

Job 6:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in it.

Analysis

Job pleads 'Return' (shub, שׁוּב) twice—a call for repentance or change of direction, ironically reversing the expected relationship where the sinner should repent. Job demands his friends reconsider their position, warning 'let it not be iniquity' (avelah, עֲוֹלָה)—unrighteousness or injustice. This is bold: Job suggests that continuing their false accusations would itself be sin. The declaration 'my righteousness is in it' (tsedaqah, תְּצַדִּיק) asserts that Job's claim of innocence is itself a matter of righteousness—he has a moral obligation to maintain the truth about his relationship with God. This paradox challenges simplistic retribution theology: sometimes maintaining one's claim of innocence is more righteous than false confession. Reformed theology recognizes that while we are sinners who deserve judgment, there is also a legitimate righteousness that comes through faith and sanctification, which we must not deny to appear humble.

Historical Context

The call to 'return' echoes prophetic language where God calls Israel to repent and return to Him. Job's reversal of this formula—calling his friends to return to truth—would have been theologically shocking. In the ancient context, the sufferer was expected to confess and repent, not to call the prosperous to change their thinking.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When is it right to insist on our innocence rather than accepting false accusations for the sake of peace?
2. How do we distinguish between godly confidence in our standing before God and self-righteous pride?
3. What does Job's demand for his friends' repentance teach about holding fellow believers accountable for their counsel?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי	וְשָׁב בִּי
Return	H4994	H408	H1961	I pray you let it not be iniquity	Return	H5750	H7725
H7725				H5766	H7725		
צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי	צִדְקָתִי
my righteousness							
H6664							

Additional Cross-References

Job 17:10 (Parallel theme): But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you.