

Job 7:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

Analysis

The phrase 'made to possess' (nachal, נָכַל) typically refers to receiving an inheritance or portion—bitterly ironic as Job's 'inheritance' consists of 'months of vanity' and 'wearisome nights.' The Hebrew shav (שָׁב, vanity) denotes emptiness, futility, and worthlessness—the same word used in Ecclesiastes to describe life 'under the sun.' Job's suffering has become his appointed portion, replacing the blessed inheritance described in chapter 1.

'Wearisome nights are appointed to me' employs the verb mana (מְנָה), meaning to number, assign, or appoint. This reveals Job's theological sophistication: he recognizes divine sovereignty even in suffering. His sleepless nights aren't random misfortune but divinely appointed trials. This Reformed perspective affirms God's meticulous providence while wrestling with its inscrutability. The verb 'appointed' echoes Lamentations 3:38, 'Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?'

Job's lament paradoxically affirms both God's sovereignty and the legitimacy of human anguish under it. The 'months' (plural) indicate prolonged suffering, not momentary trial. This extended timeline challenges easy answers and demands patient endurance while maintaining faith in divine goodness despite contrary experiential evidence.

Historical Context

The ancient Near Eastern context understood prosperity as divine favor and prolonged suffering as divine displeasure. Job's 'months of vanity' would have been interpreted by his peers (including his friends) as clear evidence of hidden sin requiring repentance. Job's uniqueness lies in maintaining his integrity while acknowledging God's sovereign appointment of his suffering.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we reconcile God's sovereignty in appointing suffering with His essential goodness and love?
2. What does Job's extended timeline of suffering teach us about false expectations for quick resolution to trials?
3. In what ways does recognizing suffering as 'appointed' rather than random affect our response to it?

Interlinear Text

וְ	בָּנָם	לְתִי	לִ	רַחֲמִ	שׁ	אָ	לִילָּות	לְ	עַ
H3651	So am I made to possess		H0	months	of vanity		nights	and wearisome	
	H5157			H3391		H7723	H3915		H5999

מְפֻ	לִי
are appointed	H4487

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 6:6 (Parallel theme): I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

Ecclesiastes 1:14 (Parallel theme): I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

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