

Job 34:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

Analysis

That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared (מִמְּלֹךְ אָדָם חָנֶפֶת מִמּוֹקְשֵׁי אֶם, mimmelokh adam chaneph mimmoqshei am)—The noun chaneph (חָנֶפֶת, hypocrite, godless person) describes one who professes piety while living wickedly. The verb malakh (מָלַךְ, "to reign, rule") indicates political power. The noun moqesh (מוֹקֵשׁ, snare, trap) depicts people being caught in evil when hypocrites rule. Elihu argues God prevents wicked rulers from reigning to protect people. This aligns with Proverbs 29:2: "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."

Yet history shows hypocrites often do reign—Ahab, Manasseh, and others. Elihu's theology is incomplete. Romans 13:1 teaches God permits all governing authorities, yet not all are righteous. This tension resolves eschatologically: Christ will establish ultimate righteous reign (Isaiah 32:1, Revelation 19:11-16). Meanwhile, God's sovereignty works through even wicked rulers to accomplish His purposes (Habakkuk 1:6, Acts 4:27-28). The gospel transcends political solutions: the Kingdom of God, not human government, is our ultimate hope.

Historical Context

Ancient Israel's monarchy included righteous kings (David, Josiah) and wicked ones (Ahab, Manasseh). Deuteronomic theology connected national prosperity to king's righteousness (Deuteronomy 17:14-20). Wisdom literature recognized the danger of wicked rulers (Proverbs 28:15-16, Ecclesiastes 10:5-7). Elihu's statement

reflects ideal covenant theology but doesn't account for mystery of God permitting wicked rulers, later addressed by prophets (Habakkuk) and apostles (Romans 13).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty operate when wicked leaders rule?
2. What is the Christian's responsibility toward unjust government?
3. How does Christ's kingdom relativize all human political arrangements?

Interlinear Text

מִמְלָכָה	אֲזַיִן	וְהָיָה	וְלֹא יִשְׁלָחוּ	עַם:
reign	That the hypocrite	H2611	be ensnared	not lest the people
H4427	H120		H4170	H5971

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