

Eric Mitchell

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Presentation: "Outline of Elihu's Speeches: Job 32-37"

Handout A: NOTES

The Roles

Author/Narrator: *Pre-suffering Job* was blameless in word and deed (1:8);
Bereft Job (after loss of family and wealth) accepts adversity (1:21); and did not sin by blaming God (1:22; see also 2:3);
Diseased Job: says that he accepts adversity (2:9-10);
BUT ...is angered by (what he considers as) the unjust nature of his suffering (18:4; 40:11), so he attempts to justify himself...
...contends with friends (who contend wrongly for their view of God/wisdom)
...desires to contend/speak directly with God
...knows that he will one day see his redeemer-God in the day of Resurrection (19:23ff)
...desires an arbiter/umpire to contend for him to God (9:32-33)
...the best he gets is impartial Elihu who speaks for God, speaks Wisdom about Job's suffering, and asks God for a divine Mediator for Job
confesses/repents (42:1-6) when God contends with Job in person;
and Job is restored (42:10-17)

Accused Sufferer: Job...speaking in anguish, pain, and bitterness of soul, considers his suffering to be unjust in the face of his personal integrity, righteousness, and justice thus Job attempts to: justify himself (13:18; 32:2; 23:4; 27:2-6; 40:8); find fault with God (יָסוּר 40:2); contend with God (רִיב, 9:3; 13:18-19; 33:13; 23:1-7,[6]; 40:2); and reprove God's actions (יָכַח, 40:2) as well as the words of his three friends (יָכַח 12:1-13:12; God will reprove them, 13:10)

Elihu's Refutation of Job:

"Friends" Answered by Elihu:

Agreed, Friends lack wisdom – 32:5-14
Friends are bad arbiters – 32:5-22
Friends lack spirit of God/wisdom, 36:1f
Friends say Job is wicked, detestable, corrupt, and keeps company with wicked men, 15:16, 33:7-8, 34:35-37
Elihu is an impartial and upright "Arbiter" speaking knowledge, and the Spirit of God speaks through Elihu, 32:18-33:7; 36:1-4

"Suffering" Answered by Elihu:

Suffering is for correction & deliverance/redemption, 33:19-30
God delivers the afflicted in their affliction, 36:15
Do not long for death for to prefer death over affliction is evil, 36:20-21
Suffering is a part of God's instruction to us, 36:22

"God's Actions" Answered by Elihu:

God does not owe you an account of His Actions, 33:13
Dreams from God instruct to correct/deliver, 33:15-18
God is not an enemy...He has a "Mediator" w/ransom for Job to restore/deliver him, 33:23-30
God is the omnipotent Judge, You cannot condemn Him when silent, 34:24-30

Job's Complaints:

Against Friends:

I have no "mediator" with God (יָכַח, Mochiach, 9:33; 16:)
Job's friends are bad arbiters (יָכַח); they smear him with lies (13:4-12; 21:34)
Job's friends are sorry comforters (16:2)
Both God and friends persecute me (19:22)

Against Suffering:

better to never have been born than suffer (10:18-19)
Wishes that God would kill him and end his suffering (36:20; 34:20, 25)
Job longs for death over his pains (7:15)
Job speaks in anguish and bitterness (7:11)
Why am I God's target for suffering? (7:20)

Against God's Actions:

Job is frightened by Dreams/Visions from God (7:14)
Have I sinned? Why do you not pardon me (7:20-21)
God hides His face from Job (13:24)
God considers Job His enemy (13:24; 16:9; 19:11; 33:10)
God has Job at a disadvantage: God will not go to court with me (9:32-35; 23:1-9)

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Job's Faith:

...The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD. (1:21 b)

...Shall we indeed accept good from God and not adversity? (2:10)

Though He slay me, I will hope in Him, nevertheless I will argue (יִכַח) my ways before Him (13:13-15)

...My eye weeps to God. (16:20)

...O that I might plead (יִכַח) with God...(16:21)

I know that my Redeemer (גֹּאֵל) lives...(19:23-29)

Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding. (28:28)

...I am insignificant, what can I reply to You...? (40:4)

God can do all things, His purpose cannot be thwarted (42:2)

Job repents of his words and actions (42:3-6)

Correcting Instigator & Arbiter/Rebuker:

Exalted Transcendent Sovereign Omnipotent God of all Creation Is Just and Righteous (Job 1-2, 37:21-24; 38-41); God instructs and God contends (רִיב) with Job (10:2; chs 38-42)

...God does not regard the wise, only those who fear Him, 37:24

Accusers:

