

Job 9:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say,
I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Analysis

Job's self-aware statement 'If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me' reveals the impossibility of self-vindication. The mouth that speaks defense becomes the instrument of judgment - a profound recognition that human words ultimately fail before divine truth. Only God can vindicate.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom valued self-examination, but Job goes deeper by acknowledging that even self-knowledge is limited. The tongue's double nature (defense/condemnation) appears throughout Scripture (James 3:9-10).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When have your words of self-defense actually condemned you?
2. How does Christ's advocacy replace your need for self-justification?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| אֲדַקְּךָ H518 | אֶצְדִּיק H6663 | אֶפְיִי H6310 | וְרָשִׁיעַ נִי H7561 | תָּם H8535 |
| | If I justify | myself mine own mouth | shall condemn | me if I say I am perfect |
| נִי H589 | אֶ H6140 | וְיִטְעֶנָּה H6140 | | |
| | it shall also prove me | perverse | | |

Additional Cross-References

Job 34:35 (Parallel theme): Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.