

Job 9:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.

Analysis

Job doubts God would answer his call: 'If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.' Even if God responded (anah, עֲתָה), Job couldn't trust it. The phrase 'would I not believe' (lo aamin, לֹא אָמַן) expresses radical doubt born from suffering. 'Hearkened' (azan, אָזַן) means to give ear or pay attention—Job doubts divine attentiveness despite hypothetical response.

Job's despair reaches depths where even divine communication seems untrustworthy. Suffering has so distorted his perception that God's voice would seem either illusion or mockery. This illustrates suffering's psychological toll—it damages not merely circumstance but the capacity to receive comfort. Job's integrity remains, but his hope erodes. He cannot imagine relief being genuine.

The gospel addresses this: Christ's resurrection provides objective proof of divine faithfulness beyond subjective feeling (1 Corinthians 15:17). Job needs not merely God's voice but tangible evidence of divine favor. He'll receive it in restoration (chapter 42), but first must encounter God in theophany (chapters 38-41). Sometimes God answers not with explanation but with presence.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern religions featured divine-human communication through dreams, visions, prophets, and oracles. Job's skepticism about divine response

even if received reflects how suffering undermines confidence in traditional means of divine-human interaction.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does prolonged suffering erode our capacity to receive comfort, even from God?
2. What objective evidences of God's faithfulness can sustain us when subjective feelings fail?
3. In what ways does Christ's resurrection provide the unshakable proof Job longed for?

Interlinear Text

אִם אָמַרְתִּי קָרָא לִפְנֵי נִיְמָנָה לֹא אָמַרְתִּי
H518 If I had called and he had answered H3808 me yet would I not believe H3588

H7121

H6030

H539

לִפְנֵי נִיְמָנָה

that he had hearkened unto my voice

H238

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