

Job 34:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others;

Analysis

He striketh them as wicked men (כְּרָשָׁיִם יִפְּקֵם)—The verb *saphaq* means to clap, strike, or smite, often depicting public humiliation or execution. Kiresaim (as wicked ones) emphasizes these are judged precisely according to their character—the punishment fits the crime. God's judgment publicly identifies and condemns wickedness, removing any pretense of righteousness.

In the open sight of others (בְּמִקְוֵם רְאִים)—Literally 'in a place of seeing ones,' emphasizing public visibility. Ro'im (seeing ones, watchers) indicates witnesses. Ancient Near Eastern justice emphasized public execution as deterrent and vindication—justice must be seen to restore social order. God's judgment of the wicked serves pedagogical purposes: demonstrating moral governance to observers, warning potential evildoers, vindicating the oppressed, and revealing divine character. Deuteronomy 13:11 expresses this principle: public punishment 'and all Israel shall hear, and fear.' God's justice isn't merely punitive but revelatory—it teaches moral order to watching generations.

Historical Context

Public execution and humiliation were standard in ancient judicial systems. Criminals were executed at city gates, hung on display, or their bodies exposed as warnings. This cultural context helps understand biblical justice imagery—not as primitive cruelty but as pedagogical demonstration that moral order exists and violations bring consequences. God's public judgment of the wicked (Pharaoh,

Korah, Achan) taught Israel and surrounding nations about divine holiness and justice.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does public exposure of wickedness serve God's purposes in demonstrating moral order?
2. What does this verse teach about the importance of visible consequences for sin in deterring evil?
3. How should believers balance this Old Testament principle with New Testament teachings on mercy and restoration?

Interlinear Text

תַּחַת	רָשָׁעִים	סָפֵק	בְּמִקְוֵה	רְאִים:
them as	wicked men	He striketh	in the open	sight
H8478	H7563	H5606	H4725	H7200

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org