

Job 4:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

Analysis

Eliphaz continues: 'How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?' The 'houses of clay' refers to human bodies (2 Corinthians 5:1). Eliphaz argues from lesser to greater: if angels can fall, how much more humans! The moth comparison suggests humans are crushed as easily as moths. This is true anthropology—humans are frail—but false soteriology—it denies that God's power preserves His elect.

Historical Context

The body as a clay house appears throughout ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature, emphasizing human mortality and frailty. Eliphaz uses this common imagery to argue for universal human guilt deserving judgment.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do you balance biblical anthropology (human frailty) with biblical soteriology (God's preserving grace)?

2. What does it mean that God chooses to preserve those who dwell in 'houses of clay'?

Interlinear Text

אַרְאָה	שְׁכַנְתִּי	בָּתָן	חַמְרָה	אַשְׁר	בָּעֵפָר
How much less	in them that dwell	in houses	of clay	H834	is in the dust
H637	H7931	H1004	H2563		H6083
whose foundation	which are crushed	before	the moth		
H3247	H1792	H6440	H6211		

Additional Cross-References

Job 10:9 (Parallel theme): Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

Genesis 2:7 (Parallel theme): And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Job 33:6 (Parallel theme): Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.

Genesis 3:19 (Parallel theme): In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Psalms 39:11 (Parallel theme): When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.

Job 13:12 (Parallel theme): Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.

Job 13:28 (Parallel theme): And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth eaten.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (Parallel theme): But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Genesis 18:27 (Parallel theme): And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:

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