

The Book of Job
Class Notes
Session 20

Job 34.1-9, 35.9-11 In *Chapters 34 and 35*, Elihu affirms God's justice and sovereignty.

While the injustice of God was one of Job's major laments, Elihu countered with three arguments to prove that there is *no injustice* with God...

...If God is unjust, then He is not God (34.10–15).

... If God is truly God, then He is perfect; and if He is perfect, then He cannot do wrong.

...If God were unjust, then He must not see what is going on in the world (Job 34.21–30). But God is omniscient and sees all things!

"An unjust God would be as unthinkable as a square circle or a round triangle... *if God were unjust, there could be no just government on earth* (Job 34:16–20). As a respected elder, Job had participated in local government and had helped to bring justice to the afflicted (29:7–17)..."¹

Chapter 35 is Elihu's condemnation of Job. God and God's ways are so far beyond what humans can know and understand.

Elihu's concern was that Job could not be "restored" by God (35.2) as long as he questioned the value of serving Him (v. 3)

Elihu tells Job and his friends that the cry for God often arises out of the pain of suffering of life, not out of genuine desire for God. In other words, according to Elihu, Job's heart is wrong.

"Elihu believes that Job has added unbelief to his sin by complaining so bitterly. In doing so, Elihu fails to consider some understandable human emotion on Job's part. Not all lamenting represents unbelief. Yet our own complaints about the conditions of our lives, though humanly understandable, can betray a weakness of faith. God may use affliction to strengthen our faith and to refocus our lives on the affliction endured by His Son for our salvation."²

Job 36.1-5; 37.1-5 Elihu now turns to proclaim the greatness of God...In *Ch. 36*...Elihu is defending the justice and sovereignty of God!

Finally, in *Ch. 37*...Elihu continues to extol the majesty, greatness, power, and sovereignty of God through descriptions of the natural world...Thunderstorms and its effects....snow, rain, whirlwind, frost, etc.

Elihu makes one last appeal to Job that he recognize his weakness (Sins?) and God's perfection *and* strength.

[Commenting on *Ch. 37*]: "The awesome power of a storm reminds us how truly small we are. Elihu tells Job to abandon obstinacy and, with proper fear and trust, to submit to God as his Lord, thereby preparing Job for God's visit in the whirlwind (38:1). All of the days of our lives are spent in such preparation. Though we may become distracted by many things in this life, both bane and blessing, God prepares us for His visitation, when all that will matter will be our confidence in His grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord..."³

¹ W.W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient*.

² *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

³ *Ibid*.

Job 38.1-7 Chapters 38-40 begins God's response to Job...Out of the "whirlwind." ...סַעַר (śā·'ār)... Lit., "Storm" "Wind" "Tempest."

The "Lord" answers...יהוה (yhw)..."(The covenant) God."

The Lord comes to Job as Job had requested... (23.3-5) and answers Job's "windy words" (16.3).

Job believed that if the Lord came to him in a whirlwind, He would crush Job... (9.17)...

What Job experiences is exactly what he wanted...God is speaking with him...Without destruction!

"Job is first rebuked (but not derided) for speaking *without knowledge*. The Bible does not consider ignorance to be either sin, or the root of sin...Job is completely in the dark because he lacks counsel and knowledge. These God now supplies."⁴

The point is that knowledge of the origins of the world is inaccessible to men.

"In a series of questions on cosmology, oceanography, meteorology, and astronomy, God challenged Job's competence to judge His control of the world. God used irony to point up Job's ignorance (e.g., "Tell Me," vv. 4, 18; "Surely you know!" vv. 5, 21)."⁵

Job 39.1-6 Job does not even know the animal world...Animals give birth to their young and the "natural" world operates without Job's help (Or knowledge of how...)

"Totally apart from man's help or knowledge, but obviously under God's supervision, mountain goats and deer bring forth their young, who soon grow up, leave their parents, and fend for themselves (cf. references to the "young" in 38:41; 39:30)"⁶

Job 40.1-5 God's first speech began with a rebuke and challenge...God concludes with a rebuke and challenge!

"The rebuke is in the form of a question. The one who contends refers to Job...Twice (10:2; 23:6) Job considered God's (10:1) contending with him (*rib*, bringing a court case against him), but now ironically, God turned the accusation around...Since Job had accused God he should answer these questions (cf. "answer Me" in 38:3; 40:7)."⁷

"In the whirlwind, Job comes face-to-face with the reality of his humanity. Although Job accused the Lord of being unfair, God responded with a mild, yet firm counteraccusation. The Lord reminded Job that He not only created the world but also continues to care for it. We, too, question God and wonder whether He is actually in charge of the daily events of our lives. Coming face-to-face with our Creator brings us to our knees. Yet the fearsome face of the Creator also smiles on Job and shows him mercy."⁸

⁴ F.I. Andersen. *Job: An Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 14, pp. 294-296). InterVarsity Press, 1976).

⁵ J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck Eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Victor Books, 1985).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *The Lutheran Study Bible*.