

Job 33:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

Analysis

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches—Elihu, whose name means 'He is my God' (אֱלֹהֵי הוּא), begins his discourse with respectful directness. Unlike Job's three friends who spoke about Job, Elihu speaks to him. The imperative שָׁמַע (shema, 'hear') demands active listening, the same verb in the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4). The phrase מִלִּי (millai, 'my speeches') and כָּל־דְּבָרַי (kol-devarai, 'all my words') emphasize comprehensiveness—Elihu will present a complete argument, not fragmented accusations.

Elihu's courteous 'I pray thee' contrasts with the three friends' dogmatic pronouncements. He positions himself as mediator, younger in years but claiming divine inspiration. His appeal for Job's attention prepares the theological correction to come—Job has claimed innocence while questioning God's justice (chapters 9-10, 13, 23). Elihu will argue that God is just in allowing suffering for sanctification, anticipating God's own speech from the whirlwind (chapters 38-41).

Historical Context

Elihu appears suddenly in Job 32 after the three friends—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—have exhausted their arguments. His youth and previous silence (32:4-7) reflect ancient Near Eastern respect for elders. However, when traditional wisdom fails to resolve Job's case, Elihu speaks with Spirit-given insight. Unlike the three friends, Elihu is not rebuked by God in chapter 42, suggesting his theology more

accurately reflects divine truth. His speeches (chapters 32-37) bridge Job's complaints and God's answer, preparing Job to receive divine correction humbly.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Elihu's respectful but direct approach model godly confrontation of error?
2. When have you needed to speak truth to someone older or more experienced—how did you balance respect with honesty?
3. What does Elihu's example teach about waiting for the right time to speak versus remaining silent when truth is at stake?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֶּיךָ	שָׁמַע	נָא	אֵי וּבִי	מִלִּי	וְכָל	דְּבָרִי
Wherefore	I pray thee hear	H4994	Job	my speeches	H3605	to all my words
H199	H8085		H347	H4405		H1697

הֶאֱזִינָה:
and hearken
H238

Additional Cross-References

Job 13:6 (Parallel theme): Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.