

Job 32:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.

Analysis

Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons (בָּהַזְכֵּרְתִּי לְדִבְרֵיכֶם) hen-hochalti ledivreikhem 'azin 'ad-tevunoteikhem)—yachal means to wait, hope, or expect; diber is word or speech; 'azan means to give ear, listen attentively; tevunah is understanding, intelligence, or reasoning. **Whilst ye searched out what to say** (עַד-תְּחַקְּרֹתִים מִלְּאֵין) chaqar means to search, investigate, examine thoroughly; millah is word or saying (Aramaic loan word).

Elihu describes his patient listening as the three friends struggled to formulate responses to Job. He wasn't merely silent but actively attentive, waiting to hear if they would provide adequate answers. The verb 'searched out' suggests their struggle—they exhausted their theology trying to convict Job but couldn't refute his claims. Elihu's description reveals the intellectual integrity of genuine discourse: listening carefully before speaking, weighing others' arguments, searching for truth rather than merely winning debates. James 1:19 commands, 'be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath'—wisdom Elihu demonstrates.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern wisdom discourse involved careful listening and measured response. Unlike modern debates focused on soundbites and interruptions, wisdom literature shows extended speeches with patient hearing. Elihu's lengthy silence (chapters 3-31) demonstrates the cultural expectation that younger participants

observe before contributing. His attention to the friends' reasoning shows intellectual respect even while preparing to refute them.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How often do you truly listen to understand rather than merely waiting to respond?
2. What would change in theological discussions if participants followed Elihu's model of patient, attentive listening?
3. In what ways does careful attention to others' reasoning sharpen your own theological understanding?

Interlinear Text

עד ונתיך מ תב ותנייך מ הום לתי נ פ |

H2005 Behold I waited for your words I gave ear to your reasons H5704 H5704

H3176

H1697

H238

H8394

מלין: תחזר וְ

whilst ye searched out what to say

H2713

H4405