

Job 9:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

Analysis

Job declares divine impartiality: 'This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.' The phrase 'This is one thing' (אחת היא) emphasizes singular, unified principle. Job asserts God 'destroyeth' (kalah, קלה, completes, finishes) both 'perfect' (tam, תם, blameless) and 'wicked' (rasha, רשע) indiscriminately. From Job's observation, divine judgment doesn't differentiate based on righteousness.

Job's theology here is both right and wrong. He's right that God's providence doesn't mechanically reward righteousness and punish wickedness in this life—rain falls on just and unjust (Matthew 5:45). He's wrong to assume this means God doesn't distinguish or that final outcomes will be identical. Job lacks eschatological perspective—final judgment will indeed separate perfectly. But in this life, providence is inscrutable.

Ecclesiastes 9:2 echoes Job: 'All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked.' But Ecclesiastes also concludes 'God shall bring every work into judgment' (12:14). Job sees only present indiscriminate providence; fuller revelation provides future discriminating judgment. God does distinguish—but on His timeline, not ours.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern retribution theology assumed divine blessing followed righteousness and curse followed wickedness visibly and promptly. Job's observation that good and evil people face similar fates challenged prevailing theology, pointing toward fuller eschatological framework where ultimate justice is deferred to final judgment.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do we reconcile observable indiscriminate providence (bad things happen to good people) with confidence in divine justice?
2. What does Job's perception teach about the limits of observational theology?
3. In what ways does eschatological judgment vindicate God's justice despite present seeming indiscrimination?

Interlinear Text

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|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| אֵת | הִיא | עַל | כִּי | אָמַרְתִּי | תִּמְמָה | בְּשָׁעָה |
| This is one | H1931 | H5921 | H3651 | thing therefore I said | the perfect | and the wicked |

מִכְלָה: ה וְ H1931 it He destroyeth H3615

