

# Job 9:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?

## Analysis

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**The earth is given into the hand of the wicked** (נִתְּנָה אֶרֶץ בְּיַד־רָשָׁע, nitt'nah eretz b'yad-rasha)—Job's complaint challenges divine providence with brutal honesty. The verb 'given' (natan, נָתַן) implies deliberate divine action, not passive permission. Job sees God actively placing the earth under wicked rulers' control.

**He covereth the faces of the judges thereof** describes judicial corruption—God blinds judges (literally 'covers their faces') so they cannot see justice. This echoes the prophetic critique of perverted justice (Isaiah 5:23, Micah 3:9). Job's theology is wrestling with the prosperity of the wicked while the righteous suffer (Psalm 73). His closing question—**if not, where, and who is he?**—challenges God directly: if You're not responsible for this injustice, then who is? This isn't blasphemy but lament's honest grappling with theodicy. Jesus later addresses this tension: God 'makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good' (Matthew 5:45).

## Historical Context

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This verse comes from Job's response to Bildad's second speech (Job 9:1-35). Job has moved from patient acceptance (1:21) to passionate complaint against perceived divine injustice. Ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature regularly wrestled with the prosperity of the wicked, but Job's directness in questioning God's governance was radical. The 'judges' (shophtim, שֹׁפְטִים) refers to the rulers and magistrates responsible for justice—central figures in maintaining social order.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How do you reconcile faith in God's sovereignty with the visible prosperity of corrupt rulers and the suffering of the righteous?
2. What does Job's honest questioning teach about authentic prayer versus sanitized religious speech?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶרֶץ	נָתַן ה'	בְּיַד	רֶשָׁע	פְּנֵי	שֹׁפֵט יְה'
The earth	is given	into the hand	of the wicked	the faces	of the judges
H776	H5414	H3027	H7563	H6440	H8199
יִכָּסֶה	אֵם	לֹא	אִם וְאֵל	מִי	הוּא:
he covereth			thereof if not where		
H3680	H518	H3808	H645	H4310	H1931

## Additional Cross-References

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**Job 10:3** (Evil): Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?