

**Message #35****Job: 33:1-33**

Every now and then you will hear someone ask, “Why is God doing this to me?” “Why is God allowing me to go through this?” Sometimes the answer may be obvious and sometimes it may not be obvious. God can permit negative things to hit us as a punishment for sin. That is exactly what Job’s friends had been alleging. This was the reason they claimed that God was doing all of the negative things. God may also permit negative things to hit us in order to teach us and develop us into a deeper relationship with God. When we are going through trials, it does cause us to turn to the Lord. Now none of the friends of Job even saw that possibility, except for one young man, whose name was Elihu.

God was going to use Elihu in a big time way. Elihu was a young man who cared about Job and loved God. Elihu had many things to say that were true and sound. What Elihu was going to do was to start to give Job some hope by turning Job’s attention back to God. Elihu presented to Job the fact that God had been speaking to Job and developing Job, but Job was not listening or seeing it. Elihu had a true handle on true doctrine.

Now when we find ourselves experiencing negative things, there are many ways we may respond: 1) We may hate it and complain; 2) We may get discouraged and quit; 3) We may learn and develop; 4) We may continue to trust God and worship God. Elihu helps to get Job back on the right path.

**GOD USES YOUNGER PEOPLE WHO KNOW HIS WORD AND DOCTRINES TO MINISTER TO OLDER PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING.**

Elihu is a young man who is respectful of his elders. He stood on the sidelines listening to all of the allegations made against Job and finally he had enough. He rebuked the men making the allegations which were totally unfounded and then God uses him to put Job back on the right path.

Now keep this in your mind, Job is the most righteous man on the earth by God’s classification. So Elihu, the young man, is actually going to instruct Job, the older and most godly man. This is an odd situation. This would be like me trying to lecture Lewis Sperry Chafer. Frankly, if I were in his presence, I probably wouldn’t dare open my mouth.

Elihu treads lightly. He has a big assignment and God will use him. Now there are five introductory observations we may make:

**ELIHU OBSERVATION #1 – Elihu asks Job to listen to what he has to say. 33:1-7**

Elihu appeals to Job to hear him out (33:1). Three times he addresses Job by name (33:1, 31; 37:14) and five times he mentions his name (33:12; 34:5, 7, 35, 36). He asks for Job’s undivided attention. He tells Job that he now wanted to open his mouth and use his tongue to speak (33:2).

Now Job must have been intrigued because a young man asks Job to listen to all of his words. It is possible that Job is thinking here we go again. We have another attack coming. However, it is also possible that Job was interested in what this young man had to say.

I do want us to observe at the end of **verse 1** the emphasis on listening to “all” the words. This should be our approach to the Bible. We should want to know and hear every word of God’s Word. Since every word is pure, we need to go through every book of the Bible and understand it.

Now Elihu presents five reasons why Job should be willing to listen to him. Elihu was not just going to ramble; he wanted Job to know that he was truly being led by God to talk.

**Reason #1** - Because what Elihu had to say came from an upright heart. **33:3a**

The word “upright” means that Elihu had a heart that was straight and not crooked (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 375). Elihu’s motive for speaking to Job was straight, not dishonest.

**Reason #2** - Because what Elihu had to say came from sincere knowledge. **33:3b**

The word “sincere” refers to impure things that have been separated or removed. The idea here is to search out and purge anything not true and not pure (*Ibid.*, p. 145). Elihu’s speech was true and pure, not polluted. Elihu has no hidden agenda. He was not jealous of God. He was not being motivated by some insincere or impure motive. He truly wanted to set forth knowledge that was true.

**Reason #3** - Because Elihu’s life had come from God. **33:4, 6**

Elihu wanted Job to listen to him because of his connection to God. God had created him and God has sustained him and God had developed him and he had something to say. Elihu acknowledges that he was just as much a man of God as anyone. God had made him and was inspiring him to speak.

**Reason #4** - Because Elihu is prepared to be refuted. **33:5**

Elihu was so confident that what he would say was the will of God that he was prepared to be refuted. In fact, he says “array yourselves,” which means to arrange in order as in getting ready for war. In all reality Elihu is saying, I am prepared to take you all on. I will present truth and if you can all show me where I am wrong, I will stand rebuked.

**Reason #5** - Because Elihu is not out to further burden Job. **33:7**

Elihu is not motivated by any desire to put any further fear or pressure on Job. That is exactly what the other three did. But not Elihu. Elihu is simply interested in communicating truth for truth's sake and he appeals to Job to listen to him.

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God can use any man or woman, young or old, to speak for Him, if their heart is straight and their life is pure. If their motives and hearts are pure, God will powerfully use the person and bless the person.

**ELIHU OBSERVATION #2** – Elihu has listened to everything Job said. **33:8-11**

Elihu is not winging it. He had listened very objectively and carefully to everything Job had said. There is no question that Elihu is impartial in what he heard because Job sits quietly and listens and realizes his summary is true and accurate. There are six claims Job made that impressed Elihu:

**Matter #1** - Job claimed he was pure. **33:9a**

Now when Job said he was pure and without transgression, he did not mean he was sinless. What he meant was he had not sinned or transgressed against God in a way that deserved this kind of terrible judgment. Elihu had listened to that.

**Matter #2** - Job claimed he was innocent. **33:9b**

Again the point is he was not guilty of doing something that would have brought about all of these terrible things that had happened to him. Job did say these kinds of things in many places- 9:21; 10:7; 2:4; 16:17; 23:7. Elihu had listened to Job.

