

Job 8:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him,
saying, I have not seen thee.

Analysis

Destruction comes suddenly: 'If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.' The verb 'destroy' (bala, בָּלָא) means to swallow, engulf, or consume completely. 'His place' (meqom, מִקְוֹם) denotes the location where he grew—when removed, the place itself denies ever knowing him. This personification intensifies the imagery: not only is the hypocrite destroyed, but his very place of growth repudiates him.

The denial 'I have not seen thee' echoes terrifying New Testament warnings: 'I never knew you: depart from me' (Matthew 7:23). The place's denial suggests complete erasure—the hypocrite leaves no trace, his existence forgotten as though he never was. This matches Job's earlier fear (7:10) that his place would know him no more. Bildad uses Job's own words against him, twisting lament into accusation.

The Reformed doctrine of perseverance provides assurance: genuine believers cannot be ultimately destroyed (John 10:28-29). But this requires faith to rest in God's verdict, not human diagnosis. Bildad presumes to know what only God knows—who genuinely belongs to God and who merely appeared to belong.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern concept of 'place' (maqom) included one's position in family, society, and memory. To be destroyed from one's place meant total obliteration—

not just death but erasure from community memory. This intensified the judgment Bildad pronounces on hypocrites.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's promise 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (Hebrews 13:5) address the terror of being denied by our place?
2. What does the place's denial teach about the difference between temporary positions and eternal security in Christ?
3. In what ways should awareness of false profession lead to self-examination rather than judgment of others?

Interlinear Text

אִם	יִבְלֶעַ נֹו	מִמָּקוֹמֹו	וְכִי תִשְׁקֹו	וְ	בֹו	לֹו	אֵלֹו
H518	If he destroy	him from his place	then it shall deny		H0		H3808
	H1104	H4725	H3584				
וְאֵינִי רֹוֹ:							
him saying I have not seen							
H7200							

Additional Cross-References

Job 7:10 (Parallel theme): He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

Psalms 37:36 (Parallel theme): Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Job 7:8 (Parallel theme): The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more:
thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

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