

Job 31:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me.

Analysis

Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me (עַל־לִי שִׁכְמִי אֶשָּׂאֵנּוּ אֶעֱבֹדֶנּוּ עֲטָרוֹת לִי al-shikhmi essa'ennu e'endenu atarot li)—shekem (שִׁכְמִי) means shoulder, nasa (אֶשָּׂא) means to carry or bear, anad (אֶעֱבֹד) means to bind or tie, and atarah (עֲטָרָה) means crown or wreath. Job responds to his wish (v. 35) that his adversary would write formal charges. If God documented the accusations, Job would carry them proudly like a crown rather than shamefully.

This stunning statement reveals Job's confidence in his integrity. Most would fear divine indictment, but Job welcomes it because he knows specific charges would vindicate rather than condemn him. The imagery of carrying accusations on the shoulder (publicly visible) and as a crown (honorable ornament) demonstrates zero fear of exposure. Psalm 139:23-24 expresses similar confidence, inviting God to search the heart and reveal any offensive way. From a Reformed perspective, Job's bold invitation for divine examination anticipates believers' confidence in Christ's righteousness. Though we cannot stand before God on our own merit, those clothed in Christ's righteousness can face judgment confidently (Romans 8:1, 33-34).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern legal documents included formal written charges. Job's request (v. 35) for his adversary to document accusations reflects legal procedure. His claim he would wear these charges as a crown demonstrates absolute

confidence. In honor/shame culture, public shame was devastating. Job's willingness to publicly display charges against him—confident they would vindicate rather than condemn—demonstrates extraordinary assurance of innocence.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Job's confidence before divine examination challenge us to examine whether we're hiding anything from God?
2. What does Job's desire to wear accusations as a crown teach about the relationship between integrity and confidence?
3. How does Christ's righteousness give believers confidence similar to Job's when facing divine judgment?

Interlinear Text

אֶם	לֹא	עַל	שֵׁ כָמִי	אֲשֶׁךְ נָו	אֶעֱבֹד נָו
H518	H3808	H5921	it upon my shoulder	Surely I would take	and bind
			H7926	H5375	H6029

עֲטָר וְתִ	לִי:
it as a crown	H0
H5850	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 22:22 (Parallel theme): And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

