

Job 11:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

Analysis

Zophar accuses Job of 'lies' (בְּדִים, baddim—empty talk, boasting) and 'mocking' (לָעֵג, la'ag). This represents a serious escalation—Eliphaz suggested Job might have sinned, Bildad implied it, but Zophar directly accuses Job of lying and mockery. The rhetorical questions demand that someone shame Job into silence. This violates the biblical principle that 'faithful are the wounds of a friend' (Proverbs 27:6)—Zophar wounds not to heal but to silence. The Reformed emphasis on speaking truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) condemns such brutal 'correction.' Zophar confuses Job's honest complaint with mockery of God.

Historical Context

In ancient honor-shame cultures, public shaming was a powerful social control mechanism. Zophar appeals to this, assuming the community should join in silencing Job. The book of Job subverts this cultural expectation by ultimately vindicating Job's speech and condemning the friends' 'correction.'

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between honest lament and mockery of God?
2. When does our desire to defend God's honor become an attack on His suffering children?

Interlinear Text

אֵין תִּתְלַעַג מִתְּמִימָן בְּדַבֵּר יְשָׁאֵן יְחִיר יְשָׁאֵן
Should thy lies men hold their peace and when thou mockest H369
H907 H4962 H2790 H3932

מִכְלָמָּה:

shall no man make thee ashamed

H3637

Additional Cross-References

Job 17:2 (Parallel theme): Are there not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?

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