

Numbers 5:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.

Analysis

The curse specifically targets the woman's reproductive capacity—the thigh to rot and belly to swell. Since the suspected sin involved sexual betrayal, the consequence affects the same area of life. This is an example of measure-for-measure justice. The final 'Amen, Amen' from the woman constitutes her consent to the terms of the oath, accepting that if guilty, this curse should fall upon her. The double Amen emphasizes the solemnity and finality of her agreement.

Historical Context

The thigh and belly language likely refers to the reproductive organs and womb using euphemistic terms. Barrenness was considered a great misfortune in ancient Israel, often viewed as divine disfavor. The curse would make the adulteress publicly recognizable through physical consequences.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does the measure-for-measure nature of this curse teach about God's justice?
2. How should the seriousness of consenting to divine judgment with 'Amen' affect our approach to oaths and vows?
3. In what ways does physical consequence for sin illustrate the broader principle that sin brings death?

Interlinear Text

וּבָאוּ	הַמַּיִם	הַמְאָרָרִים	הָאֵלֶּה	בְּמַעַיְיךָ	
shall go	And this water	that causeth the curse	H428	into thy bowels	
H935	H4325	H779		H4578	
לִצְבּוֹת	בְּטֶן	וְלִנְפֹל	וְיָרֶגְ	וְאָמַרְהָ	הָאִשָּׁה
to swell	to make thy belly	to rot	and thy thigh	shall say	And the woman
H6638	H990	H5307	H3409	H559	H802
אָמֵן	אָמֵן				
Amen	Amen				
H543	H543				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 109:18 (Parallel theme): As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

Psalms 89:52 (Parallel theme): Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Psalms 72:19 (Parallel theme): And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

Psalms 41:13 (Parallel theme): Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

Proverbs 1:31 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

John 3:3 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:11 (Parallel theme): Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

John 6:53 (Parallel theme): Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Ezekiel 3:3 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

Numbers 5:27 (Curse): And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that, if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.