

Job 11:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

Analysis

Zophar the Naamathite now speaks, the third and harshest of Job's comforters. His name (צָפָר, Tsophar) may derive from 'bird' or 'chirper,' while Naamathite indicates his origin from Naamah. Zophar represents the dogmatic certainty that suffering always results from sin. Unlike Eliphaz's mystical visions or Bildad's traditional wisdom, Zophar will rely on theological assertions delivered with biting sarcasm. His forthcoming speech demonstrates how orthodox theology divorced from compassion becomes cruel. The Reformed tradition affirms doctrinal precision but insists it must be seasoned with grace and humility.

Historical Context

Naamah's location is uncertain—possibly in northern Arabia or southern Judah. Ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature featured dialogue between friends debating life's meaning, but Job's dialogues uniquely challenge rather than confirm retribution theology. Zophar's approach reflects the ancient assumption that the universe operates on strict moral causation.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How can we maintain theological conviction while avoiding Zophar's harshness toward those who suffer?
2. What does Zophar's introduction warn us about the danger of certainty without compassion?

Interlinear Text

וְאָמַרְתָּ
Then answered Zophar the Naamathite and said
H6030 H6691 H5284 H559

Additional Cross-References

Job 2:11 (Parallel theme): Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

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