

Job 33:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

Analysis

Elihu corrects Job: 'Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.' The statement *lo-tsadaqta* (לֹא-צַדִּיקָא, thou art not just) charges Job with error. Elihu identifies Job's mistake: demanding God answer him as an equal. The phrase *ki-yirbeh Eloha me-enosh* (כִּי-יִרְבֶּה אֱלֹהִים מֵאָנוֹשׁ, God is greater than man) uses *yirbeh* (יִרְבֶּה), meaning to be many, much, or great. Elihu argues that God's transcendence means He isn't obligated to explain Himself to creatures. While affirming divine sovereignty, Elihu may overreach—God does answer Job, suggesting divine condescension beyond what Elihu envisioned.

Historical Context

Elihu's correction addresses Job's demand that God answer him (23:3-5, 31:35). Ancient Near Eastern deities were often portrayed as capricious and unanswerable to humans. Elihu rightly emphasizes divine transcendence but may underestimate divine grace—God chooses to reveal Himself beyond strict obligation. The verse balances Job's presumption with theological truth about Creator-creature distinction.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

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