

Elihu Confronts Job

Chapter Thirty-Three

Job 33:1-7

“But now, hear my speech, O Job, and listen to all my words. Behold, open my mouth; the tongue in my mouth speaks. My words declare the uprightness of my heart, and what my lips know they speak sincerely. The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. Answer me, if you can; set your words in order before me; take your stand. Behold, I am toward God as you are; I too was pinched off from a piece of clay. Behold, no fear of me need terrify you; my pressure will not be heavy upon you.”

Made By God

- Elihu began his speech by addressing Job directly **hear my speech, O Job.**
- He desired for Job to recognize that both of them were **pinched off from a piece of clay** and molded from the same source by the **Spirit of God...and the breath of the Almighty gives life.**
- Although Elihu was young, wordy, and little bit sure of himself as most young people can be he demonstrated a deep and keen insight into the purpose of suffering.

- Job's three friends believed people suffered because sin in their lives and we know that was not the case with Job who sinned during his suffering yet did not sin to cause his suffering.
- Elihu introduces a new argument for suffering: God causes suffering to keep people from sinning. Therefore, suffering is protection against sin not punishment for sinning.
- Paul's testified that "a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited."-2 Corinthians 12:2

- God in His amazing grace will do whatever He can to deliver man and “**bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be lighted with the light of life.**”-Job 33:30
- Elihu had the awareness of God’s grace in the midst of suffering and Job’s friends did not speak correctly about God by eliminating His grace from their words.
- "Elihu did, however, perceive the significance of the all-important principle of God's free grace, which the others had slighted." -Kline, Meredith

Contrasting Views Of Suffering

Job's Three Friends	Elihu
Job was suffering because of sin.	Job sinned as he suffered.
Job's suffering was God's retribution.	God protected Job as he suffered.
Job's suffering was God's punishment	God was teaching Job as he suffered.
Job's suffering would end if he repented.	Job should learn what God was teaching as he suffered.
Job should seek to restore his relationship with God.	God was always near Job during his suffering and He already begun to restore Job.

Job 33:8-11

“Surely you have spoken in my ears, and I have heard the sound of your words. You say, ‘I am pure, without transgression; I am clean, and there is no iniquity in me. Behold, he finds occasions against me, he counts me as his enemy, he puts my feet in the stocks and watches all my paths.”

Elihu hadn't Listened

- Elihu said that he heard the **sound of Job's words** who stated, '**I am pure, without transgression; I am clean, and there is no iniquity in me.**'
- Job had argued with intensity for his righteousness based upon the good deeds that he had done in his defense of being a godly and upright man but he had never said that he was without sin or **without transgression.**
- "We need to ask, therefore, whether Elihu is fair. To some extent, he is. Job has repeatedly claimed to be *clean* and *pure*, whatever the words he used... But, side by side with this, Job has often admitted to being a sinner." -Andersen, Francis

Job Complained

- Elihu said that Job had complained against God, Who **finds occasions against** him and puts his **feet in the stocks** as He stands back and **watches all my paths**.
- Job did complain during the process of his suffering which he recognizes later and confesses his sin to God (Job 42:3).
- Elihu was not so concerned with what Job said about himself as he was to how Job spoke about God.

Job 33:12-18

“Behold, in this you are not right. I will answer you, for God is greater than man. Why do you contend against him, saying, ‘He will answer none of man’s words’? For God speaks in one way, and in two, though man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds, then he opens the ears of men and terrifies them with warnings, that he may turn man aside from his deed and conceal pride from a man; he keeps back his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword.”

God Has Answered Job

- Elihu says the way that Job had spoken about God was **not right** when Job lamented that **He will answer none of man's words**.
- Elihu contended that God had answered Job but Job may not have **perceived it**.
- Elihu said that God speaks to man three different ways: In a dream or a vision (vs. 12-18), in suffering (vs. 19-22), in the ministry of an angel (vs.23-33).

