

Job 31:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.

Analysis

Then let me sow, and let another eat (אָזְרַעַה וְאַחֵר יֹאכֵל, ezre'ah ve'acher yochel)—This self-imprecation invokes the covenant curse of Leviticus 26:16: 'ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.' Zara (sow) without reaping was the ultimate agricultural futility. Job invites this judgment if his hands bear moral 'blot' (v. 7).

Yea, let my offspring be rooted out (וְצֵצְאִי יֶשְׁרָשׁוּ, vetze'etza'ai yeshorashu)—Tze'etza'im (offspring, descendants, what comes forth) being sharash (rooted out, uprooted) meant complete extinction of one's lineage, the severest Old Testament curse. Job's children have already died (1:18-19), making this oath bitterly ironic—he's already experienced the very judgment he invokes, yet maintains his innocence. This proves Job isn't claiming sinless perfection but rather rejecting the specific sins his friends allege.

Historical Context

In Deuteronomic theology, covenant curses included agricultural failure and loss of posterity (Deuteronomy 28:30-32, 38-42). For an ancient patriarch, family continuity was essential to identity and legacy. Job's willingness to invoke these ultimate curses upon himself demonstrates the seriousness of oath-taking in legal contexts. The tragic reality is that he's already suffered these losses without the corresponding guilt.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Why does Job invoke covenant curses upon himself when he's already experienced their effects?
2. How does this verse demonstrate that Job's oath is about specific accusations, not claims of sinlessness?
3. What would you be willing to lose to prove your integrity before God and others?

Interlinear Text

אָ זִרְעָה	וְאֵי ר	יֹאכֵל ל	וְצִאָצָא י	יִשְׁרָשׁוּ:
Then let me sow	and let another	eat	yea let my offspring	be rooted out
H2232	H312	H398	H6631	H8327

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 26:16 (Parallel theme): I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

Micah 6:15 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.

Deuteronomy 28:38 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it.

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