

Job Chapter 34

- We were introduced to Elihu in chapter 32, a younger man who had listened to the discussion between Job and his comforters who, waiting for an opportunity to interject has begun to do so.
- He's angry with both Job and his comforters and is seeking to correct both. In so doing he's introduced the idea that the things that have befallen Job are not necessarily intended to be punitive as much as they might be preventative or instructive in some way. The chastening of the Lord as opposed to His judgment.
- Generally there is certainly merit to this idea as God would seek to work in all of our lives, specifically whether this applies to Job is debatable only because God is the one who indicated that Job is basically a good man.
- Another option which neither Job, his comforters, nor Elihu have considered or stated is that God would simply use these circumstances to bring glory to Himself as He is again victorious over Satan through the witness of His servant.
- Given what is presently taking place in our world today with the persecution of the Christian Church in various parts of the world and the many believers who are suffering through incredible affliction because of their faith in Christ, and their profession that Jesus is Lord; it isn't farfetched at all.
- We should be constantly **praying** for the persecuted church.

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- In his book The Knowledge of the Holy by A.W. Tozer he states "*The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.*"
 - So whoever attempts to explain and defend the Almighty must have the humble heart of a worshiper; for knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

1 Corinthians 8:1 "... Knowledge puffeth up, but charity / love edifieth."

- As we read through Elihu's speeches we get the impression that he was not growing as much as he was swelling.
- We also see that his listener's minds must have been wandering because he gives the continual exhortation to "listen", "hearken", and or pay attention.

V: 1-4 Elihu continues, and specifically addresses Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, referring to them as "wise men" that have knowledge. (Flattery...)

- Having knowledge is not the same as having wisdom. Wisdom is the proper application of knowledge.

“³For the ear trieth / tests words, as the mouth tasteth meat.”

- Just as we can discern between salty, sweet, and bitter - we can and should discern what we hear, if we're listening.

Psalm 119:103 "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

- Elihu is flattering himself, saying taste his words, savor his wisdom.
- ⁴Let's discern what is right and figure out what is good: "lets consider these things..."

V: 5-8 Job has maintained his righteousness and said that God has taken away his judgment, not been just. - "Should I lie against my right?"

- If job admitted to sin or un-righteousness, then that would be a lie, then he would indeed be guilty of sin and transgression.

Testimony: Sgt. Marvin O'Leary "... if any of you idiots wants to stand up and tell me that you've never smoked weed before, or even tried drugs - then stand up so I can call you a liar and throw your butt out of here...!"

- ^{6b}Even though I'm guiltless I am being wounded, unfairly, unjustly - this is Elihu's perspective on Job's statements.
- ⁷"Who is like Job, you have scorned him severely and it hasn't affected him, he's just swallowing it down, drinking it like water with no effect." Like water off a duck's back!
- ⁸Job has been hanging out with some very unsavory characters and has become like them.

1 Corinthians 15:33 "Be not deceived: evil communications / company corrupt good manners / habits."

- Elihu asserts "you've made some very serious charges - and he is unchanged."

V: 9-10 For Job has said "it doesn't do any good to serve God..." Now Job didn't actually say that, this is Elihu's perspective on what Job said - which isn't accurate, and it isn't true. There is great benefit in serving God!

Describing the Word of God:

Psalm 19:11 “Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”

Psalm 37:4 “Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”

Job was describing the wicked when he said:

Job 21:15 “What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?”

- Elihu is building a straw man at this point then knocking him down. Job is in pain and distress and Elihu is quoting him inaccurately and out of context. Putting words in his mouth, then rebuking him for what he said.
- “*Therefore...*” because of these things listen to me, God would never do what Job is saying, He would never commit iniquity...”
- Elihu’s argument or defense of God is essentially that if God is unjust then He is not God.
- That is true, God doesn’t commit iniquity - but that’s not what Job was saying.

V: 11-12 Elihu states that God gives man what he deserves he is just, He is righteous. There is no way to escape the justice of God.

