

Job 6:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?

Analysis

Job accuses his friends of misinterpreting his words of despair as mere 'wind' (ruach, רוּחַ)—empty, meaningless utterance. The verb 'imagine' (chashab, חָשַׁב) means to devise or plan, suggesting his friends are deliberately constructing arguments against him rather than offering compassionate understanding. Job identifies himself as 'desperate' (ya'ash, יָאֵשׁ), one who has lost hope—a state that requires grace, not condemnation. This verse addresses a critical pastoral failure: treating the sufferer's anguished cries as theological errors to be corrected rather than as legitimate expressions of pain. Job's friends commit the error of prioritizing doctrinal precision over love, assuming that suffering always indicates specific sin. Reformed theology recognizes that while maintaining truth is essential, we must also exercise compassion toward those whose suffering produces temporary despair, as even Christ quoted Psalm 22:1 from the cross.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom literature valued careful, measured speech, making Job's 'desperate' words particularly scandalous to his friends. The cultural expectation was that the wise maintain composure even in adversity. Job challenges this expectation by arguing that extreme suffering produces extreme speech—not because truth has changed, but because human capacity has limits.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do we balance speaking truth to suffering believers while avoiding the cold legalism of Job's friends?
2. When has someone dismissed your honest struggles as 'just words,' and how did that affect your faith?
3. What does Christ's cry of dereliction teach us about expressing despair without losing faith?

Interlinear Text

חַלְהוֹכְךָ	מִלִּי יָם	תִּחַשׁ בּוֹ	וְלֹר וּמִ	אִמְרֵי י
to reprove	words	Do ye imagine	which are as wind	and the speeches
H3198	H4405	H2803	H7307	H561

נֶאֱשׁ:
of one that is desperate
H2976

Additional Cross-References

Job 8:2 (Word): How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

Ephesians 4:14 (Parallel theme): That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;