

Job 9:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?

Analysis

Job acknowledges asymmetrical power: 'If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?' Regarding 'strength' (koach, כָּחַ), Job admits God is mighty (ammits, עַמְּתָּא). Regarding 'judgment' (mishpat, מִשְׁפָּט), Job asks who can summon God to trial—'set me a time' (yoedeni, יְוָדֵנִי) means to appoint or designate a court date. Job cannot compel God's appearance in court; no bailiff can serve summons on the Almighty.

Job's legal metaphor intensifies: he wants trial but cannot enforce it. God cannot be subpoenaed, witnesses cannot be compelled, evidence cannot be forced. The defendant controls the court. Job's desire for legal resolution meets insurmountable barrier: God's sovereignty makes Him both party to dispute and sole authority over whether proceedings occur. This seems to preclude justice.

The gospel provides what Job seeks: a court where God Himself is judged. At Calvary, God in Christ stood trial before human judges and submitted to unjust verdict. The One who could not be summoned voluntarily appeared. The One who could not be judged willingly accepted judgment. Christ's trial vindicates divine justice while providing human justification.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern legal systems assumed rough parity between litigants—both could summon witnesses, both had access to judges, both operated under same

rules. Job's problem is radical asymmetry: when one party is infinitely more powerful and is also judge, how can justice occur? This anticipates Christ's voluntary submission to human jurisdiction.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's voluntary submission to human judgment address Job's complaint about asymmetrical power?
2. What does Job's legal imagery teach about the limits of human justice systems in addressing grievances against God?
3. In what ways does the gospel provide the fair trial Job desperately seeks?

Interlinear Text

מִן־לֹכֶד אָמַן הַיְהִי אָמֵן אָמֵן אָמֵן אָמֵן וְאָמֵן לְמִשְׁפָט תְּמִשְׁפָט

H518 If I speak of strength H3581 H533 H2009 H518 and if of judgment H4310 H4941

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who shall set

H3259

Additional Cross-References

Job 9:4 (Parallel theme): He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

1 Corinthians 1:25 (Parallel theme): Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Psalms 62:11 (Parallel theme): God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.

1 Corinthians 10:22 (Parallel theme): Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

Matthew 6:13 (Parallel theme): And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

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