Satan – Job Fears God for Protection / Health

Job's wife: Job must be a sinner and is being punished (rather than telling Job to repent she encourages him to curse God and die)

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False Arbiters/Rebukers (wrongly claim to take wisdom's side against Job, 12:2; and unjustly contend (רִיב) for God, 13:7-8; and reprove Job (יָכַח, 6:26):

Eliphaz – God is reproving (יָכַח) Job for his sin (22:4); Job is guilty, wicked, and full of hot air (15:2-6, 20); Job needs to repent (22:21-30)

Bildad – Job's sons died for their sin (8:4); Job is a sinner because this is how God treats men of no integrity; Job is wicked, unjust, and does not know God (18:21; 25:4)

Zophar – Job is a sinner or he would not be in this situation; Job has received the portion of a wicked man (ch's 11, 20)

Righteous Arbiter (Rebuker [32:12]/Justifier [33:32]) (correctly takes God's side against Job):

Elihu – Job may or may not be righteous, but his self-justification and complaints/attitude toward God are wrong. Job calls for an arbiter between him and God in 9:33. Elihu was, at first, looking for one of the friends to take up this role, but they were found wanting, (32:12) Elihu speaks *for* God to Job but when it comes time to speak *to* God for Job, He fails...Elihu fears to be an arbiter (refuter) for Job *to* God because neither he nor the 3 friends, know what to say in Job's defense,...And he fears God will destroy him (he will be swallowed up), if he speaks foolishly, 37:19-20

Mediator: Divine Interceding Angel/envoy (מְלִיץ) who "mediates" between God and Man (as only God can do, 33:29-30): (1) Declares to a man what is upright (33:23), (2) Delivers man from the pit (33:24), (3) provides a ransom/restoration to God (33:24, 26), (4) restores his flesh to youthful vigor (33:25), (5) Divine Kinsman-Redeemer (blood avenger), (6) Ransom Provider, (7) Restorer. See also Kinsman-redeemer = Christ (גֹּאֵל, 19:23-29). See also...The Law as added later to the Hebrews is also a mediator (see Gal 3:19-22), but the Law could not impart life, ransom, or restore.

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Handout B: Outline

Elihu's Speeches (chs. 32–37)

1. Introduction (32:1–5)
2. The speeches themselves (32:6—37:24)
 1. First speech (32:6—33:33)
 - 32:6-22 **Elihu's apology**
 - vv 6-10 3 Friends Failure: Unwise and Without God's Spirit
 - vv 11-22 Elihu as Impartial, Wise, Spirit Compelled **Arbiter**
 - 33:1-33 **Elihu Confronts Job's Complaints**
 - vv 1-7 Elihu speaks for God
 - vv 8-12 Job's Self-Justification is Wrong
 - v 8-9 Job: "I am innocent"
 - v 10-11 Job: "God has denied Me Justice"
 - v 12 Job is Wrong: God is Greater than Man
 - vv 13-28 Who are you to complain against God when He does not give account?
 - vv 13-18 God Protects/Speaks to men in Dreams
 - vv 19-22 God Warns/Chastens Men through Suffering
 - vv 23-28 But...God Delivers through a Heavenly Mediator
 - vv 31-33 Summary: How God Delivers men from death to eternal life
 2. Second speech (ch. 34:1-37)
 - 34:1-9 **Elihu's Complaint Against Job & Friends**
 - vv 5-6 Job Wrong: I am innocent, God has Taken Away Justice
 - vv 7-8 3 Friends Wrong: Sarcasm toward the 3 Friends' view of Job
 - v 9 Job Wrong: "...profits Man Nothing when...pleased w/God
 - 34:10-33 **Elihu Refute's Job's "Profits Man Nothing..." statement**
 - vv 10-12 God Cannot Pervert Justice
 - v 10 God is Not Wicked
 - v 11 God only Gives Man what he deserves
 - v 12 God will Not Pervert Justice
 - vv 13-15 God Has the Right to Judge/Rule
 - v 13 God Alone has Authority/Power
 - vv 14-15 God Sustains/Keeps all Life from Perishing
 - vv 16-33 Only A Just God can Rule
 - vv 16-20 God is Impartial in Justice
 - vv 21-23 God is Omniscient in Justice
 - vv 24-30 God is Omnipotent in Justice
 - vv 31-33 No One is God's Equal in Justice
 - 34:34-37 **Elihu Sarcastically Condemns the Friend's Assessment of Job**

