

17a JOB

This is Friday the 8th of September 2006. We continue tonight our study in the book of Job, resuming at chapter 32. Let's take a moment at the outset to clear our minds.

I don't mean by that wipe our minds completely clear, but to lay aside the concerns and the distractions that might have come in with us. You know, we have the opportunity to relax and refresh ourselves, refresh our souls in the spiritual nourishment of God's Word. Shall we pray? Father, we're grateful for this opportunity to spend time in fellowship and in the study of your Word.

We're grateful for the spiritual gifts that you have distributed amongst us. We pray that as we spend this time together, that each one will have the opportunity both to bless and to be a blessing, and that the portion of your Word that we study this evening will become a part of the resources in our souls that will thoroughly equip us for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. We begin a new and exciting section tonight. Chapter 32-37 gives us the speeches of Elihu.

I won't review the outline of the book. We've gone over it many times. I think everyone should basically remember where we are.

The words of Job have ended, and we now find ourselves looking at the final human speaker, Elihu. He is introduced here at the beginning of chapter 32, and we could do no better than to read a portion of this together. We concluded in chapter 31 with the words of Job being ended.

Then in chapter 32 it says, So these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barakel the Buzite of the family of Ram, was aroused against Job. His wrath was aroused because he justified himself rather than God.

Also against his three friends, his wrath was aroused because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job. Now because they were years older than he, Elihu had waited to speak to Job. When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was aroused.

So Elihu the son of Barakel the Buzite answered and said, I am young in years, and you are very old. Therefore I was afraid, and dared not declare my opinion to you. I said, Age should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding. Great men are not always wise, nor do the aged always understand justice. Therefore I say, listen to me.

I also will declare my opinion. Indeed, I waited for your words. I listened to your reasonings while

you searched out what to say.

I paid close attention to you, and surely not one of you convinced Job or answered his words. Lest you say we have found wisdom, God will vanquish him, not man. Now he has not directed his words against me, so I will not answer him with your words.

They are dismayed and answer no more. Words escape them. And I have waited because they did not speak.

Because they stood still and answered no more, I also will answer my part. I too will declare my opinion. For I am full of words.

The spirit within me compels me. Indeed, my belly is like wine that has no vent. It is ready to burst like new wineskins.

I will speak that I may find relief. I must open my lips and answer. Let me not, I pray, show partiality to anyone, nor let me flatter any man.

For I do not know how to flatter, else my Maker would soon take me away. Well, that's the chapter. This is a speech that constitutes the first of four by Elihu.

He is going to more or less introduce himself and justify his speaking at all. Then he is going to address different kinds of audience. It's important to figure out who is being spoken to.

We've seen this in looking at Jesus, in looking at his delivery of parables, his teaching sections. Who is being spoken to? This is one of the most commonly violated principles of biblical interpretation because many Christians will go to the Sermon on the Mount and try to make direct application of what Jesus said to Jews in the age of Israel at the threshold of the kingdom. They take those words and try to apply them to the church.

And they do not directly apply. We have to use the same principles of observation, interpretation, application there as we do for other sections of teaching that are really based in the Old Testament. Well, Elihu is going to give, as I said, four speeches.

And he is going to address himself to the three friends. And then he is going to address himself to Job. And you can see the clear break over.

Did you notice it when we were reading chapter 32? Where was the switch in person that was being addressed? Did you notice it in verse 15? They are dismayed and answer no more. And he is still talking about the three friends. So there is a break there.

There is a shift. Well, the first section here is sort of the apology. He says, this is why I have waited to speak.

But before we even get to that, let's look at the introduction because we have the longest introduction of any of the three friends given for Elihu. And we have more information given about Elihu than any of the other three. How does it begin? The three men ceased answering Job.

Why? Because he was righteous in his own eyes. This is how you have it here in the English. Well, this is not quite as it seems.

The statement is that he vindicated himself. This is the verb form from tzedek, the noun tzedek, which means righteous or tzedek, righteousness or righteous. If you make this a verb, to make righteous, to declare righteous, to establish the righteousness, it basically says that Job declared the righteousness of himself.

Or Job righteoused himself is how this appears in Hebrew. So the very first thing that is given to us in this chapter, after the words of Job are ended, is that the three men ceased answering Job. Now the word for cease here is shabbat.

You know what that means, right? You rest, you quit, you stop. Sabbath comes from this word. So the three literally says, and sabbathed the three and stopped the three from the three men and made no more answer to Job So because he, and this is emphatic, he himself, there is a pronoun here, who.

In Hebrew who is he, he is she. That is just the way it works. When you say who in Hebrew, you are saying he.

