

Job 12:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?

Analysis

'Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?' Job uses two physical analogies: ears discerning words as mouths taste food. The verb 'try' (בָּחַן, bachan—test, examine, prove) suggests careful evaluation. Just as the palate distinguishes flavors, rational minds should evaluate arguments. Job appeals to his friends' discernment—they should test his words rather than dismiss them. This assumes truth corresponds to reality and can be evaluated through reason illuminated by revelation. The Reformed tradition values the mind renewed by the Spirit (Romans 12:2), rejecting both anti-intellectualism and rationalism divorced from Scripture. Job calls for honest evaluation, not blind acceptance of traditional formulas.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom literature valued discernment and tested truth claims against experience and tradition. Job here appeals to this value, asking his friends to actually evaluate his arguments rather than merely assert orthodoxy.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we cultivate discernment that neither blindly accepts tradition nor arrogantly dismisses it?
2. What role does reason play in evaluating theological claims, and what are its limits?

Interlinear Text

בְּלֹא	דָּוֶת	אֵל	מִلְּוָא	תְּבַטֵּח	וְ	בְּרֵת	בְּ	לְ	לְ	וְ	לְ	לְ
H3808	Doth not the ear		words	try		and the mouth		his meat	taste		H0	

H241

H4405

H974

H2441

H400

H2938

Additional Cross-References

Job 34:3 (Word): For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org