

Job 22:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

Analysis

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said—This verse introduces Eliphaz's third and final speech (22:1-30). After Job's devastating argument about wicked prosperity (chapter 21), Eliphaz abandons reasoned debate and resorts to false accusations. His progression through three speeches shows deteriorating discourse: first, appeals to revelation and experience (4-5); second, warnings about wicked consequences (15); third, baseless accusations of specific sins (22). When theology contradicts observable reality, some respond by doubling down and inventing facts to fit their system.

Eliphaz represents religious certainty that cannot tolerate mystery. His name (אַלְפָחַז) possibly means 'God is fine gold' or 'God is pure,' while Temanite indicates origin from Teman in Edom, famous for wisdom (Jeremiah 49:7, Obadiah 1:8-9). Yet this wise man's certainty blinds him to truth. God will later rebuke Eliphaz and his friends for not speaking truth about Him as Job did (42:7).

Historical Context

Job 22 represents the final speech in the third dialogue cycle. Eliphaz speaks, then Bildad briefly (chapter 25), but Zophar remains silent—the friends are running out of arguments. Ancient Near Eastern wisdom dialogues often featured multiple voices debating universal questions. The Book of Job's dialogue structure resembles Babylonian wisdom literature like *Ludlul Bel Nemeqi*, though Job's theological sophistication far surpasses other ancient texts. This verse marks the beginning of the friends' final failure to comfort or convince Job.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When have you responded to uncomfortable truth by doubling down on your position rather than reconsidering it?
2. What does Eliphaz's trajectory from wisdom to false accusation teach about the danger of theological systems that can't admit mystery?
3. How can we maintain theological convictions while remaining open to correction when observable reality challenges our understanding?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלְיָהוּ בֶּתֶם נָבָע יְהוָה
answered Then Eliphaz the Temanite and said
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