

Job 26:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

Analysis

Job challenges his friends with biting irony: "To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?" The interrogative construction demands identification of the source of their wisdom. Job implies their words lack divine inspiration—they speak from human prejudice, not heavenly revelation. The phrase "whose spirit" (ruach-mi, רוח-מי) asks whether the Holy Spirit truly animates their speech. This anticipates the New Testament teaching that true wisdom comes from above (James 3:17) and that prophecy comes not by human will but by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). From a Reformed perspective, this highlights the distinction between human religious opinion and Spirit-illuminated truth. The friends' theology, though containing elements of truth, lacks the discernment that comes from genuine divine guidance. Job's question reminds us that orthodox words without spiritual insight can become weapons that wound rather than heal.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions claimed divine origins—Egyptian wisdom literature attributed teachings to gods, and Mesopotamian sages claimed divine inspiration. Israel's wisdom tradition (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) similarly grounded wisdom in "the fear of the LORD" (Proverbs 9:10). Job's challenge questions whether his friends' words truly reflect divine wisdom or merely human tradition. This distinction between human and divine wisdom appears throughout Scripture, culminating in Christ as the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How can we discern whether our theological conclusions reflect Spirit-guided understanding or merely cultural assumptions?
2. What is the relationship between orthodox doctrine and spiritual discernment in pastoral ministry?
3. How does Job's question challenge us to examine the source and motivation of our words to the suffering?

Interlinear Text

אַתָּה	מִ	הָנָתַת	מִלְּוָיָה	וְנִשְׁמָת	מִ	וַיָּבֹא
H854	H4310	To whom hast thou uttered	words	and whose spirit	H4310	came
		H5046	H4405	H5397		H3318

מִלְּוָיָה

H4480

Additional Cross-References

Job 32:18 (Spirit): For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.

Job 20:3 (Spirit): I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 (Spirit): Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

1 Corinthians 12:3 (Spirit): Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

