

Elihu Continues His  
Speech  
Chapter Thirty-Five

## **Job 35:1-3**

“And Elihu answered and said: “Do you think this to be just? Do you say, ‘It is my right before God,’ that you ask, ‘What advantage have I? How am I better off than if I had sinned?’”

# Righteous Living

- Elihu continues with his speech by addressing Job's claim that living a righteous life does not benefit a person since God does not seem to bless the righteous nor punish the wicked (Job 9).
- Job said, "It is all one; therefore I say, 'He destroys both the blameless and the wicked...If I wash myself with snow and cleanse my hands with lye, yet you will plunge me into a pit, and my own clothes will abhor me." -Job 9:22,30-31

- “Job felt that God should have rewarded him for his innocence, rather than subjecting him to suffering. Elihu replied that man's sin or innocence does not affect God, and God was silent to Job because Job was proud.”-Constable, Thomas
- Elihu indicated that Job sought an **advantage** through righteous living and wondered if Job, in his mind, thought if he would not have been **better off** to have **sinned**.
- Throughout the Book, Job has been focused upon man's position before God. He wondered, “**how can a man be in the right before God?**”(Job 9:2)
- Job knew that right living was better than sinning but his suffering made him question if God was indifferent to man's behavior.

## **Job 35:4-8**

“I will answer you and your friends with you. Look at the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds, which are higher than you. If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him? And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to him? If you are righteous, what do you give to him? Or what does he receive from your hand? Your wickedness concerns a man like yourself, and your righteousness a son of man.”

# **God Is Not obligated**

- Elihu encouraged Job to **look up to the heavens** and realize that God is higher than man and is not obligated to respond to the actions of mankind.
- God is God and man is subject to Him and His rules for governing the universe and since it His world to govern He is free to respond or not respond to man.
- God is perfect in His character and does not change for the better or worse by reacting to man's behavior.
- This is the reason God's grace is so amazing in that He doesn't have to respond to mankind but He does, in order to, have interaction with man and have fellowship with him.

- “For thus says the Lord GOD: ‘I will deal with you as you have done, who despised the oath by breaking the covenant. Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you...And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done,” says the Lord GOD.’ ”-**Ezekiel 16:59-60,62-63**
- Despite Israel’s rejection of the covenant by their wicked actions God’s character is not affected and He will keep the covenant nevertheless out of His grace and mercy.

- “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”-**Isaiah 55:1-2**
- God invites people to come who have nothing to offer Him in return. Out of His amazing grace He provides everything simply because He desires a relationship with man.
- One of the problems with man is that he feels God owes him something: an explanation for suffering, economic prosperity for “right” living, healing and miracles upon our demand and yet this attitude reflects a dissatisfaction with what God has already provided, salvation from eternal damnation.

# Our Actions Affect Others

- Elihu explained to Job that although his sin or his righteousness did not influence God good or bad actions do affect other people.
- "Here [in v. 8] we find in a nutshell the point of the whole speech from v 2 onwards. For Elihu, the purpose of right living is not to secure rewards for oneself, not to influence the deity, but to help other human beings. That is where profit or benefit in righteousness lies. Job's concentration upon his own benefit (v 3) is therefore wrongheaded, and not in accord with justice (v.2).-Clines, David

- “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.-**1 Peter 2:2**
- “Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals.”- **1 Corinthians 15:33**
- “But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”-**1 John 3:18**
- These few verses speak to our conduct among people and our interaction with them. Our morals can be affected by the company we keep and as we love in deed and truth our conduct affects our neighbor who sees our deeds and glorifies God.

## **Job 35:9-12**

“Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out; they call for help because of the arm of the mighty. But none says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens?’ There they cry out, but he does not answer, because of the pride of evil men.”

# People Neglect God

- Man does what comes natural to him. He compartmentalizes his life into categories of work, recreation, family, and religion in order to feel safe.
- These categories become a monotonous, boring and redundant routine as we go about our everyday life praying over our meals and praying when it becomes convenient for our lifestyle.
- Elihu said that **because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out.**
- “We tend to use prayer as a last resort, but God wants it to be our first line of defense. We pray when there's nothing else we can do, but God wants us to pray before we do anything at all.”- Chambers, Oswald

- When the arm of the Almighty alters our lifestyle by an unexpected event we become shaken out of our natural routine.
- These unexpected events are a gift from God to keep us from relying upon ourselves instead of trusting and leaning upon God.
- It is during suffering and affliction that we then cry out to God.
- “Elihu’s reason is right in the majority of cases. The great cause of a Christian’s distress, the reason of the depths of sorrow into which many believers are plunged, is simply this — that while they are looking about, on the right hand and on the left, to see how they may escape their troubles, they forget to look to the hills whence all real help cometh; they do not say, ‘**Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?**’”-Spurgeon, Charles

# Pride Hinders Our Prayers

- Pride hinders our prayers because they stem from a selfish motive rather than from an honest desire to learn from God through the suffering.
- Praying only when we are oppressed is the actions of a double-minded person who wants a relationship with God only in the bad times and ignores God the rest of the time.
- “But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.”-James 1:6-8, NLT

- A prideful prayer is a prayer that seeks an answer from God on our own terms and according to our own desires rather than aligning our desires with His will for our life.
- “You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to **spend it on your passions.**”-James 4:2b-3
- In this respect, Elihu said, humans are like animals in that we do not ask for knowledge nor grow wiser during the suffering.

- “God hath given to men those gifts which he hath denied to beasts, reason and religion, wisdom to know God and themselves, and their obligations to God, and their dependence upon him. And therefore it ill becometh them to lie like brute creatures, roaring and crying out in their miseries, without taking any notice of God in way of prayer or praise; and if they do so, it is no wonder if God takes no notice of them.”-Poole, Matthew
- “But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ”-James 4:6,8
- If God doesn’t remove our immediate burden He will always give more grace and songs in the night to get us through.

## **Job 35:13-16**

“Surely God does not hear an empty cry, nor does the Almighty regard it. How much less when you say that you do not see him, that the case is before him, and you are waiting for him! And now, because his anger does not punish, and he does not take much note of transgression, Job opens his mouth in empty talk; he multiplies words without knowledge.”

# Waiting For God

- Elihu instructed Job to **wait** for God's answer and just because Job couldn't **see** God didn't mean that God was not aware of Job's situation.
- "It is always possible to think of a reason for unanswered prayer. The trite explanation, which we hear all too often, is that 'You didn't have enough faith', or 'You prayed from the wrong motive', or 'You must have some hidden, unconfessed sin'. This diagnosis is always applicable. Everyone who prays is aware of the weakness of his faith; everyone with a scrap of self-knowledge knows that his motives are always mixed; everyone who searches his conscience can find no end of fresh sins to be dealt with. If no prayers could be offered and none answered, until all these conditions were satisfied, none would ever be offered and none answered.-Anderson, Francis

# God Is Patient

- God is patient with Job and all of man but Elihu made the point that because God is patient and not striking Job with His anger didn't give Job the right to **opens his mouth in empty talk**.
- “Most of us would prefer, however, to spend our time doing something that will get immediate results. We don't want to wait for God to resolve matters in His good time because His idea of 'good time' is seldom in sync with ours.”-Chambers, Oswald
- “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”-**Matthew 6:7-8**

- “Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few.”-**Ecclesiastes 5:2**
- Prayer requires more of the **heart** than of the **tongue**. The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, and the simplicity of faith.”- Clarke, Adam
- Job repented of his **empty talk** and said, “I have **uttered** what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.”-**Job 42:3**