When you say he in Hebrew, you are saying she. So who is he and he is she. It is one of the first things they teach you.

But it says because who, tzedek, he himself made himself righteous. Or because he was righteous in his eyes. Because he was righteous in his eyes.

Now some manuscripts say in their eyes. He was righteous in their eyes. But this doesn't make a whole lot of sense, given the context.

But in the Syriac, in the Septuagint, and Symechnus, who is an ancient Greek witness, all of them have this, he was righteous in their eyes. As though Job's final couple of arguments just, they said, well, I guess you are righteous. And that doesn't really fit.

But they realized that they could not move him from the view, his own view, that he was righteous. We have talked about this confidence. How do you have confidence that you are in the right? There is nothing wrong with having that confidence.

This has often been interpreted that Job was self-righteous. But there is no accusation made. God doesn't say, Job, you are a self-righteous bad guy.

It doesn't occur. But they saw that he was vindicated in his own eyes. That he saw no wrongdoing.

So they stopped answering. Then, literally, and pay attention here, Then the nose of Elihu burned. That's what it says.

The nose of Elihu burned. It's a figure of speech in Hebrew. And that's the first thing in the verse.

Then burned the nose of Elihu ben Barakel ha-buzi. In your English, I think, they try to follow this word order somewhat. But it says wrath, and then it gives his name, and then it says was aroused.

But af, A-P-H here is the word for nose. You find this in many places in Scripture. Probably one of the most famous is Proverbs 30-33.

I like this one because it's very graphic. As the churning of milk produces butter, and the ringing of the nose produces blood, so the forcing of wrath produces strife. Like, churning produces butter, ringing the nose produces blood, so forcing wrath produces strife.

You're just asking for it. It's a great verse. In the plural, this is often translated nostrils, like the breath of God's nostrils is used when it says God breathed into his nostrils.

The breath of life is the plural form of this word. Same thing in Exodus 15-8, where they're celebrating departing the Red Sea. They say with the blast of your nostrils, the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright, and so on.

It's the place where you would put a ring ornament. You know, people now put rings in their nose, just as they've done since ancient times. The story of the servant going to get Rebecca for Isaac.

In Genesis 24, the servant put the nose ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her wrist, when he identifies her from the family of Bethuel, and so on. So this is nose. Ah, A-P-H, it's nose.

And his nose burned. Well, sometimes this refers to sort of the whole face, but it means he was livid. The connotation here is that he just was red-faced.

And of course he gives this description later on. So the nose burned of Elihu. Now, this is interesting.

What can you deduce about his name? We've talked about enough Hebrew in the past. What is his name? El, we know what that is, right? It's the short form of God's name, Elohim. Eli means what? Eli, Eli, Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachne.

Eli, Eli, what does it mean? My God. Elihu. What does hu mean in Hebrew? What does hu mean? I just recovered it.

Who is he, and he is she. So, my God is he. He is my God.

Elihu. Now, let's think about this a little more. Who is the prophet that went up in the fiery chariot? Elijah.

What does his name mean? El, Eli. My God is Yahweh. Very similar.

Elihu, Eliya. You wouldn't say Eliel, would you? That would be kind of redundant. So, Elihu.

My God is he. Or, he is my God. The son of Barachel.

Can you make anything out of that name? Some of you can, if you're familiar with a church in Houston. It has part of this as its name. Barach means what? Blessing, to bless.

Barachel, the blessing of God. God's blessing. The Buzzite.

We know from Genesis 22, 21, that Huz and Buzz were nephews of Abraham. Sons of his brother Nahor. It tells you at the end of chapter 22 of Genesis, it came to pass after these things, it was told Abraham saying, Indeed, Milcah has born children to your brother Nahor.

Huz, his firstborn. Buzz, his brother. Chemuel, the father of Aram.

Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaf, and Bethuel. And Bethuel begot Rebekah. So, Buzz was Rebekah's uncle.

Abraham's nephew. Now, the Buzzites are therefore cousins to the Israelites. It also tells us that he is of the family of Ram.

This is interesting mainly because the family of Ram is mentioned in connection with the tribe of Judah. It's not the same Ram, but the sons of Judah through Perez include Ram. Ram is the father of Abinadab and so on.

In fact, this is the line that is near to the line of David himself. So, you have the line given in Ruth 4. The genealogy of Perez. Remember the whole story of Judah and his daughter-in-law and the sons that died.

And she set herself up as a prostitute, waylaid him in the road, got him to sleep with her, and she got pregnant by her father-in-law and had his staff and everything to prove. And when they were about to condemn her to death for unchastity, it turned out that he was the guy that had been unchaste. Anyway, her son was Perez.

Perez begot Hezron. Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Abinadab.

