

Job 36:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.

Analysis

Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee—The verb כָּתַר (kattar, "suffer/bear with") requests patience, literally meaning "surround" or "wait around." Elihu asks Job to endure one more speech. The phrase **I have yet to speak on God's behalf** uses לְאֱלֹהִים (le'eloah), emphasizing Elihu's role as theodicy's defender—one who vindicates God's justice against Job's complaints.

This verse reveals Elihu's theological boldness: he claims to speak FOR God, not merely ABOUT God. While presumptuous on the surface, chapters 32-37 receive no divine rebuke (unlike the three friends in 42:7), suggesting Elihu's theology, though incomplete, moves in the right direction. His assertion "I have yet to speak" implies the three friends left crucial aspects of God's character unexplained. Paul echoes this advocacy role in Romans 3:4-6, defending God's righteousness against human accusations.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern legal proceedings included advocates who spoke on behalf of absent parties. Elihu assumes this forensic role, acting as God's defense attorney in Job's lawsuit against divine justice. His request for patience reflects wisdom literature's emphasis on careful listening before speaking (Proverbs 18:13). The cultural context valued lengthy deliberation—truth emerged through extended dialogue, not quick answers. Elihu's youthful zeal contrasts with the friends' weary repetition, bringing fresh energy to the theological debate.

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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When have you needed to ask others to 'bear with you' while you explain a difficult theological truth?
2. What does it mean to speak 'on God's behalf' without claiming to speak AS God?
3. How can we balance theological boldness with humble recognition of our limited understanding?

Interlinear Text

סָפֹר	לִי	זְעִיר	וְאַתָּה בְּ	כִּי	עַד	לְאֵל וְ
Suffer	H0	me a little	and I will shew	H3588	H5750	on God's
H3803		H2191	H2331			H433

מְלִים:

thee that I have yet to speak
H4405

Additional Cross-References

Job 21:3 (Parallel theme): Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (References God): Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

