

Job 11:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

Analysis

Zophar asks: 'Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?' The verb chaqar (חֲקַר, searching) means to investigate, examine, or explore deeply. Matsa (מָצָא, find out) means to discover or attain. Takhlit (תָּכְלִית, perfection) refers to completeness or ultimate extent. Zophar correctly asserts God's incomprehensibility—finite minds cannot fully grasp infinite being. However, he uses this truth to silence Job's questions rather than acknowledge mystery. The verse contains profound theology about divine transcendence but is weaponized against legitimate suffering.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom acknowledged divine mystery and human limitation. Zophar's question echoes themes from Psalms (145:3, 'His greatness is unsearchable') and Isaiah (40:28). The problem isn't the theology but its application—Zophar uses God's incomprehensibility to dismiss Job's protests rather than sit humbly with mystery. This demonstrates how true doctrine can be employed to silence rather than comfort.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do we balance affirming God's incomprehensibility with encouraging honest questions and laments?
2. What is the difference between acknowledging divine mystery and using it to shut down legitimate suffering?

Interlinear Text

בְּמַעַן	אֱלֹהִים	תִּמְצָא:	אֵלֶּה	עַד	תִּכְלִיל
Canst thou by searching	God	canst thou find	H518	H5704	unto perfection
H2714	H433	H4672			H8503
שָׁدֵךְ	תִּמְצָא:				
out the Almighty	canst thou find				
H7706	H4672				

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (References God): He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

Romans 11:33 (References God): O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Psalms 145:3 (Parallel theme): Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

Isaiah 40:28 (References God): Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

Psalms 77:19 (Parallel theme): Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

Job 37:23 (Parallel theme): Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Job 5:9 (Parallel theme): Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

Ephesians 3:8 (Parallel theme): Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

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