

Job 32:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

Analysis

Now he hath not directed his words against me (וְלֹא־עָרַךְ אֵלַי מִלִּין, velo-'arakh 'elay millin)—'arakh means to arrange, set in order, or direct (as in arranging battle lines); millah is word or speech (Aramaic). **Neither will I answer him with your speeches** (וְבִאֲמֵרֵיכֶם לֹא אֶשִׁיבֵנּוּ, uv'imreikhem lo 'ashivenu)—'emer is saying or word; shuv means to return or answer.

Elihu distinguishes his approach from the three friends' failed methodology. Job hasn't attacked Elihu personally, so Elihu won't respond defensively. More importantly, Elihu refuses to use the friends' arguments—their retributive theology that assumes all suffering indicates proportional sin. This strategic distinction is crucial: Elihu recognizes that repeating the same failed arguments won't convince Job. He'll introduce fresh perspective, arguing that God uses suffering to warn, discipline, and refine the righteous, not merely to punish the wicked (33:14-30, 36:15). This anticipates the New Testament's theology of sanctifying affliction (Hebrews 12:5-11).

Historical Context

Ancient rhetoric distinguished between ad hominem attacks and substantive arguments. Elihu's refusal to answer Job 'with your speeches' shows intellectual independence—he's not merely the friends' spokesman but offers original theological contribution. His speeches (chapters 32-37) have been debated: some see them as late addition, others as inspired bridge between human debate and

divine revelation. God's silence regarding Elihu (neither commending nor condemning him) differs from His rebuke of the three friends (42:7).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How can we avoid repeating theological arguments that have already proven inadequate or harmful?
2. What does Elihu's fresh approach teach about the need for creative, Spirit-led responses to suffering rather than formulaic answers?
3. In what ways should we distinguish between defending truth and defending our own egos in theological discourse?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא	עָבַר	אֵלַי	מִלִּי	וּבְאִמְרֶיךָ	לֹא
H3808	Now he hath not directed	H413	his words	him with your speeches	H3808
	H6186		H4405	H561	
אֲשִׁיבָנִי:					
against me neither will I answer					
H7725					

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org