

Job 29:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me;

Analysis

When the Almighty was yet with me—the divine name שָׁדָּי (Shaddai, Almighty) appears 31 times in Job (more than the rest of the Old Testament combined), emphasizing God's power and sovereignty. The phrase **was yet with me** uses עָמָד (immadi, with me), indicating intimate presence. Job laments God's felt absence—not theological denial of omnipresence but experiential loss of conscious fellowship. **When my children were about me** uses סְבִיבוֹתִי (sevivotay, around me/surrounding me)—his children encircled him like a protective hedge, the same word used in 1:10 where Satan complains God hedged Job in. That hedge is now gone.

This verse poignantly captures Job's double loss: God's sensed presence and his children's actual presence. The parallelism links these—God's presence was experienced partly through family blessing. Job doesn't merely miss his children; he misses the sense of divine favor they represented. Ancient theology understood children as covenant blessings (Psalm 127:3-5), so losing them suggested losing God's favor. Job's grief is compounded: he mourns his children and questions God's continued presence.

Historical Context

In patriarchal culture, children (especially sons) represented legacy, security in old age, and divine blessing. The phrase "about me" suggests a protective circle—children gathered around their father for guidance, provision, and blessing. Job's

former life included this relational richness. The loss of all ten children in a single day (1:18-19) was catastrophic not only emotionally but theologically—it seemed to prove God's disfavor, which Job's friends argued explicitly.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between God's actual presence (theological reality) and felt presence (experiential reality) during suffering?
2. What blessings or relationships have represented God's favor to you, and how would their loss challenge your faith?
3. How can we maintain confidence in God's presence when circumstances suggest His absence?

Interlinear Text

בְּעֵד יְהוָה יְהוָה עָמָד
H5750 When the Almighty H5978 were about
H7706 H5439

בְּעֵד:

was yet with me when my children

H5288

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 128:3 (Parallel theme): Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Psalms 30:7 (Parallel theme): LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.

Joshua 1:9 (Parallel theme): Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Song of Solomon 2:4: He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

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