

Job 35:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There they cry, but none giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

Analysis

There they cry, but none giveth answer (שָׁם יִצְעַקُו וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּחֲהָה, sham yitz'aqu velo ya'aneh)—The verb tsa'aq (צַעַק, "to cry out") indicates distress calls. The negative lo ya'aneh ("none answers") reflects divine silence. The phrase **because of the pride of evil men** (מִפְנֵי גָאוֹן רָעִים) gives the reason: ga'on (גָאוֹן, pride, arrogance) prevents God from answering. Elihu argues the wicked's prayers go unanswered due to pride, not divine indifference. This echoes Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

Unanswered prayer is theology's pastoral crisis. Elihu attributes it to pride. Yet Scripture reveals multiple reasons: hidden sin (Psalm 66:18), wrong motives (James 4:3), unforgiving spirit (Mark 11:25), or divine timing (Habakkuk 2:3). Sometimes God's silence is test, not rejection (Psalm 22:1-2). The gospel transforms prayer: Christ's intercession ensures access (Hebrews 4:16, 7:25). We pray not in our merit but in His name (John 14:13-14). Even when answers delay, we're assured of God's listening ear (1 Peter 3:12).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern religions featured capricious deities requiring appeasement. Israelite faith distinguished Yahweh as hearing righteous prayers (Psalm 34:15, 145:18-19) but resisting the proud (Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6). Temple liturgy emphasized proper approach to God. Prophets condemned external religiosity

without heart change (Isaiah 1:15, 58:3-9). Elihu's theology aligns with prophetic tradition: God requires humble, righteous prayer, not mere ritualistic crying out.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do we respond faithfully when prayers seem unanswered?
2. What role does humility play in effective prayer?
3. How does Christ's mediation ensure our prayers are heard even when answers are delayed?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֶּנֶה יְשִׁיבָתָה
H8033 There they cry H3808 but none giveth answer H6030 because H6440 of the pride
H6817 H1347

בְּעֵינֵם:
of evil men
H7451

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 1:28 (Parallel theme): Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

John 9:31 (Parallel theme): Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.