



DISCIPLE

Desire Determination Discipline Diligence Delight Doer

Course: A Survey of the Bible: Genesis to Revelation

Lesson: 20_11 - **Elihu Speaks**

Passage: Job 32-37

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

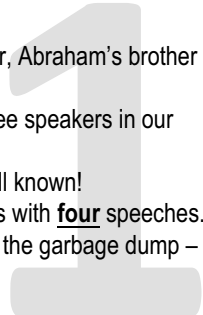
(Romans 15:4)

What Was Happening?

- Job's three friends stopped their arguments and were waiting for God's judgment to fall finally upon Job.
- Job had ended his complaining and challenged God to either vindicate him or pass sentence on him.
- **What happened? NOTHING!!! God was silent!!**
 - This has been seen as God's way of telling Job's friends that they were wrong, **and**
 - Telling Job (and us) that God does not drop what He is doing when a creature thinks its time to appear and do something.
 - **GOD IS SOVEREIGN.** This means that God does whatever He desires (Job 23:13; Psalm 115:3; 135:6; Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 14:24-27; 46:10; Daniel 4:35; Ephesians 1:9-11)
 - **GOD does not answer to man - man answers to God.** (Job 33:13; Romans 9:19-24)

Who Was Elihu? (32:1-5)

- What do Scripture say?
 - He was a "Buzite" – Buz was the second son of Nahor, Abraham's brother (Genesis 22:20-24)
 - Elihu's ancestry was very specific unlike the other three speakers in our book.
 - This has led some to think that Elihu was not well known!
 - **BUT** not unimportant since we have **six** chapters with **four** speeches.
 - From his speeches we learn that Elihu was there – at the garbage dump – from the beginning.



- We are told that Elihu's anger was kindled for two reasons:
 - ① **Job justified himself rather than God.** (God will say the same thing – Job 40:8 – we need to learn from this!
 - Whatever God does He is just! (Deuteronomy 32:4)
 - ② **Job's three friends because they had found no answer to Job's suffering and yet condemned him.**

Elihu Has Waited (32:6-9)

- Elihu has something to say – see vv. 17-20.
- Elihu, younger than the other three friends, has **waited** (vv. 6-9, 16). “Young” and “very old” speaks of difference between Elihu and the other four speakers.
 - Elihu waited for the older ones to speak **because** –
 - Older men (and women) **ought to teach** wisdom.
 - Older men and women are to be examples to the younger men and women. (Titus 2:1-5)
 - **BUT** great (older) men are not always wise nor do they always understand justice!
 - This is why we **test** everyone! (1 John 4:1; 1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11)
 - Consider God's challenge to Jeremiah in 5:1-5!
 - God gives understanding (1 John 5:20) and **hides** wisdom (Matt 11:25).

Elihu Has Listened (32:11-14)

- (v. 10) “opinion” is דַּעַתְּ dea` {day'-ah} and means “knowledge”. The key is **what is his knowledge based on!** (See Deuteronomy 4:6; Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; Ecclesiastes 12:13)
 - **WARNING:** See Romans 1:18-23 **then THEREFORE** – vv. **24-25, 26-27, 28-32.**
- (vv. 11-12) Elihu three times tells his listeners that **he has listened carefully.**
 - ① (v. 11) “I have **waited** for your words.” He listened carefully to hear wisdom – but did not hear it!
 - ② (v. 11) “I **listened** to your reasonings.” This is something that this generation is lacking. We don't demand reasons (proofs) for what is said in the media, in the universities, in church!!
 - ③ (v. 12) “I have **paid close attention** to you.” בִּינְךָ biyn {bene} means to discern with diligence.
- He found Job's three friends words **empty** – none of them answered Job's words!
- (vv. 13-14) Job had not addressed his words to Elihu, so he would not answer Job's words, but present a different solution.

Silence Opened Elihu's Door (Job 32:15-22)

- (vv. 15-16) Elihu sees an opportunity to speak when everyone else ceases to speak.
- (vv. 17-20) Elihu is ready to “burst open”. His spirit is compelling him to speak!
- (vv. 21-22) **BUT** Elihu showed concern for what he is about to do. He prays:
 - ① He does not want to show partiality to anyone. (Leviticus 19:15; Deut. 1:17; **16:19; Proverbs 24:2; Matt. 22:16**; James 2:1-10)
 - ② He does not want to use any flattery!
 - See Psalm 12:2-3; Proverbs 25:5; 1 Thess 2:4-6; Rom 16:18.
- Titles are **nothing** when compared with the **MOST HIGH HOLY GOD**. Think about it!! See Christ's words – **Matthew 23:8-12**.

