

# Job 33:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me,  
stand up.

## Analysis

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**If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up**—Elihu invites Job to formal debate. The conditional 'if thou canst' challenges Job's previous demands to contend with God (13:3, 22; 23:3-7). **עֲרַכְתָּ** (orkeni, 'answer me') uses legal terminology—to arrange arguments systematically. **עַרְכָּה** (irkah, 'set in order') appears in contexts of arranging battle lines or legal cases, suggesting forensic precision.

**Stand up** (**הַתִּצְבָּה**, hityatzevah) means to take a position, to present oneself—the stance of someone ready to defend their case. Elihu offers Job what he'd requested: dialogue with someone on equal footing rather than an overwhelming divine opponent. Yet the challenge contains implicit humility—Elihu doesn't claim to replace God but to mediate understanding. He positions himself as fellow creature (33:6) who can address Job without the terror Job feared in approaching God directly (9:34-35). This invitation demonstrates confidence in truth while respecting Job's dignity as rational moral agent capable of responding to argument.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern legal procedure involved formal presentations before judges or assemblies. Job had repeatedly demanded his 'day in court' with God (13:18-19, 23:3-7), longing to present his case. Elihu grants a version of this—not the divine encounter Job craved, but human dialogue that prepares him for God's actual

appearance. The legal language reflects ancient juridical customs where cases were argued publicly with witnesses and advocates.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does Elihu's invitation to dialogue model respectful theological disagreement?
2. When have you demanded to 'make your case' to God—what was the result?
3. Why does God often use human mediators (teachers, friends, Scripture) rather than always speaking directly?

## Interlinear Text

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אָמַן	לֵאמֹן	תֹּוֹךְ	נִשְׁיבֵּנִי	עָרַךְ	הַתִּיצְבָּה:	לִפְנֵי				
H518	If thou canst	H3201	answer	H7725	me set thy words in order	H6186	before	H6440	me stand up	H3320

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