

Job 35:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Elihu spake moreover, and said,

Analysis

Elihu spake moreover, and said—This brief verse introduces Elihu's third speech (chapters 35-37). The name Elihu (אֵלִיָּהוּ) means 'He is my God' or 'My God is He,' theologically significant as this young sage attempts to vindicate God's justice. The term va-ya'an (וַיַּעַן), 'and he answered,' suggests Elihu responds to Job's previous arguments.

Elihu represents a fourth perspective beyond Job's protests, his three friends' retribution theology, and God's eventual answer. His speeches (chapters 32-37) receive no divine rebuke (unlike Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar in 42:7), suggesting partial theological validity. Yet God doesn't commend Elihu either, simply bypassing him to address Job directly. This transitional positioning makes Elihu's role debated—is he the book's hero or another inadequate counselor?

The verse's simplicity belies its importance: Elihu will emphasize God's transcendence (chapter 35), His use of suffering as discipline (chapter 36), and His sovereignty over creation (chapter 37), preparing for Yahweh's whirlwind theophany. His pedagogy—teaching through questions about creation—previews God's method in chapters 38-41.

Historical Context

Elihu appears suddenly in Job 32:2 after the three friends' failed arguments, identified as 'the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram.' Buz was Nahor's son (Genesis 22:21), making Elihu possibly Aramean. His youth (32:6-7)

contrasts with the elderly friends, representing a fresh generational perspective. The four-speech structure (chapters 32-37) surpasses the three friends' three-speech cycle, suggesting superior insight. Ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions valued both aged experience and youthful zeal, creating tension Elihu embodies.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we discern between partially helpful counsel and fully adequate theological answers?
2. What does Elihu's position—neither rebuked nor commended by God—teach about human attempts to explain divine ways?
3. When serving as counselors to the suffering, how can we avoid both the friends' error (false accusations) and Elihu's limitation (theological correctness without divine presence)?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעַן	אֱלִיהוּ	וַיֹּאמֶר:
spake	Elihu	moreover and said
H6030	H453	H559