

Elihu Continues His
Speech
Chapter Thirty-Six

Job 36:1-4

“And Elihu continued, and said: “Bear with me a little, and I will show you, for I have yet something to say on God’s behalf. I will get my knowledge from afar and ascribe righteousness to my Maker. For truly my words are not false; one who is perfect in knowledge is with you.”

Elihu Speaks For God

- Elihu told Job that he was speaking on **God's Behalf**.
- Elihu believed that his knowledge came from God Himself Who is **perfect in knowledge**.
- "It is certainly unlikely Elihu would claim for himself the same perfection he attributes to God." Smick, Elmer
- E.W. Bullinger observed, "From Job 37:16, it is clear that God is meant, and not the speaker."
- "Do you know the balancing of the clouds, the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge,"-**Job 37:16**

- In Job's theology God blesses the righteous and brings judgment and hardship upon the wicked.
- This was why Job was conflicted to the core of his soul because he could not identify a specific sin he had committed to warrant suffering.
- Job believed himself to be innocent and righteous and by doing so condemned God since God was unjust to bring upon Job his trial.

- Elihu said he would **ascribe righteousness to my Maker.**
- Elihu defended the righteousness of God Who brings affliction to both the righteous and wicked in order to teach a lesson.
- **The righteous will learn from God and glorify Him but the wicked will despise God.**
- "In his defense of the righteousness of God, Elihu now develops his thought on the disciplinary meaning of suffering. God is great, but he does not despise men. The incorrigibly wicked he does not preserve, but in mercy he afflicts the righteous that they may be cleansed of all sin and pride."-Rowley, H.H.

Job 36:5-12

“Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise any; he is mighty in strength of understanding.

He does not keep the wicked alive, but gives the afflicted their right. He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous, but with kings on the throne he sets them forever, and they are exalted.

And if they are bound in chains and caught in the cords of affliction, then he declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly. He opens their ears to instruction and commands that they return from iniquity. If they listen and serve him, they complete their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasantness. But if they do not listen, they perish by the sword and die without knowledge.”

Behold

- Elihu said, "**Behold**" four times in this chapter (vv. 5, 22, 26, 30).
- In each case he then said something very valuable about the nature of God.
- After his statement concerning God's character he attempted to apply that truth.
- The word "**behold**" means more than a casual look; it means to make a careful study , to look closely, to focus attention upon.

God is Mighty

- The first thing that Job was to focus his attention upon was the fact that **God is mighty**.
- God is mighty but He is also merciful to all people and He **does not despise any**.
- God is also **mighty in strength of understanding**.
- God is mighty and powerful but in all of His greatness He understands that man is weak and feeble and thus deals with man in gentleness and in kindness.

- “But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”-**Psalm 86:15**
- “It is because God is so great that He despises none. If He were less than infinite, He might overlook.”- Meyer, F.B.
- The word for “understanding” conveys the idea of wisdom that comes from the heart.
- God is mighty and from His heart He gives wisdom to Instruct those under affliction if they are listening.

Two Possible Responses

- Elhiu said that God **opens their ears to instruction** but the big question is are we listening.
- There is only two possible responses to the **instruction** that comes from God: To listen or not to listen.
- If a person listens he will serve God but if they refuse to listen **they perish by the sword and die without knowledge.**
- The Lord does not withdraw His eyes from the path of the righteous in order to see if they will act arrogantly or with humility towards Him.

Job 36:13-15

“The godless in heart cherish anger; they do not cry for help when he binds them. They die in youth, and their life ends among the cult prostitutes. He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.”

The Fate Of The Godless

- The godless person lives his life in anger towards God because of the affliction.
- God tests our faith to demonstrate our short comings in order that we might grow deeper in our knowledge of His grace.
- The godless become angry at God when in reality they should be praising Him for His grace and mercy.
- “The foolishness of man ruins his way, and his heart rages against the Lord.” –**Proverbs 19:3**

- In his rage He refuses to pray and **cry out** to God Who alone can deliver him.
- It is easier to blame God through adversity rather than humble ourselves and listen to what God teaches during the trial.
- All believers will be sooner or later be brought to a **crisis of faith** which will exhaust every human resource available to him.
- It is this crisis that teaches us to truly trust upon the Lord.
- If we base our lives upon God's Word we will be able to stand in the midst of the test, but **if we rely upon what we see or what we understand we will falter and move deeper into the abyss of darkness created by our own lack of trust.**