Elihu, Just Like Job (Job 33:1-17)

- Now Elihu asks Job to listen to all of his words.
- (v. 3) Elihu assures Job that he speaks with an upright heart and sincerely.
- (vv. 4, 6) Elihu acknowledges that his life comes from God (see Acts 17:25, 28) and that, just like Job, he has been made from clay.
- ★ Elihu is making the point that he is just like Job and wants Job to listen to him as his equal. He is saying that he is a man before God just as Job.
- (v. 7) Elihu assures Job that he is not speaking to bring fear or pressure upon Job. He is striving to be fair.

Elihu's First Charge Against Job (Job 33:8-13)

- (v. 8) Elihu quotes Job's exact words. This gives evidence that Elihu has been at the discussions from the beginning.
- (v. 9) Elihu charges Job with his own words:
 - (9:21) “I am blameless.”
 - (13:18) “I know that I shall be vindicated.”
 - (23:10) “When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold”
 - (27:6) “My righteousness I hold fast, and I will not let it go.”
- (vv. 10-11) Job was charging God with **injustice**.
 - ★ “He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.” (Deuteronomy 32:4)
- (vv. 12-13) Elihu charges Job with unrighteousness!
 - ★ **LESSON:** Though Job spoke under extreme circumstances he is still without excuse.
 - We are **ignorant** of many of God ways (see Isaiah 55:10-11) and therefore **cannot** charge God with any wrong-doing or injustice.
 - God works to fulfill His purposes! We are part of those purposes.

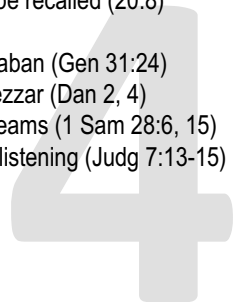
- God is more wise than we are. He sees things we do not see and understands things we do not understand. (Remember Job has no idea of what really is happening!)
- Elihu “defends” God - though God does not need *any* man to defend Him.
 - “God is greater than man.” – **MUCH GREATER!**
 - His greatest is unsearchable and therefore He should be greatly praised! (Psalm 145:3; 96:4; Romans 11:33)
- **“WHY DO YOU CONTENT WITH HIM?”** (Job 33:13)
 - Isaiah **WARNS** with a powerful **WOE** for anyone who strives or contends with the Almighty God. (Isaiah 45:9-11)
 - Paul **WARNS** the Romans about disputing with God. (Rom 9:19-21)
 - Nebuchadnezzar tells us that God does whatever He pleases and we cannot murmur by saying, “What are You doing?” (Daniel 4:35)
- **GOD DOES NOT GIVE AN ACCOUNTING OF ANY OF HIS WORDS!**
 - “words” here is דַּבָּר ^{דָּבָר} dabar {daw-baw} and can mean “matters”, “business”, “words”, “works”, “acts”, “speech”.
 - **To whom would God give an account??**
 - All creatures must give an account to their Creator – not the other way around!! (Hebrews 4:13)
 - Deuteronomy 29:29 – The **secret** things belong to God and the **revealed** things belong to us and our children to **obey**.
 - **Man’s duty is simple:** Fear God and keep His commandments! (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; 1 John 5:1-3)

God Speaks In Three Ways (Job 33:14-30)

- Elihu suggests that God speaks three ways:
 - ① Through different kinds of dreams (vv. 14-18)
 - ② Through chastening by suffering (vv. 19-22)
 - ③ Through messengers (vv. 23-28)

God Spoke Through Dreams (Job 33:14-18)

- Dreams can be frightening – (7:14; 4:12-17)
- Dreams can be transitory – here and then gone, not to be recalled (20:8)
- Dreams in the OT –
 - Abimelech (Gen 20:3, 6); Jacob (Gen 31:10,11); Laban (Gen 31:24)
 - Pharaoh’s baker and butler (Gen 40); Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2, 4)
 - Saul is upset that God does not speak to him in dreams (1 Sam 28:6, 15)
 - An enemy soldier tells of a dream when Gideon is listening (Judg 7:13-15)
- Dreams in the NT –
 - Joseph (Matthew 1:20; 2:12-13, 19, 22)
 - Pilate’s wife (Matthew 27:19)



