

Job 15:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.

Analysis

Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them—Eliphaz claims the wise men's tradition comes from a pure, uncontaminated source: zar (זר, 'stranger/foreigner') never passed among them. This appeals to ethnic and theological purity—their wisdom wasn't corrupted by outside influence. The phrase nittenah ha'aretz (ונתנה הארץ, 'the earth was given') echoes Genesis 1:28 and suggests original, Edenic wisdom.

The supreme irony: Job is set in the land of Uz (likely Edomite territory), Job and his friends are probably non-Israelites, and the book itself represents 'foreign' wisdom literature influencing Hebrew thought. The claim to pure, unmixed tradition is fiction. Moreover, Scripture repeatedly validates 'foreign' wisdom—Melchizedek, Jethro, Ruth, the Magi. Theological xenophobia always produces distorted truth.

Historical Context

Post-exilic Judaism increasingly emphasized separation from foreign influence (Ezra 9-10, Nehemiah 13). Some scholars date Job to this period as a counter-voice, reminding Israel that God's wisdom transcends ethnic boundaries. The book's non-Israelite setting deliberately challenges theological ethnocentrism.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. When has your theological tradition used 'purity' arguments to resist necessary correction from outside voices?
2. How does the church's history of learning from 'outsiders' challenge claims to pure, uncontaminated tradition?
3. What voices are today's Eliphaz-figures excluding as 'strangers' who might actually speak God's truth?

Interlinear Text

וְ	לֹ	בְּ	דָּמָ	לְ	לַ	נָתַן	הָ	לְ	בְּ	דָּמָ	לְ	לַ	בְּ	רָ	אָ	לִ	אָ		
H0		H905				was given		Unto whom alone the earth						H3808		passed			
			H5414					H776							H5674				
בְּ	תֹּ	כֶּ	םָ																
and no	stranger	among																	
	H2114																		
		H8432																	

Additional Cross-References

Joel 3:17 (Parallel theme): So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.