Galatians 6:7-8 “⁷Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁸For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Revelation 22:12 “And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

- God doesn’t pervert judgment, He judges righteously. Elihu affirms what we would affirm.
- Elihu emphasized the justice of God, His righteousness, but he made the mistake of omitting the love of God, the mercy of God, and the grace of God.
- God in His infinite wisdom devised a plan of redemption for mankind that not only satisfied His perfect righteousness, but also demonstrated His love, His mercy, and His grace - we refer to it as the Gospel which was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
- It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice.

V: 13-15 Who put God in charge? This is a rhetorical question asking who is over God? The simple understanding is that because God created it, He is in charge of it. He owns it, even if it's temporarily under the poor management of the usurper, the "prince of this world."

- If God withdrew Himself from mankind, all flesh would perish - return to dust. True enough.

Colossians 1:16-17 "16For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: 17And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

- God is the glue that holds our universe together, if He lets go then it all falls apart!

Daniel, rebuking Bel-Shazzar:

Daniel 5:23 "... the God in whose hand thy breath is..."

- God holds our breath, our heart beat in His hands - if He were to withdraw that...

Lamentations 3:22 "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not."

V: 16-20 "If you're smart, if you have understanding... then you had better listen..."

- Apart from God there is no just government, if God is unjust then there will be no justice. Job had been a respected elder who no doubt sat in the gates of the city helping to bring justice to the afflicted - now he's being accused of condemning the most just, God.
- Elihu is saying that Job is being hateful towards God, that he is condemning God.
- Elihu asks rhetorically: would you challenge an earthly king? The obvious answer is "no" you wouldn't dare, it would lead to your own death.
- How much less so, then should we challenge or insult God in this way!
- ²⁰In a moment they are taken away, killed, "without hand" - without the hand of men, meaning God takes them away, destroys them.

Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand."

V: 21-22 God sees and knows everything, there are no secrets with the Almighty.

Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”

Psalm 147:5 “Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite.”

- There is no place to hide from God, all things are known unto Him.

V: 23-28 God is fair, He is just.

- God sets men up, He takes them down, He does so in front of others.

Psalm 75:6-7 “⁶For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. ⁷But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another.”

- Those who turn their back on God, turn away from him, nor consider His ways bring destruction upon themselves.

Jeremiah 2:13 “For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

- Those that have used their position or authority to subjugate others will be dealt with, God listens to the cry of the poor and the oppressed.

V: 29-32 Job had complained that God was silent, not speaking. Elihu declares when God is silent, who can condemn Him, or criticize Him? If He doesn't reveal Himself no one really knows? The same is true of nations and individuals.

- Job had accused God of ignoring men's sins; but what right had he to judge the Judge?
- God waited four centuries before judging the wicked nations in Canaan, and 120 years before sending the flood.
- Sinners should be grateful, we should be grateful that God give them / us time to repent.

2 Peter 3:9 “For God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

- It is proper to confess to God “I've learned my lesson, I won't sin any more...”

- Help me see what I haven't been able to see. (Prayer)

Psalm 119:18 “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

V: 32b Describing repentance:

Ephesians 4:28 “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

V: 33 Elihu is asking Job “Should God order things according to your understanding of things?” That's probably a question that God asks us on a frequent basis!

- He's basically encouraging Job to confess his sins - it's his choice - whether you refuse to come clean or not - God knows. Therefore speak what you already know.

V: 34-37 Elihu gets more personal and direct - Job has spoken foolishly, without wisdom.

- Elihu has forgotten his promise to Job: he said that he wasn't going to take the same tact, his hand wouldn't be heavy upon him - but now he's resorted to the same conclusions as the others.
- Job needs to be punished! Tried to the end, taught a lesson! Job has added sin unto rebellion and spoken against God.
- Elihu seems to be losing it a little...
- Elihu is missing the mark when it comes to Job - but without knowing it he's hitting it accurately when it comes to mankind.
- We all deserve the judgment of God; His justice and righteousness demand that sin be judged - all men are sinners, the wages of sin is death - a judgment that we all deserve.
- God is more than “just” and “righteous” - He is merciful, He is gracious, He is forgiving, and above all He is love! That is why He sent His Son to die on a cross in our place to take our sins upon Himself and pay our price, the redemption price for each one of us!