

Job 32:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

Analysis

Elihu's anger extends to Job's friends: "Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job." The verb *charah* (חָרָה, "kindled") describes anger's burning. The verb *matsa* (מָצָא, "found") means to discover or attain. Despite failing to refute Job (*ma'aneh*, מַעֲנֶה, "answer"), they condemned him. Elihu recognizes a crucial flaw: condemnation without proof is unjust. From a Reformed perspective, this highlights the danger of maintaining theological positions despite contrary evidence. The friends' commitment to retribution theology blinded them to its inadequacy for Job's case. This warns against ideological rigidity that condemns when it should humbly acknowledge mystery. Yet Elihu's anger at others' failure suggests self-righteousness—he's confident he can succeed where they failed. The tension between legitimate critique and overconfidence appears throughout Elihu's speeches.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom discourse valued logical coherence and evidential support. The friends' failure to answer Job while condemning him violated standards of reasoning. Proverbs warns against answering before listening (18:13) and condemning the righteous (17:15). Elihu correctly identifies their procedural failure even if his own speeches don't fully succeed either.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How can we avoid the friends' error of maintaining theological positions despite inadequate evidence?
2. What is the relationship between theological conviction and intellectual humility when facing mystery?
3. How does Elihu's confidence in his own answers warn us about overestimating our theological insights?

Interlinear Text

וּבְשָׁלִשׁ שָׁנָה	רְעֵי הָרֵעִים	אֶפְרַיִם	לְעֵלֵךְ	אֶשְׁרָר	לֹא
Also against his three	friends	kindled	was his wrath	H5921	H834 H3808
H7969	H7453	H2734	H639		
מֵצְאוּ	בְּמַעַן הָ	וַיִּרְשׁ יְעֹזֵר	אֶת	אֵיּוֹב:	
because they had found	no answer	and yet had condemned	H853	Job	
H4672	H4617	H7561		H347	

Additional Cross-References

Job 8:6 (Parallel theme): If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.