- Five warnings about living according to dreams:
 - ① God **in the past** spoke to **some** in dreams. In Hebrews 1:1-2, the Holy Spirit tells us that in **these** days God has spoken by His Son.
 - ② 1 Thessalonians 5:21 tells us, “Test all things . . .” Dreams must be tested by the Word of God.
 - ③ God has given us His Word and this is sufficient.
 - ④ We dare not say that God would never again use dreams. God is **sovereign** and does whatever He pleases.
 - ⑤ We are **warned** about false **dreamers**. See Deut 13:1-5; Jude 8; **Jeremiah 23:25-32**; 27:9; 29:8
- (v. 16) In their dreams, God opens the ears of men (gives the ability to understand) and seals (affixes) their “instruction” – מוֹסֵר *mosar* {mo-sawr} – meaning “discipline”; “correction”.
- (vv. 17-18) **WHY?** To turn man from going his own way. To turn man from **his** purposes to **God’s** purposes. To turn man from destruction!
 - (v. 17) “Hide” is “to cover” man’s pride that **deceives** (Obadiah 3) and **leads to destruction** (Proverbs 16:18).

God Speaks through Chastening by Suffering (Job 33:19-22)

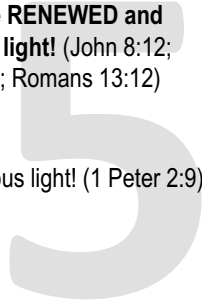
- God uses suffering to bring someone to the end of themselves.
- “destroyers” are probably **death** and **the grave** or “destroying angels” as in 2 Samuel 24:16; 2 Kings 19:35; Psalm 78:49.
- God caused Paul to continually have a “**thorn in his side**” to keep Paul from pride. (2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

God Speaks through Messengers (Job 33:23-28)

- (v. 23) “angel” מַלְאָכִים *mal'ak* {mal-awk'} is also the word for “messenger”.
- The purpose of the messenger (whether angelic or human) was to “deliver him from going down to the pit.”
- (v. 24) **God** had found a **ransom!** A ransom was needed to **redeem**. The ransom had to be acceptable to God. Man cannot redeem himself. (Psalm 49:5-8, 15). **GOD provided a ransom for us – HIS SON!**
- (vv. 25-28) **The redeemed SAY SO!! The redeemed are RENEWED and SING PRAISES to GOD! The redeemed walk in the light!** (John 8:12; 12:35; Ephesians 5:8; 1 John 1:7; 2:9-10; Psalm 89:15; Romans 13:12)

Why? (Job 33:29-30)

- To bring man back from falling into the pit into His marvelous light! (1 Peter 2:9)



Elihu Speaks to the Wise Present (Job 34:1-4)

- (v. 3) We have been given ears to test words.
 - Since we live in the age when many will be and are deceived (Matthew 24:4, 5, 10-11, 24; 7:21-23) we must test everyone and everything.
 - We are commanded to test. (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22; Isaiah 8:20; Acts 17:11; Romans 12:2; 1 John 4:1; Jude 3-4; Revelation 2:2)
- (v. 4) We are to choose what is just (true) and good in God's sight – **NOT the world's or our own understanding.** (See Proverbs 3:5-7; 28:26)
- Elihu wanted to get to the bottom of Job's problem by "arriving at a knowledge that was right and good from God's point of view."

Elihu Charges Job with Irreverence (Job 34:5-9)

- Again Elihu uses Job's own words against him.
- Job had charged God with being unfair when in 27:2 he accuses God of "taking away my justice." – Job was charging God with injustice. Also see Job 9:22-24.

Elihu Defends God's Actions (Job 34:10-15)

- (v. 10) "men of understanding" is literally "men of heart" showing that in many cases both in Hebrew and Greek "the heart" is connected to the "mind" and "understanding" more than it is connected to "emotions".
- When we set our minds to understanding (through the study of the revealed words of God) we learn that God does not do wickedness or iniquity.
 - Since God is not under any law He cannot transgress a law!
- Others have echoed Elihu's words:
 - Abraham (Genesis 18:25)
 - Moses (Deuteronomy 32:4)
 - Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 19:7)
- (v. 11) The concept of a just God rendering unto man according to his works is taught in the Old and New Testaments – see Psalm 62:12; Proverbs 24:12; Jeremiah 32:19; Ezekiel 33:17-20; Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:6; 2 Cor 5:10; 1 Peter 1:17; Revelation 22:12.
- (v. 12) God never perverts justice. (Deuteronomy 32:4) **IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!**
- (v. 13) God is sovereign over the earth – the whole world (universe).
 - The heaven and the highest of heavens, as well as the earth and all that is in it belongs to the LORD because He is their Creator. (Deut 10:14)
- (vv. 14-15) If God chooses He could recall His spirit and breath and all creation would immediately die and cease to exist!

