

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

(OT Survey Lesson 279—Job 32-37)

Introduction: Elihu, a young bystander, takes his turn at correcting the misstatements he has heard. Perhaps he is correct in much of what he says; but at times he sounds remarkably similar to Job's friends. His most important statements are those that remind Job that God is far greater than man. It is this that Job must come to fully appreciate and it is this idea that prepares the way for the Lord's own revelation to Job.

Lesson aim: To emphasize that, though we may not understand God's dealings, it is never right to charge Him with error.

Introduction to Elihu's speech—Job 32:1-5

1. How did Job's friends handle his persistent claim to innocence? (32:1) What was the reaction of Elihu to Job? (32:2) His friends? (32:3-5) Why did he think each was wrong?

Elihu prepares his hearers to listen—Job 32:6-33:7

1. Why did Elihu say he had been reluctant to speech? (32:6-10) Did he believe that age insured wisdom? What did he consider its source?
2. How did Elihu feel about the answers Job's friends had given him? (32:11-14) Now, how does he describe Job's friends? (32:15-16) Himself? (32:17-22)
3. What appeal did Elihu make to urge Job to listen to him? (33:1-7)

Elihu challenges some of Job's statements—Job 33:8-33

1. With what statements of Job did Elihu take issue? (33:8-12) Had Job spoken these words or other similar to them? What did Elihu say about Job in view of these statements? About God?
2. With what other point did Elihu take issue? (33:13-18) How did he affirm God spoke to man?
3. What other way did Elihu think God "spoke" to man? (33:19-28) What effects would this produce on the part of the one chastened? What would be the outcome?
4. So then, for what purpose did Elihu say God did all these things? (33:29-32)

Elihu answers Job's claims of innocence and his implication that God had been unjust—Job 34:1-37

1. What words of Job does Elihu now address? (34:1-9) Had Job made such comments?
2. Elihu answers these statements Job has made by affirming what about God? (34:10-15). What did he say about God's rule over the rulers of this world? (34:16-20)
3. What did Elihu say God does to the wicked? (34:21-30) Is it possible for man to dictate terms to God? (34:31-37) What had he heard others say about Job?

Elihu answers Job's statements that seem to place too much emphasis on the value of man's service to God—Job 35:1-16

1. What statements of Job does Elihu mention that he now seeks to answer? (35:1-4) What did he affirm about man's sin or righteousness? (35:5-8) Would you agree?
2. Elihu observed that men often cry out to God when? (35:9-16) Yet, what do they not say? Why then did he think God had not responded to Job's pleas? What statements did he think were particularly inappropriate on Job's part?

Elihu makes some further observations about God's dealings with men—Job 36:1-37:24

1. What principles did Elihu set forth that determine God's dealings with men? (36:1-7) What does He do when they suffer? (36:8-10)
2. Describe the ways a man may respond to God's chastening and with what results? (36:11-15) How does Elihu apply these principles to Job's case? (36:16-23)
3. What then does Elihu exhort Job to do? (36:24-26) What does he offer as examples of God's great power and wisdom? (36:27-37:13)
4. In conclusion, what does Elihu urge Job to do? (37:14-20) He says these things to show Job the inappropriateness of what statements that he had made?
5. What is Elihu's final word about God? (37:21-24)