

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

I praise you today for being a God who loves me enough to discipline me (Job 33:15–18). You said, “The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives” (Heb 12:6). I praise you that all such discipline, even though it is painful for a time, is for my good, that I may share in your holiness (Heb 12:10–11).

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about young Elihu’s first two speeches to Job. Elihu had remained silent while Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar all tried to refute Job. When they failed, Elihu could restrain himself no longer. In Elihu’s mind Job’s guilt was certain (Job 34:36–37). If Job’s assertions of innocence were left unanswered, it would mean that God had not acted righteously and justly—and that was impossible. Previously, Job had longed for an arbiter, someone who would go between him and God (Job 9:33). Elihu volunteered himself. He would act as mediator and adjudicate Job’s case against God (Job 32:12; 33:12). However, Elihu’s message, while partially accurate (you do use suffering to discipline, and you do forgive those who repent; cf. Job 33:19, 26), was based on the same faulty premise as Job’s friends. Further, Elihu twisted many of Job’s words (Job 34:5–9) and cast Job’s cries of frustration and confusion in the worst possible light.

Reflection

Elihu’s speeches underscore to me how important it is to have a proper theology, a complete and balanced understanding of you and your ways. If my presuppositions about you are flawed, then I will misapply your truth and cause harm instead of help.

Request

Father, help me today to do my best to present myself to “God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). Remind me to read your word on my knees, aware that some of what you have said is “hard to understand,” and keep me from twisting the text to my own destruction (2 Pet 3:16).

Thanksgiving

Thank you for giving me examples of improper theology and misapplied truth so that I can be aware of such pitfalls and avoid them myself. Thank you for the promise that if my will is to do your will, you will lead me to a knowledge of the truth (John 7:17).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Cast Thy Burden on the Lord](#)” – Barney E. Warren.

Meditation Verse: Job 33:26.