

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 29, 2011

Passage: Job 36-37

Memory Passage: Job 37:23-24

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Job 36:1-12.** What credentials does Elihu present in vs. 1-4 to defend what he is about to say? How does Elihu's knowledge compare with his assessment of Job's knowledge (cf. 34:35)? How do Elihu's words compare to Job's assessment of his friends' words (cf. 13:4)? To whom does v. 4b refer?
- (b) How does Job describe God's general treatment of the righteous (vs. 5-7)? Sometimes (v. 8) the righteous find themselves "bound" and "caught" in affliction rather than exalted. What are God's purposes in these afflictions (vs. 9-10)? What are the two possible responses from the afflicted (vs. 11-12)? How does Elihu's teaching differ from Job's friends?
- (c) How do these truths guide your understanding of your own personal suffering, whether current or future? How do they instruct our ministry to others who are suffering? What do these truths illustrate about God and His character?
- (d) *Family: Read Job 36:1-4.* Using your white board, have your family make a list of all of the credentials Elihu presents to back up why Job should listen to him (I speak on God's behalf, I get my knowledge from Him [afar], I believe God acts justly, my words are not false, the One who has perfect knowledge [God] is with you through me). Then discuss how we speak for God in the same ways when we speak the words of Scripture to others.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Job 36:13-25.** What 2 things does God accomplish through affliction & adversity according to v.15? What is God trying to accomplish on Job's behalf if Job would only repent (think: "He is alluring" if your version says "He also allured")?
- (b) Of what is Elihu warning in v. 18? Of what ransom does he speak and why is it great?
- (c) In your own words summarize Elihu's teaching in vs. 23-25. When we complain about our situation we are in effect telling God, "You have done wrong!" (v. 23). Think through your last week and compare how many times you have complained about the situation in which God has placed you rather than "singing & extolling" His work in your life (v. 24). Spend some time praying that God will bring to mind joyful praise rather than allowing you to complain against Him as you navigate the circumstances He has orchestrated for you. Moving from whining to worship will produce much fruit in your life!
- (d) *Family: Read Job 36:8-12.* Act out these verses as a way to visually teach their truths. Choose something that you will, for the purposes of this lesson, call sinful (a bowl of fruit, a can of soda, a toy) and place it in the middle of the table. Then tell your family that you are just too tempted by this sin and you *must* partake of it, and that they need to do everything in their power to bind you in "chains & cords of affliction" (i.e. use their arms to bind you up). As they do, prearrange for one person to "declare your transgressions (eating the forbidden item)," warn you to "open your ears to instruction" and "command that you return from iniquity." Then you should cease striving for the item, repent of your sinful desire, and state your desire to "listen and serve God." Then teach that this is what God might be doing when He sends affliction, discipline, or trials to us, and that we should respond in such a way that we are blessed by God in our obedience to His word.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Job 36:25-37:13.** What does Elihu mean when he says that because God is great we do not know Him? Why is it important that "the number of (God's) years is unsearchable?" What is he saying about God?
- (b) One way that Elihu sees God's greatness is in the way He creates, controls, and commands thunderstorms. According to v. 33, what do these thunderstorms declare? Rather than trying to ask a convoluted question I will just state an application: The next time you observe a thunderstorm, or watch one forming, take a moment to contemplate God's sovereign and majestic control and creation of the storm and thank Him for the declaration of His presence with every thunderclap! Many times we are thinking about less important things like, the weatherman got it wrong again, I wonder if I shut my windows, or why did it have to rain on my parade/ballgame/track meet/picnic etc. Even thunderstorms are a chance for us to "sing & extol" His work!
- (c) What is Job talking about in v. 7? Why might it be considered a blessing & benefit for God to "seal up your hand?"
- (d) In verses 12-13 thunderstorms accomplish God's commands with regard to 3 areas. What are these three areas and give examples of how each one can be accomplished through His sovereign reign over thunderstorms.
- (e) *Family: Read Job 36:25-37:13.* As you read, stop every couple of verses to explain what is being described (the process of evaporation-condensation-precipitation in vs. 27-28, thunderstorms, lightning, thunder, snow, ice, etc.). Then draw their attention back to 36:33 and remind them that even though thunderstorms can be frightening we must remember that they declare God's presence, and to 37:12-13 and remind them that they always accomplish God's loving purposes.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Job 37:14-24.** What answer would Job have to the 5 questions Elihu asks him in vs. 14-20? How do these questions help Job “consider the wondrous works of God” (v. 14) and to what conclusion should he come?

(b) Who is the “us” Elihu asks Job to teach in v. 19? Darkness is used often in Job and refers most often to death, suffering & loneliness. To what does it refer in v. 19? How does v. 19 relate to Job and his actions, and what connection does it have to God’s first statement (38:2)?

(c) How does Elihu describe the character of the Almighty in v. 23? Why do you think Elihu finds these specific characteristics to be relevant to Job in particular as he closes out his case against him?

(d) What choice does Elihu’s final statement (v. 24) provide for Job? This is the choice with which every human being is confronted with as they “stop and consider the wondrous works of God” (v. 14), so we must speak correctly about God’s work & character as we tell the world of His mighty works and ways! Since Job is “blameless” in God’s sight, it also instructs us concerning how we minister to professing believers with His word. Every believer who fights sin must choose to either fear God or be found trusting in his/her own wisdom and therefore place themselves under God’s discipline, so we must follow Elihu’s example & speak rightly about God from His word as we give counsel.

(e) *Family:* **Read Job 37:14** but read it with your family’s name in place of Job (i.e. “Hear this, O Davis family . . .”). Then ask your family to think of as many wondrous works of God that they can. Discuss each work as it is mentioned, and then spend some time praying as a family giving thanks for His wonderful works!

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) Take today and think through Elihu’s speeches (I did not ask you to re-read chapters. 32-37 but it might help you remember what you have learned!) and summarize his argument in one paragraph. Then, compare and contrast it to the arguments of Eliphaz, Bildad & Zophar, marking the differences & similarities.

(b) Now that you have finished studying Elihu, what do you think of him? Are your thoughts the same as they were a few weeks ago when you began chapter 32? If not, how are they different?

(c) **Read Job 37:21-24** again. In what ways are these verses preparing us for God’s answer to Job in chapter 38? Picture Elihu seeing in chapters 36-37 an actual thunderstorm and using it as an illustration to instruct Job, and then realizing that the storm is actually God coming to speak to Job! In what ways has Elihu prepared you to hear from the Lord, both as a reader of the book coming to chapter 38 and as a believer applying His teaching to your everyday life?

(d) *Family:* Using your white board, help your family summarize Elihu’s argument and then compare it to Job’s 3 friends. Help them understand that Elihu has spoken well of God and functioned in the role of a prophet as he has dealt with Job and called him to see God rightly and obey Him accordingly.

DATE: May 29, 2011

PASSAGE: Job 36-37

Elihu: Consider the Wondrous Works of God!