Dreams And Visions

- We know that God speaks to man in dreams and visions like he did with Nebuchadnezzar and others throughout the Scripture.
- “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams...”-**Acts 2:17**
- “for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”-**Daniel 1:17**
- “We must recognize that since we have the completed Bible, we do not need to trust any dream that we have had. However, way out on the frontier where the gospel has not gone, I think you will find that God still uses this method.”-**McGee, J. Vernon**

Job 33:19-28

“Man is also rebuked with pain on his bed and with continual strife in his bones, so that his life loathes bread, and his appetite the choicest food. His flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out. His soul draws near the pit, and his life to those who bring death. If there be for him an angel, a mediator, one of the thousand, to declare to man what is right for him, and he is merciful to him, and says,

‘Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom; let his flesh become fresh with youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor’; then man prays to God, and he accepts him; he sees his face with a shout of joy, and he restores to man his righteousness. He sings before men and says: ‘I sinned and perverted what was right, and it was not repaid to me. He has redeemed my soul from going down into the pit, and my life shall look upon the light.’”

God Speaks In Suffering

- God spoke to Job in a dream and now, according to Elihu, God spoke to Job in his suffering in order to save his soul from death.
- “Here the main contention of his argument took shape. It is that through suffering God is dealing with men to some higher issue. According to this argument, suffering is educational.”- Morgan, G. Cambell
- The book of Hebrews tells that Jesus, “Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.”-**Hebrews 5:8**
- If suffering was good enough to teach the Son of God, then as believers, we must perceive it as a tool of instruction in our life.

- "**People need adversity**, setback and perhaps even trauma to reach the highest levels of strength, fulfillment and personal development." ... Second, trauma opens people's hearts and minds to one another, and relationships are strengthened as a result."-Haidt, Jonathan, Psychologist
- Personal development it is not the goal of a believer. The goal of a believer is to glorify God and love Him for who is regardless of His benefits.
- If personal development is the goal then we dethrone God in our heart and we will become frustrated, critical, and cynical when things don't go our way or the way we think things should go to satisfy our immediate needs.

- “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”-**2 Corinthians 3:18**
- “It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.”-**Psalms 119:71**
- As we endure suffering beholding the glory of God we are being transformed into image of Jesus and we are learning and growing in grace.

- The word “beholding” means more than a casual look; it means to make a careful study , to look closely, to focus attention upon.
- “For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. ”-2 Corinthians 1:8-10

A Messenger From God

- God had spoken to Job through a mediator of some sort but Job didn't receive it.
- On **mediator** in Job 33:23: “Or *interpreter*: *i.e.*, one who can interpret and reveal the truth concerning God and His ways.”-Bullinger, E.W.
- Job did not perceive that God was protecting him through an angel who **delivers** and **ransoms** from going down into the **pit**.

- This messenger was according Elihu **one of the thousand**, and he appears in order to plead Job's case.
- The ministry of this angel was twofold: he declares to Job what is right for him to do and he intercedes for Job's restoration.
- “It seems likely that this interceding angel is the Angel of the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator who gave His life as a ransom for sinners (1 Timothy 2:5;Mark 10:45).”-Wiersbe, Warren

Elihu Knows God

- Elihu said some pretty awesome things about God here in this passage of Scripture:
 - God is a **deliverer** from the pit. (33:22;24)
 - God brings **life** from death. (33:22)
 - God is **merciful**. (33:24)
 - God is a God of **restoration**. (33:26)
 - God is a **redeemer**. (33:28)
- Listening is an important lesson we get from Elihu's speech. Sometimes we can become dull of hearing to the Holy Spirit during times of suffering. If we can take the time to Stop and Listen we may hear the Spirit speaking to us during difficult times.

Job 33:29-33

“Behold, God does all these things, twice, three times, with a man, to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be lighted with the light of life. Pay attention, O Job, listen to me; be silent, and I will speak. If you have any words, answer me; speak, for I desire to justify you. If not, listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.”

God Was Patient With Job

- Elihu wanted Job to understand that God had been patient with Job **to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be lighted with the light of life.**
- Elihu asked Job to **listen** and be **silent** in order that he could **teach you wisdom.**
- The Lord says in **Isaiah 55:2-3**, “**Listen** diligently to Me... **incline** your ear, and come to Me; hear, that your soul may live...”.
- It takes practice and time to learn to “listen diligently” but the reward is life.