God Is Impartial (Job 34:16-20)

- (v. 17) Elihu was accusing Job of calling (implying) that God was a **hater** of justice!
- (v. 17) Job had no right to condemn God who was absolutely righteous and mighty!
- (vv. 18-19) There is no partiality in God! (See Deuteronomy 10:17; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Col 3:25; 1 Peter 1:17)
- As **imitators** of God (Ephesians 5:1) we, too, are not to show impartiality (see Proverbs 24:33; 28:21; 1 Timothy 5:21; **James 2:9**)
- (v. 20) Elihu says that the great and mighty in vv. 18-19 have no special power or exceptions before God.

God Knows Everything (Job 34:21-30)

- (vv. 21-22) God is just because He knows and sees everything!
- See Psalm 34:15; Proverbs 5:21; 15:3; Jeremiah 16:17; 17:10; 32:19; Amos 9:8; Hebrews 4:13
- (v. 23) God does not need to “consider” a man because He already **knows** that man’s thoughts, words, and deeds.
- (vv. 24-25) God takes one man down and places another in His place – see Daniel 2:21.
- (vv. 26-28) God judges because men **turn from following Him**. “**What does the LORD God require . . . ?**” See Deuteronomy 10:12-14.
- (vv. 29-30) If God hides His face, who then can behold Him? – The opposite of this we find in the priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24-26.

Elihu Accuses Job of Speaking without Knowledge (Job 34:31-37)

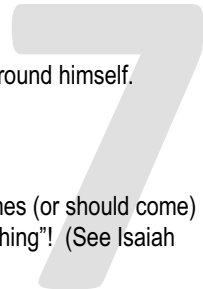
- God condemns Job for the very same thing – see Job 38:2!
- (v. 33) Is God required to come to us on our terms or do we come to God on His terms?
- When we are without knowledge we ought to **keep silent!**

Elihu Uses Job’s Words Against Him (Job 35:1-3)

- What we say is important!
- READ carefully Matthew 12:34-37.
- Elihu is quoting Job from 21:13-15 and 34:9.
- The Psalmist, Asaph, **felt** the same way when he looked around himself. (Psalm 73:13)

Elihu Reminds Us Who We Really Are (Job 35:4-8)

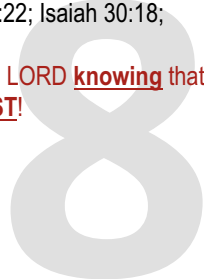
- When one meditates on the HEAVENS (universe) one comes (or should come) to a realization that we here on earth are “less than nothing”! (See Isaiah 40:15, 17, 26)



- God's thoughts and ways are much HIGHER than ours! (Isaiah 55:8-9)
- God's judgment, wisdom, knowledge, and greatness are all unsearchable. (Isaiah 40:28; romans 11:33; Psalm 145:3)
- Since GOD is NOT like us (Psalm 50:21; Numbers 23:19; Isaiah 40:18). He is incomparable to anyone or anything.
- (vv. 6-8) TRULY, what do we add or take away from GOD!
 - God gives us commandments **for our good!** (Deuteronomy 10:13; 6:24)
 - When we have done all that we are suppose to do (perfectly) we have only done our duty (a moral or legal obligation). (Luke 17:9-10)
 - Our sin does not hurt God – it hurts us and others.

What About the Cry of the Afflicted? (Job 35:9-14)

