

Job 16:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Job answered and said,

Analysis

Then Job answered and said (וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיּוֹב וַיֹּאמַר, vaya'an 'iyyov vayomar)—This marks Job's third reply to Eliphaz, using the standard dialogue formula. The verb אָנָה ('anah, 'to answer') implies not mere response but an antiphonal refutation. Job's speeches grow progressively darker as his friends' accusations intensify.

The structure of Job's debate follows ancient Near Eastern legal dispute patterns—each party states their case, cross-examines, and appeals to witnesses. Job will call his friends 'miserable comforters' (v. 2), reversing their self-appointed role as counselors. This dialogue formula underscores the failed pastoral care: those who came to comfort became accusers.

Historical Context

Job 16 opens Job's response after Eliphaz's second speech (ch. 15). The dialogue structure mirrors ancient Mesopotamian wisdom disputation texts, where sages debated suffering and divine justice. Unlike his friends' theological abstractions, Job grounds his argument in raw experiential reality.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. When has well-meaning counsel turned into accusation in your experience of suffering?
2. How does Job's persistence in dialogue—despite his friends' failures—model faithful engagement with hard questions?
3. What does the formal 'answered and said' structure reveal about Job maintaining dignity amid devastation?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעֲן	אֵיּוֹב	וַיֹּאמֶר:
answered	Then Job	and said
H6030	H347	H559

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