

Young Elihu's Third Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 35

Elihu Again Twists Job's Words

- 1 Then Elihu continued and said,
- 2 “Do you think this is according to justice?
Do you say, ‘My righteousness is more than God’s’?”
- 3 “For you say, ‘What advantage will it be to You?
What profit will I have, more than if I had sinned?’”

Elihu's Answer—Nothing You Do Obligates God in Any Way

- 4 “I will answer you,
And your friends with you.
- 5 “Look at the heavens and see;
And behold the clouds—they are higher than you.
- 6 “If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against Him?
And if your transgressions are many, what do you do to Him?”
- 7 “If you are righteous, what do you give to Him,
Or what does He receive from your hand?”
- 8 “Your wickedness is for a man like yourself,
And your righteousness is for a son of man.

Elihu's Answer—God Does Not Hear You Because He Does Not Hear the Wicked

- 9 “Because of the multitude of oppressions they cry out;
They cry for help because of the arm of the mighty.
- 10 “But no one says, ‘Where is God my Maker,
Who gives songs in the night,
11 Who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth
And makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens?’”
- 12 “There they cry out, but He does not answer
Because of the pride of evil men.
- 13 “Surely God will not listen to an empty cry,
Nor will the Almighty regard it.
- 14 “How much less when you say you do not behold Him,
The case is before Him, and you must wait for Him!
- 15 “And now, because He has not visited *in* His anger,
Nor has He acknowledged transgression well,

Elihu Concludes With a Harsh Judgment against Job

- 16 So Job opens his mouth emptily;
He multiplies words without knowledge.”

Young Elihu's Fourth and Final Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 36–37

Elihu Claims to Have Perfect Knowledge

- 36:1 Then Elihu continued and said,
- 2 “Wait for me a little, and I will show you

That there is yet more to be said in God's behalf.

- 3 "I will fetch my knowledge from afar,
And I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
4 "For truly my words are not false;
One who is perfect in knowledge is with you.

Elihu's Central Message—God Uses Suffering to Turn People from Their Sin

- 5 "Behold, God is mighty but does not despise *any*;
He is mighty in strength of understanding.
6 "He does not keep the wicked alive,
But gives justice to the afflicted.
7 "He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous;
But with kings on the throne
He has seated them forever, and they are exalted.
8 "And if they are bound in fetters,
And are caught in the cords of affliction,
9 Then He declares to them their work
And their transgressions, that they have magnified themselves.
10 "He opens their ear to instruction,
And commands that they return from evil.
11 "If they hear and serve *Him*,
They will end their days in prosperity
And their years in pleasures.
12 "But if they do not hear, they shall perish by the sword
And they will die without knowledge.
13 "But the godless in heart lay up anger;
They do not cry for help when He binds them.
14 "They die in youth,
And their life *perishes* among the cult prostitutes.
15 "He delivers the afflicted in their affliction,
And opens their ear in *time of* oppression.

Elihu Again Urges Job to Repent

- 16 "Then indeed, He enticed you from the mouth of distress,
Instead of it, a broad place with no constraint;
And that which was set on your table was full of fatness.
17 "But you were full of judgment on the wicked;
Judgment and justice take hold *of you*.
18 "*Beware* that wrath does not entice you to scoffing;
And do not let the greatness of the ransom turn you aside.
19 "Will your riches keep you from distress,
Or all the forces of *your* strength?
20 "Do not long for the night,
When people vanish in their place.
21 "Be careful, do not turn to evil,
For you have preferred this to affliction.

Elihu's Description of God's Power—The Thunderstorm

- 22 "Behold, God is exalted in His power;

Who is a teacher like Him?

- 23 “Who has appointed Him His way,
And who has said, ‘You have done wrong’?
24 “Remember that you should exalt His work,
Of which men have sung.
25 “All men have seen it;
Man beholds from afar.
26 “Behold, God is exalted, and we do not know *Him*;
The number of His years is unsearchable.
27 “For He draws up the drops of water,
They distill rain from the mist,
28 Which the clouds pour down,
They drip upon man abundantly.
29 “Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds,
The thundering of His pavilion?
30 “Behold, He spreads His lightning about Him,
And He covers the depths of the sea.
31 “For by these He judges peoples;
He gives food in abundance.
32 “He covers *His* hands with the lightning,
And commands it to strike the mark.
33 “Its noise declares His presence;
The cattle also, concerning what is coming up.

Elihu’s Description of God’s Power—The Icy Blasts of Winter

- 37:1 “At this also my heart trembles,
And leaps from its place.
2 “Listen closely to the thunder of His voice,
And the rumbling that goes out from His mouth.
3 “Under the whole heaven He lets it loose,
And His lightning to the ends of the earth.
4 “After it, a voice roars;
He thunders with His majestic voice,
And He does not restrain the lightnings when His voice is heard.
5 “God thunders with His voice wondrously,
Doing great things which we cannot comprehend.
6 “For to the snow He says, ‘Fall on the earth,’
And to the downpour and the rain, ‘Be strong.’
7 “He seals the hand of every man,
That all men may know His work.
8 “Then the beast goes into its lair
And remains in its den.
9 “Out of the south comes the storm,
And out of the north the cold.
10 “From the breath of God ice is made,
And the expanse of the waters is frozen.
11 “Also with moisture He loads the thick cloud;
He disperses the cloud of His lightning.
12 “It changes direction, turning around by His guidance,

That it may do whatever He commands it
On the face of the inhabited earth.

- 13 “Whether for correction, or for His world,
Or for lovingkindness, He causes it to happen.

Elihu’s Rebuke—God’s Greatness Precludes Any Attempt by Job to Present His Case

- 14 “Listen to this, O Job,
Stand and consider the wonders of God.
15 “Do you know how God establishes them,
And makes the lightning of His cloud to shine?
16 “Do you know about the layers of the thick clouds,
The wonders of one perfect in knowledge,
17 You whose garments are hot,
When the land is still because of the south wind?
18 “Can you, with Him, spread out the skies,
Strong as a molten mirror?
19 “Teach us what we shall say to Him;
We cannot arrange *our case* because of darkness.
20 “Shall it be told Him that I would speak?
Or should a man say that he would be swallowed up?

Elihu’s Concluding Description of God’s Greatness—The Brilliance of the Sun After the Storm

- 21 “Now men do not see the light which is bright in the skies;
But the wind has passed and cleared them.
22 “Out of the north comes golden *splendor*;
Around God is awesome majesty.
23 “The Almighty—we cannot find Him;
He is exalted in power
And He will not do violence to justice and abundant righteousness.
24 “Therefore men fear Him;
He does not regard any who are wise of heart.”