- Again Elihu is using Job's words against him. See Job 24:12; 30:20.
- Why are the cries of the afflicted not answered by God?
 - Jeremiah 14:12; Ezekiel 8:18; Micah 3:5; Zechariah 7:13
 - (vv. 10-12) Elihu suggests that a majority of people do not acknowledge their **Maker!**
 - God **promises not** to answer **foolish** people. (Proverbs 1:27-33; Jeremiah 11:11)
 - When affliction comes we must approach God with humility! (James 4:6-10)
 - Some ask for deliverance for the wrong reasons. (James 4:3)
 - God resists the PROUD. Pride will deliver many into hell!
- (v. 13) The **ALMIGHTY** who knows "**every intent of the thoughts of man's heart**" (Genesis 6:5) will **not** listen to vain, empty words.
 - God listens to **heart** worship not **lip** worship. (Isaiah 29:13; Matt 15:7-9)
 - God will not listen to those who do not listen to Him. (Ezekiel 33:31-33)
 - God will not listen to those who have already made up their minds to do as they please. (Jeremiah 42:1-4, 20)
 - God does not listen to **deceitful** lips. (Psalm 17:1)
 - God listens to those who call upon Him **in truth**. (Psalm 145:18)
- (v. 14) Justice is always before the LORD – though we might not see it.
 - Consider the Prophet Habakkuk – 1:1-4
 - Habakkuk is taught that he must wait on the LORD. See 3:17-19.
 - **WAIT!** (Psalm 27:14; 37:7, 9, 34; 130:5; Proverbs 20:22; Isaiah 30:18; 40:31; Lamentations 3:25-26; Micah 7:7)
 - In the midst of our affliction we must **wait** on the LORD **knowing** that He knows what He is doing! We must **TRUST!**



Elihu's Next Charge (Job:35:15-16)

- (v. 15) Because God has been **patient** He is accused of being unjust!
- (v. 16) **THEREFORE** . . .
 - Job opens his mouth **in vain**!
 - Job's words, though intelligent sounding to us and others, were, in fact, words without knowledge!

Elihu Defends God (Job 36:1-12)

- GOD is **RIGHTEOUS** (period!!).
 - Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 11:7; 145:17
 - God is the CREATOR and therefore, whatever He decides and does is **RIGHTEOUS!**
 - It is absolutely ridiculous for a creator to call his/her Creator guilty of wrong-doing.
- **THIS IS ONE OF THE VERY BIG LESSONS GOD WANTS US TO LEARN IN THE BOOK OF JOB.**
- (v. 5) GOD is **MIGHTY**. He is **ALLmighty**. **AND** . . .
- (v. 6) GOD is mighty in "heart" – "understanding". See Psalm 145:5.
 - Job, as well as his two friends and along with others in Scriptures have been bothered and even confused on what God is doing with the wicked and what happens to the righteous.
 - GOD is **RIGHTEOUS** in all of His ways. God has more information than we and He knows His purpose for each and every person.

Elihu Warns Job (Job 36:13-21)

- Elihu speaks of **hypocrites** storing up wrath – see Romans 2:5-7.
- (v. 17) Elihu accuses Job of being **filled** judgment due the wicked. He is accusing Job of being preoccupied with the judgment of others.
 - Judgment belongs to God and it is God's business.
 - Obedience and praise is **our** business.
- (vv. 18-19) Elihu reminds Job to **fear** GOD!

Elihu Reminds Job of the Greatness of God (Job 36:22-33)

- **BECAUSE** God is great, exalted by His power, is taught by no man (Romans 11:34).
- No one **can** say, "You are wrong!"
- Our job is to **exalt** and **magnify** His work. (Psalm 34:3; 72:18; 86:8-10; 104:24; **111:2-4**; 145:10-12)
- **GOD IS GREAT** (vv. 26-33).
 - He controls the rain and the watering of the earth.
 - He moves and controls the cloud.



- Light, thunder, food, lightning are all under the control of His hand.
- He commands where lightning strikes!! **MEDITATE!**

God Is Great (continued) (Job 37:1-18)

- (v. 1) Elihu **trembles** at thoughts of God! (Psalm 89:17; 99:1; 119:120; Philippians 2:12; Jeremiah 5:22; Habakkuk 3:16;)
- (v. 5) God does great things which we cannot be comprehend.
- (vv. 6-11) God commands the snow, gentle rain, heavy rain, ice, clouds, etc.
- (v. 12) Weather is under the absolute control of God.
 - Psalm 148:8 – Fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word! (See Psalm 107:25-29; Exodus 10:13, 19; 14:21; Amos 4:13; Jonah 1:4; Matthew 8:24-27)
- (v. 13) Why does God control weather?
 - ① For correction (discipline).
 - ② For His land (His earth).
 - ③ For mercy.

Remember Who God Is (Job 37:19-24)

- THINK about a mere man speaking to the **ALMIGHTY** God!
- God is **awesome** in majesty, power, judgment, justice!
- All men need to **FEAR** God. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

And the Words of Elihu Ended