

Job 34:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God.

Analysis

For he addeth rebellion unto his sin (כִּי-יֹסֵף עַל-חַטֹּאתוֹ פְּשֻׁעָה) — The verb yasaph (אָסַף, "to add") indicates compounding. The noun pesha (פְּשֻׁעָה, rebellion, transgression) is stronger than chatta't (חַטֹּאת, sin, missing the mark). Elihu accuses Job of adding deliberate rebellion to sin. The phrase **he clappeth his hands among us** (בְּינֵינוּ יִסְפֹּוק) uses saphaq (סְפֹּק, "to clap"), possibly meaning mockery or defiant gesture. The phrase **multiplieth his words against God** (וַיַּרְבֶּה אֶתְמָרָיו לְאֱלֹהִים) accuses Job of excessive speech against God.

Elihu misunderstands Job's lament as rebellion. Yet God will vindicate Job (42:7). This teaches discernment: honest questioning isn't rebellion. The Psalms model bringing raw emotions to God (Psalms 13, 22, 88). Lament is faith's cry when praise seems impossible. Jesus Himself cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). The gospel permits—even requires—brutal honesty before God. Christ bore actual rebellion (Isaiah 53:5, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him") so our honest struggles wouldn't be counted as rebellion.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern piety typically demanded stoic acceptance of divine decrees. Lament was permitted but within limits—excessive questioning risked blasphemy. Biblical faith uniquely permits profound lament and questioning (Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Psalms) while maintaining ultimate submission. Elihu reflects

conventional piety that mistakes honesty for rebellion. Jesus's Gethsemane prayer ("if it be possible, let this cup pass," Matthew 26:39) models combining honest desire with submission ("nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt").

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between faithful lament and sinful rebellion against God?
2. What does Jesus's cry of dereliction (Mark 15:34) teach about bringing pain to God?
3. How can we create spaces where honest struggle with God is welcomed rather than condemned?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶלְעָלָה בֵּין יָנוֹם וְשָׁעָה חֲטֹאת זוֹעַל יְשָׁעָה
H3588 **For he addeth** H5921 **unto his sin** H2403 **rebellion** H996 **he clappeth**
H3254 H5606

לֹאֶלְעָלָה אֶמְכֵר יְהִי כָּבֵד
his hands among us and multiplieth his words against God
H7235 H561 H410

Additional Cross-References

Job 27:23 (Parallel theme): Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

1 Samuel 15:23 (Word): For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

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