- The godless refuse to seek God during the affliction but instead are driven away from God because of their lack of trust.
- If a person refuses to seek God they turn to other avenues for the answer which results in death.
- “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”-**Proverbs 14:12**
- The only way to understand our affliction is if **open our ears** to the voice of God speaking to us in the midst of the adversity.
- “The physical illness produced within me a wellness of joy”-Murray Harmon

Job 36:16-21

“He also allured you out of distress into a broad place where there was no cramping, and what was set on your table was full of fatness. But you are full of the judgment on the wicked; judgment and justice seize you. Beware lest wrath entice you into scoffing, and let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside. Will your cry for help avail to keep you from distress, or all the force of your strength? Do not long for the night, when peoples vanish in their place. Take care; do not turn to iniquity, for this you have chosen rather than affliction.”

Job Did Not Turn To God

- Elihu lumped Job into the category of those who refused to hear from God and turn to Him.
- Elihu warned Job to not let the adversity entice him into **scoffing** which would **turn** him away from God.
- Elihu had believed Job turned to **iniquity** rather than turn to God in the midst of the adversity.

Job 36:22-25

“Behold, God is exalted in his power; who is a teacher like him? Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, ‘You have done wrong’ Remember to extol his work, of which men have sung. All mankind has looked on it; man beholds it from afar.”

God Is A Wise Teacher

- The second “behold” drew Job’s attention to the sovereignty of God Who is a wise Teacher.
- Elihu wanted Job to exalt God in the midst of his affliction so that God could teach Job.
- Elihu instructs Job to glorify God for His creation by singing praises to Him for the mighty works that He has done.
- “May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may **the LORD rejoice in his works...**”-**Psalm 104:31**
- When the Lord shows up He asks Job: “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?”-**Job 38:4**

- David declared: “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him...”-**Psalm 8:3-4a**
- Considering the work of God’s creation compels a person to see the greatness of God and wonder how we fit into this grand sovereign plan.
- The God of reality has a plan for each person because He is mindful of us which created in David a deep assurance that God is in control.
- Worship would enable Job to learn the lessons that God was teaching him.

Job 36:26-29

“Behold, God is great, and we know him not; the number of his years is unsearchable. For he draws up the drops of water; they distill his mist in rain, which the skies pour down and drop on mankind abundantly. Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of his pavilion?”

God Is Beyond Understanding

- The third “behold” draws Job’s attention to infinite wisdom of God which is beyond understanding.
- No man knows why God does what He does or how He operates within His creation.
- Elihu observed the water cycle of evaporation, forming in clouds which then pour out rain upon the earth as a example of God’s brilliance as a Designer.
- “The clouds and the rain display God’s astonishing control of the world in operations of such delicacy and strength that men can neither understand nor imitate them.” –Andersen, Francis

Job 36:30-33

“Behold, he scatters his lightning about him and covers the roots of the sea. For by these he judges peoples; he gives food in abundance. He covers his hands with the lightning and commands it to strike the mark. Its crashing declares his presence; the cattle also declare that he rises.”

The Thunder Announces God

- The fourth “behold” drew Job’s attention to thunder itself as announcing God’s presence.
- Throughout the Bible God speaks in the midst of thunder in a storm.
- When God came to Job He spoke to Him in the midst of the whirlwind.
- “Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said...”-**Job 38:1**

- “On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled...“And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. ”-**Exodus 19:16;19**
- “Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine.”-**John 12:28-30**

- “It has been suggested that this last part of Elihu’s speech really consists in a word description of what was happening around him at the moment. When presently God speaks, He speaks out of a whirlwind, and the idea is that it was this great storm in its approach and force which Elihu described.” –Morgan, G. Campbell
- The change that comes over Elihu at this point, and that continues and builds in power to the end of his discourse, is so dramatic that the reader should be bowled over by it. For here something strange and wonderful begins to happen to this young man: he opens his mouth and speaks by the unction of the Holy Spirit!”-Mason, Mike