

Job 9:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

Analysis

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Job articulates one of the Old Testament's most profound yearnings—for a mediator between God and humanity. The word "daysman" (mokiach, מוקִיכָה) means arbiter, umpire, or mediator—one who can adjudicate disputes between parties. Job recognizes the vast gulf between himself and God: he cannot argue his case before the Almighty as an equal.

"That might lay his hand upon us both" describes the mediator's function—touching both parties to bring reconciliation and establish terms. In ancient Near Eastern legal contexts, a mediator needed authority over both disputants to effect resolution. Job's lament recognizes that no such figure exists who can simultaneously represent human interests to God and divine justice to humanity. The Hebrew emphasizes this absence: "there is not" (eyn, יֹאָن)—no mediator exists.

This verse is profoundly Christological. Job's longing finds fulfillment in Christ, the one Mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5). Christ uniquely can "lay His hand" on both God and humanity because He is fully divine and fully human. As God incarnate, Christ bridges the infinite gap Job perceived, representing us before the Father and revealing the Father to us. Job's ancient cry anticipates the gospel's central message: God Himself has provided the mediator Job desperately needed but could not imagine.

Historical Context

Job 9 records Job's response to Bildad's first speech. Job acknowledges God's power and wisdom but questions how a mortal can be just before God (9:2). The cultural context of ancient Near Eastern law included mediators or arbiters who settled disputes between parties. However, disputes between humans and deities had no such mechanism—gods acted with absolute authority, and humans had no recourse.

This theological problem—the gap between holy God and sinful humanity—runs throughout Scripture. The Mosaic covenant provided priests as mediators, but even they could not fully bridge the divide (Hebrews 7:23-28). The sacrificial system pointed toward the need for ultimate mediation but could not itself provide it (Hebrews 10:1-4).

Early Christian interpretation immediately recognized Job's cry as prophetic of Christ. Church fathers like Augustine and Chrysostom saw this verse as expressing humanity's universal need for a Redeemer who could satisfy divine justice while showing mercy to sinners. The New Testament explicitly answers Job's longing: Christ is the mediator of a new covenant (Hebrews 8:6, 9:15, 12:24), the one who reconciles God and humanity through His death and resurrection.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

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. How does Job's recognition that no mediator exists reveal the impossibility of self-salvation or human merit before God?

2. In what ways does Christ fulfill Job's longing for a daysman who can 'lay his hand upon us both'?
3. What does Job's cry teach about the human condition—our need for someone to bridge the gap between us and God?
4. How does understanding Christ as Mediator deepen appreciation for the Incarnation and atonement?
5. What comfort does this passage provide to those who, like Job, feel unable to approach God due to His holiness and their unworthiness?

Interlinear Text

ל	א	יִש	בֵּין	יְנוּ	מִזְכָּר	יְמִן	בֵּין	יְנוּ	מִזְכָּר	יְמִן	תַּ
H3808	Neither is	H996	there any	daysman	betwixt us that	might lay	his hand				
	H3426			H3198			H7896				H3027
עַל	שְׁנַיּוֹן:										
H5921	upon us both	H8147									

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 2:25 (Parallel theme): If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

Job 9:19 (Parallel theme): If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?

Psalms 106:23 (Parallel theme): Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.