

# Job 15:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches  
wherewith he can do no good?

## Analysis

---

**Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?**—Eliphaz's rhetorical questions attack Job's words as functionally worthless. The Hebrew *lo'-yiska* (לֹא־יִסְכָּא, 'unprofitable') and *lo' yo'il* (לֹא־יִוָּעִיל, 'can do no good') emphasize pragmatic uselessness. This reveals Eliphaz's fundamental criterion: theology must be 'profitable' and practically useful.

The irony is devastating: Eliphaz condemns Job's speeches as pointless, yet the book's epilogue (42:7) declares that Job 'spoke what is right' while the friends spoke wrongly. What Eliphaz calls unprofitable—Job's honest wrestling with suffering—proves to be the only speech God honors. This reversal challenges our tendency to value tidy theological systems over honest faith struggles.

## Historical Context

---

Ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature prized practical utility. Wisdom was measured by results, not abstract truth—advice had to work. Eliphaz represents this tradition, unable to comprehend that Job's suffering defies pragmatic wisdom's explanatory power. The book of Job subverts this entirely.

## Related Passages

---

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

---

1. When have you dismissed someone's honest doubts as 'unprofitable' because they threatened your theological framework?
2. How do you distinguish between genuinely destructive speech and necessary faith questioning?
3. Why might seemingly 'useless' wrestling with God be more valuable than efficient answers?

## Interlinear Text

---

הֹכֵחַ הַ	בְּ דִבָּר	לֹא	יִסְכּוּ וְ	וּ מְלִי יִם	לֹא
Should he reason	talk	H3808	with unprofitable	or with speeches	H3808
H3198	H1697		H5532	H4405	
יִנְעַ יֵל	בָּם:				
wherewith he can do no good	H0				
H3276					

---