**Matter #3** - Job said God had invented charges against him. **33:10a**

There is no question that Job had made it clear that he was ready for a court appearance before God to find out exactly what the charges against him were (i.e. 13:23). He knew he had done nothing to bring this on and he assumed that God had invented some trumped up charges.

**Matter #4** - Job said God considered him to be His enemy. **33:10b**

Job had said this very thing multiple times and Elihu had heard him say it—13:24; 19:11.

**Matter #5** - Job said God had locked him into troublesome times. **33:11a**

Again this is accurate. Job had said that and it was true (13:27). God had locked him into some bitter things and he could not get out of them.

**Matter #6** - Job said God monitored all his paths. **33:11b**

Job did believe that God watched him at all times—7:17-20; 13:27.

Elihu had carefully listened to what Job had said and it is probably one reason why Job gave him a hearing.

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He was sick and tired of people who invented things he hadn't said or done, but at least Elihu was shooting straight. A person who tells the truth and does not exaggerate will always be the kind of person who will end up being listened to by those who have spiritual wits. Elihu was that kind of young man.

**ELIHU OBSERVATION #3** – Job is wrong in verbally accusing, questioning or criticizing God. **33:12-22**

Now having shown Job that he is a man of truth, Elihu looks Job straight in the eyes and says, “You are wrong.” Job was so bogged down he stopped realizing God was working in his life. Now there are two very profound theological facts that Elihu brings out to Job:

**Theological Fact #1** - Man has no right to accuse, question or criticize God, because God is greater than man and does not have to explain things to any man. **33:12-13**

God does not have to report to sinful man about what He is doing in anything. God does not have to tell us the “why” of what He is doing. God does not have to defend Himself. He does not need to come to some sinner and give an explanation for what He is doing.

God asks that we believe Him and trust Him, not question Him and accuse Him. Complaining and criticizing God are wrong; trusting and submitting to God are right. Elihu had the same view of God that Paul had when he said who in the world are you, O man, to talk back to God (Rom. 9:20).

Who does man think he is? God owes all of us hell. He does not owe us anything else. God does not have to report to us; He is God. Everything He does and permits will always be right. That is what Elihu reminded Job of here.

**Theological Fact #2** - Man has no knowledge of what God is doing even when God does reveal Himself. **33:14-22**

Now this is an interesting point. God does speak and most of the time when He does, people miss what God is doing or saying. There are two ways God speaks:

**(Way #1)** - God speaks mysteriously through His revelation to turn man from sin and hell and men have no idea God has spoken or is speaking. They are sound asleep to this reality. **33:15-18**

Job had said that God's dreams terrified him and he wanted to die (7:14-15). Elihu says the purpose of the scary dreams is to make people right with God and Job had missed this point.

Here is profound theology. Most dreams we forget, but some we remember. Let us say that a child has some scary dream of some evil monster. Why would God permit that? One reason would be to cause that child to realize that if I am right with God, no evil monster can touch me.

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Suppose one has some lustful dream. What does that show? It shows that one is a sinner and needs a new heart. It shows there is a flesh and the flesh is a failure. When one sees that and admits that, it draws them close to God. That is how God mysteriously works.

**(Way #2)** - God speaks through the physical to develop the spiritual. **33:19-22**

Sometimes God will put man sick in bed so that man will think about God and get his spiritual life in order. The purpose of the sickness, in such instances, is to draw a man close to the Lord and actually take him further and further away from sin and death, not closer to sin and death.

Paul had some physical infirmity that he asked God to remove three times, but God did not remove it because it caused him more and more to depend on God's grace. Job's sufferings should cause Job to draw closer to the Lord, not cause him to question the Lord.

There are times when God has used sickness to save people. Some come to faith in Christ just before they die. Elihu had a tremendous grasp of what God did and most of the time we have no idea what God is doing. God does not owe a man any explanation.

**ELIHU OBSERVATION #4** – Sinful man needs a mediator to make him right with God.  
**33:23-28**

These verses have been interpreted a couple of ways. Some suggest that God has a specific angel that is given to every man in order to help him through various difficulties and help him develop into a right relationship with God. Others suggest that Elihu is talking about the need man has for Jesus Christ to intervene as mediator in order for God to accept any man. I personally tend to think the latter interpretation is correct.

The one in 1,000 was used by Job in 9:3 to demonstrate no man could be right with God on his own. The 1 in 1000 here is used to remind Job that it is very rare for someone to communicate that man needs a mediator to be right with God. 999 out of 1000 will tell you that you can be right with God by your own works, but Elihu knew better.

His point is that if any person were going to be redeemed and restored to a right relationship with God, he could not do that on his own. God must provide a heavenly mediator to bring about deliverance. That is what Job needed. He didn't need to be questioning God; he needed a mediator who could actually make the situation better.

According to **verses 29-30**, God, many times, uses negative things to draw a person into a right relationship with Him. He will actually end up using terrible things to enlighten a person as to truth about Him.

**ELIHU OBSERVATION #5** – Job needs to listen to Elihu. **33:31-33**

Look at **verse 32**; Elihu was speaking to justify Job, not condemn him.

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**Lessons:**

1. There is power in speaking when backed by a life of righteous integrity.
2. In order to address properly, one must interpret and organize properly.
3. God is sovereignly speaking through everything presently in our world.