁ:

to his soul

H5315

Additional Cross-References

Romans 12:14 (Curse): Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

1 Peter 3:9 (Sin): Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Matthew 5:22 (Parallel theme): But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org