

Job 8:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

Analysis

Bildad applies his imagery: 'So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish.' The verb 'forget' (shakach, שכח) doesn't merely mean memory lapse but willful neglect or abandonment. The 'hypocrite' (chaneph, חנף) literally means 'profane' or 'godless'—one who appears religious but lacks genuine piety. Their 'hope' (tiqvah, תקוה) shall 'perish' (abad, אבד), be destroyed or lost.

Bildad's theology is orthodox: false profession cannot endure, and those who abandon God face destruction (Psalm 9:17, Proverbs 10:28). However, his application is slanderous—he implies Job is the hypocrite whose hope perishes. This illustrates the danger of using sound theology as diagnostic tool for others' suffering. Only God knows hearts (1 Samuel 16:7); we must apply doctrine to ourselves while extending charity toward others.

The New Testament develops the theme of false profession (Matthew 7:21-23, 1 John 2:19). Those who depart 'went out from us, but they were not of us'—their departure reveals what was always true. But Bildad's error is timing: Job hasn't departed, and God's final verdict will vindicate him. Premature judgment reveals more about the judge than the judged.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern wisdom distinguished between the wise/righteous and the fool/wicked, often emphasizing the latter's ultimate doom. Bildad operates within this framework, correctly identifying the category (godless hypocrite) but wrongly assigning Job to it. The book of Job complicates these categories by presenting righteous suffering.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we maintain theological conviction about false profession without presuming to judge specific individuals?
2. What does Bildad's misapplication teach about the danger of using theology as weapon rather than medicine?
3. In what ways does the doctrine of perseverance provide assurance without creating presumption?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אֵלֶּה דְּרֹתָיו	כָּל	שֵׁי כֹחֵי	אֵל	וְתִקְוָת	חַיֵּי
H3651	So are the paths	H3605	of all that forget	God	hope	and the hypocrite's
	H734		H7911	H410	H8615	H2611
וְיִשָּׁרְפוּ:						
shall perish						
H6						

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 9:17 (References God): The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Job 13:16 (Parallel theme): He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

Job 11:20 (Hope): But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

Job 15:34 (Parallel theme): For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.

Proverbs 10:28 (Hope): The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

Job 20:5 (Parallel theme): That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?