

Job 36:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Analysis

He openeth also their ear to discipline—The phrase יִגְלֶת אֶזְרָם (yigel oznam, "He opens their ear") depicts making the deaf hear—God removes spiritual deafness that prevents learning. The word מִסְרָר (musar, "discipline/instruction") appears 50 times in Proverbs, always denoting corrective teaching that shapes character. God's discipline isn't vindictive punishment but educational correction.

And commandeth that they return from iniquity uses יְאִמְרֶת (wayyomer, "He commands/says") with יְשֻׁבָּן מֵאָבֶן (yeshuvun me-aven, "they should return from iniquity"). The verb שׁוּב (shuv, "return/repent") is Scripture's primary repentance term—turning 180 degrees from sin toward God. Affliction's purpose is repentance: God opens deaf ears, reveals hidden sin (v.9), then commands turning away from evil. This three-step process—awareness, conviction, repentance—describes biblical conversion and ongoing sanctification.

Historical Context

Ancient pedagogy relied heavily on physical discipline (Proverbs 13:24, 23:13-14). Elihu applies this educational model theologically: God uses suffering as corrective discipline for spiritual formation. Unlike pagan concepts of arbitrary divine wrath, covenant theology presents suffering as purposeful education. This revolutionized understanding of adversity—not cosmic bad luck or divine caprice, but loving correction. The NT develops this fully in Hebrews 12:7-11, explaining that God disciplines all His children for their ultimate good.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What spiritual disciplines has God used to 'open your ear' to correction you previously couldn't hear?
2. How does understanding suffering as God's command to 'return from iniquity' change your perspective on current trials?
3. In what areas of your life might you be spiritually 'deaf' to God's discipline right now?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעֲשֶׂה	וְאֶת	אֶת	לִמְדָס	רְאֵת	וְאֶמְרֵת	וְיִשְׁבֶּה
He openeth	also	their	ear	to discipline	and commandeth	that they return
H1540	H241		H4148		H3588	H7725

: וְאֶת
from iniquity
H205

Additional Cross-References

Job 36:15 (Parallel theme): He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.

Matthew 3:8 (Parallel theme): Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Isaiah 48:17 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

Isaiah 50:5 (Parallel theme): The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

2 Kings 17:13 (Parallel theme): Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

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