

Job 9:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

Analysis

Job describes relentless affliction: 'He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.' The phrase 'suffer me to take my breath' (yitteneni hasheb ruchi, יתתני נשֶׁב רֻחִי) means to recover or catch one's breath—Job gets no respite between blows. 'Filleth me' (yasbienu, יָשְׁבָעֵנוּ) means to saturate or satisfy—but instead of satisfaction, God fills Job with 'bitterness' (mamerurim, מָמָרִים), plural intensive form suggesting overwhelming bitter experience.

Job's imagery evokes drowning or exhaustion—before recovering from one blow, another lands. This describes suffering's crushing momentum where trials compound faster than recovery allows. The saturation with bitterness suggests total immersion in anguish—every sense, every moment dominated by suffering. Job cannot find air pocket for relief.

Christ experienced this saturation in Gethsemane and Golgotha—'My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death' (Matthew 26:38). The cup of divine wrath contained such bitterness that Christ sweat blood contemplating it. Yet He drank it fully, being saturated with bitterness so believers need never be. Job's bitter cup foreshadows Christ's cup of wrath, which He drank to the dregs.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern judicial punishments often involved relentless severity—repeated blows without mercy. Job's description of divine prosecution borrows this

imagery, experiencing God's action as merciless judge rather than merciful father. His limited revelation lacks the fuller picture of divine compassion.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we maintain hope when trials compound faster than recovery permits?
2. What does Job's saturation with bitterness teach about suffering's totalizing power?
3. In what ways did Christ's drinking the cup of divine wrath spare us from the bitterness Job experienced?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	תִּתְגַּנְנִי	בְּשִׁבְעָנִי	רֹוחִי	כִּי	לֹא
H3808	He will not suffer	me to take	my breath	H3588	but filleth
H5414		H7725	H7307		H7646

מָרָרִים:
me with bitterness

Additional Cross-References

Job 7:19 (Parallel theme): How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

Lamentations 3:15 (Parallel theme): He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.

