

Job 36:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.

Analysis

For truly my words shall not be false—Elihu guarantees truthfulness using בַּל־שֶׁקֶר (bal-sheker), a strong negation meaning "not lies/deception." This oath-like formula claims divine inspiration for his discourse. The phrase **he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee** uses תִּמִּימ דֵּעִים (temim de'im), literally "complete/perfect of knowledge."

Critical question: who is this "perfect in knowledge"? Three interpretations exist:

1. Elihu refers to himself with youthful arrogance
2. He speaks of God who observes this dialogue
3. He prophetically anticipates God's imminent appearance.

Context favors interpretation 2—Elihu claims God Himself validates this theological discourse, standing present though unseen. This foreshadows God's whirlwind speech (38:1). The phrase anticipates Colossians 2:3 where Christ embodies all wisdom's treasures, and James 1:5 where God gives wisdom generously to those who ask.

Historical Context

Wisdom literature prized perfect knowledge (דַּעַת, da'ah) as the highest intellectual achievement. Egyptian and Mesopotamian sages similarly claimed divine inspiration for their teachings. Elihu's claim to perfect knowledge seems audacious until God's speeches prove him partially correct—suffering does have pedagogical

purposes beyond retribution. Unlike the three friends whose theology God explicitly rejects (42:7), Elihu's speeches stand uncorrected, suggesting his insights, though incomplete, align more closely with divine truth.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How can we test whether our theological convictions are 'false words' or truth aligned with God's revelation?
2. What distinguishes confident proclamation of truth from presumptuous claims to 'perfect knowledge'?
3. How does recognizing God's presence in our discussions change how we speak about theology?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אֵלֶּיךָ	לֹא	יִשָּׁקֶר	מִלִּי	תָּמִיד	יָדַע
H3588	For truly	H3808	shall not be false	my words	he that is perfect	in knowledge
	H551		H8267	H4405	H8549	H1844

עֲמִירָה:
H5973

Additional Cross-References

Job 37:16 (Parallel theme): Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

1 Corinthians 14:20 (Parallel theme): Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

