

September 6th

Chapters 35-37, Elihu's 3rd and 4th speeches (Learn, Read, Discuss)

Elihu now addresses Job's claim that there is no gain in being just, he insults Job for having the audacity to expect a response from God. Elihu says that God is too mighty, too far away to care about the minutia of individual human lives. Elihu states that our actions (righteous or evil) do not affect God, but other human beings. Elihu believes that most people's cries for help are insincere, and not worthy of God's time. Elihu says that just as God does not hear these insincere cries for help, so even moreso God does not have time for nor does God hear Job's cries for a hearing with God. Ironically, God's response will prove this statement by Elihu wrong.

In chapter 36-37, Elihu's final speech, and the final speech before God speaks for God's self, Elihu illustrates God's power and wisdom as a storm. God will continue to use this illustration when God speaks in chapters 38-41. Again, Elihu feels he must come to the defense of God's righteousness. He reaffirms God's justice, and says (vs. 10) that those who open their ears to God's instruction and those who repent will complete their days in prosperity and their years in pleasantness. And, conversely, those who do not listen die without knowledge. Vs. 24-33, Elihu images God's power as unsearchable, providing rain for abundant harvest, and hurling lightning strikes with pinpoint precision, as a sign of God's judgment against iniquity. Beginning in chapter 37, lightning is not just a sign of judgment, but also the wondrous accompaniment to his voice manifest in the thunder. 37:13 summarizes parts of God's own upcoming speech: after recounting the amazing, wonderful, complex, intersecting realities of our world that God causes to happen through nature, Elihu states "whether for correction, or for his land, or for love, he causes it to happen." Compared to the incredibly complexities of our natural world, Job's present struggles seem minimal. Elihu says all of this to illustrate that while Job may want to come on equal standing with God to present his case, the reality is that Job will never be anywhere close to God's equal, for he is but a mere mortal. Elihu concludes his speech by saying that while we can view God from afar through the wonders and power of nature, that "The Almighty- we cannot find him, he is great in power and justice."