

Job 8:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

Analysis

Bildad concludes: 'Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers.' The verb ma'as (מָשַׁא, cast away) means to reject or despise. Tam (תָּם, perfect) is the same word describing Job in 1:1—complete or having integrity. Bildad's logic appears sound: God doesn't reject the righteous or aid the wicked. The problem is the implied accusation: since Job is suffering (apparently cast away), he must not truly be perfect. Bildad cannot accept that God might test the perfect or that suffering serves purposes beyond punishment.

Historical Context

Bildad appeals to observable patterns: the righteous generally prosper, the wicked generally suffer. Proverbs teaches these patterns as normative. However, Bildad elevates pattern to absolute law, leaving no room for exceptions or divine mystery. His speech promises that if Job repents, God will restore him (8:5-7), assuming Job's suffering results from sin requiring repentance.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do we hold biblical principles about sowing and reaping without making them absolute laws that deny mystery?
2. What does Bildad's error teach about the limits of human wisdom in understanding God's ways?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלָי יְמַאֵּן
H2005 Behold God H410 H3808 will not cast away H3988 a perfect H8535 H3808

מְרֻעִים: בַּיד
man neither will he help H2388 H3027 the evil doers H7489

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 37:24 (Parallel theme): Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

Job 4:7 (Parallel theme): Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

Psalms 37:37 (Parallel theme): Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

Isaiah 45:1 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

Psalms 94:14 (Parallel theme): For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

Job 21:30 (Evil): That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

Job 9:22 (Evil): This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

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