

Job 36:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee.

Analysis

But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked (וַדִּין־רָשָׁע מְלֵאָה, v'din rasha maleta)—Elihu's accusation intensifies. The verb male (to fill, fulfill, complete) suggests Job has filled up the full measure of wicked judgment by his complaints against God. Rather than submitting to discipline, Job has adopted the posture of the wicked—questioning divine justice. This echoes Jesus's warning about those who 'fill up the measure' of their fathers' sins (Matthew 23:32).

Judgment and justice take hold on thee (דִּין וּמִשְׁפָּט יִתְמַכּוּ, din u-mishpat yitmokhu)—The paired terms din (judgment, legal case) and mishpat (justice, verdict) represent the full legal process. The verb tamak (to grasp, seize, support) suggests these principles have gripped Job like a vise. Elihu argues that Job's own words have entrapped him in the very judgment he protests. This represents the friends' consistent error: assuming Job's suffering must result from personal sin, when the prologue reveals it's a test of faith. Yet Elihu's warning carries truth—how we respond to suffering matters. Bitter complaint can indeed lead us into the sin we're falsely accused of.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern legal terminology permeates this verse. Court proceedings in patriarchal society involved public assembly where cases were heard and verdicts rendered. Elihu uses judicial language to frame Job's situation as a legal

matter between him and God, reflecting the lawsuit motif that runs through Job's speeches (9:32-35, 13:3, 23:3-7).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How can suffering tempt us to adopt the very attitudes and behaviors we've previously rejected?
2. In what ways does prolonged hardship test whether we'll maintain integrity or slide into bitterness and accusation against God?
3. How do we distinguish between honest lament (like the Psalms) and sinful complaint that crosses into accusing God of injustice?

Interlinear Text

דִּין	רֶשָׁע	מָלֵא אֶת	דִּין	וּמִשְׁפָּט	תִּתְּחַזֵּק
judgment	of the wicked	But thou hast fulfilled	judgment	and justice	take hold
H1779	H7563	H4390	H1779	H4941	H8551

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 18:4 (Parallel theme): And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Romans 1:32 (Judgment): Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