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3. Third speech (ch. 35:1-16) Elihu Refutes Job's "What Profit...than If I sinned"
 - 35:1-4 **Job's Injustice**
 - vv 1-2 Is it justice for Job to say: he is more righteous than God?
Ie. I am innocent, 10:7, 27:5
 - v 3 Is it justice for Job to say: there is no point in being good?
Ie God is unjust, 7:20; 9:29-31; 34:9
 - 35:4-8 **Neither Job's Wickedness Nor Righteousness Affect God**
 - vv 4-5 As the clouds are higher than you...(*so is God*)
 - v 6 Job's sins do not Affect God (they only hurt Job, See Prov 8:36; Jer 7:19)
 - v 7 Job's righteousness does not Give to God - meaning God does not owe Job anything (Luke 17:10; Rom 11:35; Isa 64:6)
 - v 8 Job's Wickedness or Righteousness only Affect Job (Prov 9:12)
 - 35:9-14 **God Ignores the Empty Cry of the Wicked As Well as the Insolent Cry of One Impatient for Justice**
 - v 9 The wicked cry out for help from oppression
 - vv 10-11 BUT the cry of the wicked is not to God (see Num 21:6-9)
 - vv 12-13 God ignores the empty cry of prideful, evil men
 - v 14 Neither will God regard the Insolent cry of One impatient for Justice...Your case is before Him, you must wait for Him!
 - vv 15-16 Because God has not acted according to Job's standard of and timing for justice, Job multiplies his empty protestations
4. Fourth speech (chs. 36:1-37:24)
 - 36:1-21 **Elihu: God is Just**
 - vv 1-4 Elihu is God's Messenger speaking "perfect" knowledge
 - vv 5-7 God Judges the Wicked and Blesses the Righteous
 - v 5 God is mighty in Understanding (Wisdom)
 - v 6 God Gives the Afflicted Justice (the wicked die)
 - v 7 God Blesses the Righteous
 - vv 8-15 God instructs Sufferers to repent (*an apology for Job, v 13*)
 - v 8-9 God declares the Sufferer's Sin and Pride
 - v 10 A. God Instructs: Return from Evil
 - v 11 B. Hearer/Repentant will prosper
 - v 12 C. Unhearing/Unrepentant will perish
 - v 13 D. Godless hearts do not cry to God
(which Job does consistently)
 - v 14 C'. Godless die worldly and young
 - v 15 B'. God Delivers the *Repentant* Sufferer
 - v 16 A'. God Entices the Sufferer to Deliverance
 - vv 17-21 Elihu instructs Job to not get stuck on "Justice" (what is *fair*)
 - v 17-18 Job's Sense of Justice Influenced His response to Suffering

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- vv 19 Job Warned: Do not let your anger lead you to scoffing/rebellion
- v 20 Job Warned: Do not long for Death
- v 21 Job Warned: You have chosen an Improper response to Suffering (anger/longing for death)

- 36:22-37:24 **Elihu: Fear God – Who is Exalted in Power**
 - vv 36:22-37:13 Elihu's Praise Hymn: Things which make E. fear God
 - vv 22-23 Behold: God is Exalted (He has all power & Authority) No one instructs Him
 - vv 24-25 Remember: Man Should Exalt God's Work
 - vv 26-29 Behold: God is Exalted and We Do Not Know Him: He Controls the Rain Cycle
 - vv 30-32 Behold: God Controls the Lighting, Thunder, & Rain (So Has Dominion over Man)
 - vv 33-37:1 Thunder and Cattle Declare God's Approach & Leads to Man's Fear of God (Elihu v 1)
 - vv 37:2-13 Listen Job & Friends: And Tremble at God's Presence in the Storm
 - vv 2-6 *Fear* God's Control of Thunder, Lightning & Rain
 - vv 7-8 *Fear* God's Dominion over Weather (which forces man & animals to seek shelter)
 - vv 9-11 *Fear* God's Power over Winter Storms
 - vv 12-13 *Fear* God Who with Justice Causes all Weather to Do His Will: either for Correction or Lovingkindness
 - vv 37:14-24 Listen Job: And Recognize God's Sovereignty
 - v 14 *Fear* God's Wonders in Creation
 - vv 15-16 *Fear* that you do not Know How God Works in Creation
 - vv 17-18 *Fear* that you cannot Control the Hot Summer Wind like God
 - v 19 *Fear* that you cannot instruct us how to even speak to God (about your own problems)
 - vv 20 *Fear* that it is "certain death to contest God"
 - vv 21-22 *Fear* that: if the sun is too Bright for Man's eyes when the clouds blow away, How can Man view God's glory when He comes?
 - v 23-24a God is unknowable, Omnipotent, Just, and Righteous: Therefore men fear Him
 - v 24b *Fear* Him: For he has no regard for wise men.