

Job 5:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.

Analysis

Eliphaz lists deliverances: 'In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.' The Hebrew 'padah' (redeem) indicates God's ransoming deliverance. Eliphaz's promise is conditionally true—God does often deliver His people—but falsely promises immediate relief upon repentance. This ignores that God's servants sometimes die in famine and war (Hebrews 11:37), not because God failed them, but because God's purposes include martyrdom and suffering witness.

Historical Context

Famine and warfare were the two greatest threats to ancient Near Eastern populations. Eliphaz's promise of deliverance from both would sound comprehensive and appealing but fails to account for God's various purposes in allowing or preventing such calamities.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you maintain faith when God doesn't deliver you from life-threatening circumstances?
2. What purposes might God have in allowing His people to experience famine, war, or martyrdom?

Interlinear Text

בְּרָעָב	פָּדָךְ	מִמָּוֶת	וּבְמִלְחָמָה	מִיָּדִי
In famine	he shall redeem	thee from death	and in war	from the power
H7458	H6299	H4194	H4421	H3027
חֶרֶב:				
of the sword				
H2719				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 33:19 (Parallel theme): To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Hosea 13:14 (Redemption): I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

Psalms 37:19 (Parallel theme): They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

Proverbs 10:3 (Parallel theme): The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.

Genesis 45:7 (Parallel theme): And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

1 Kings 17:6 (Parallel theme): And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

Psalms 144:10 (Word): It is he that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

Habakkuk 3:17 (Parallel theme): Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

Psalms 27:3 (Parallel theme): Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

Matthew 24:6 (Parallel theme): And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.