Abinadab begot Nashon. Nashon begot Solomon. Solomon begot Boaz.

Boaz begot Obed. Obed begot Jesse. And Jesse begot David.

So, right at the end of the book of Ruth, Ram is in the line of David. Now, this is not the same Ram. This is obviously several generations earlier.

But it is interesting that he is associated with the tribe of Judah and specifically with the line of David just by the similarity of name. So, we were not given this kind of information about Eliphaz or Bildad or Zophar, were we? We were told their town and that was it. Elihu, we're given much more information.

We're given his father. We're given his family. We're given his ancestry all the way back to Abraham.

And I ask myself, why? Why do we have all this information about Elihu? Well, each of these names is significant. Remember, this is a poetic section. These lines occur in couplets.

Elihu, he is my God. Barakel, God blesses. Buzz takes you all the way back to Abraham and the promises made to Abraham and not necessarily to his relatives.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Buzz is real close, but he's a nephew. He's not a son.

Of the family of Ram. His nose gets inflamed. Why? Well, it tells us again his wrath was roused.

In fact, we are told this three separate times. His nose catches fire three times here. It's a threefold wrath.

He's angry. Why? Because Job justified himself rather than God. Now, first of all, we were told that Job was righteous in his own eyes.

And that's why the three initial friends stopped talking. Now, we're told that Elihu is angry because Job, now we have the verb form where before we had the adjective. He was tzaddik in his own eyes.

He was righteous. Now we have tzadko, which is the verb form. Job righteoused himself.

Job declared himself righteous. Job made himself righteous. And when it says himself, it's actually his soul.

His nose was on fire on account of he, Job, tzaddik, his soul. Then we have ma elohim. Ma is the preposition that goes in front there.

Mem means of or from. And so this causes debate. Does it mean declared himself righteous apart from God? Mem can mean this when it's used in this way as a preposition.

Declared himself righteous apart from God. That is a possibility. If you look at your translation, it says rather than God.

Didn't declare God to be righteous, declared himself to be righteous. Well, we'll have to see what the statements tell us. Get more context to be able to interpret this correctly.

I don't want to say what it is right now. So, he justified himself and there's some relationship here to God. Either rather than justifying God or justified himself apart from God.

It's of God, from God. You could even say that Elihu is upset because Job seems to claim authority from God that he is righteous. He's righteous from God.

He says, look, I'm claiming divine authority for the fact that I'm righteous. We'll have to wait and see what this exactly means. So, also, verse 3. Against his three friends, his nose was on fire.

Why? Because they found no answer. They could not find an answer. And they had declared guilty Job.

They declared Job guilty and they had no answer. This is sort of the false witness idea. They had no evidence.

They said he was guilty, but when asked why is he guilty, they had no answer. That's the idea. No evidence would almost be a good translation here.

They found no evidence and yet had condemned Job. They had no answer. Now, verse 4. Because they were years older than he, Elihu had waited to speak to Job.

When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was aroused. How many times are we told that Elihu is angry? Twice in verse 2. Again in verse 3. And again in verse 5. Four times we're told that his nose caught fire. So, in verse 6. Elihu, and once again we're given this information as though if we missed it the first time, look at it again.

The son of Barakel the Buzite. Answered and said. Now, he says, I am young in years and you are old.

He's going to give these four speeches and he's going to do it on the authority not of having standing, not of having seniority, not because he's old or wise or knows the traditions or had an angel speak to him in the night. What is his authority? Since he's young in years, he's got to have some excuse to speak. Because normally, it's kind of like we say, children are to be seen and not heard.

He's much younger. And normally in the ancient Near East, in a council of elders and so on, young guys just wouldn't speak. They don't have any grounds upon which to speak.

What does he claim? Because there is a spirit in man and the spirit within me compels me. This is his argument. There is a spirit in man and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

Therefore, I say, listen to me. I too have the spirit of God, he says. So I will speak.

He goes on to say, I listen to you. Basically, the implication is, now you ought to listen to me. Now, a lot of this is kind of obscure.

When you read through it, when he says, lest you say we have found wisdom, God will vanquish him, not man. Now he has not directed his words against me, so I will not answer him with your words. The long and the short of this is, Elihu says, I have listened to you, now I want you to listen to me.

Why? There is a spirit within me, God is prompting me, I feel compelled to speak. What is the compulsion that Elihu feels? What are we told four times in the first five verses? He is angry. He is frustrated.

Now, let's think about the situation. Job has been destroyed. He has lost all of his stuff.

Ten children have been killed. These men are speaking. Job is speaking.

And Elihu is angry about what? Well, he is angry because Job is declaring himself righteous, somehow relative to God, and because the men have condemned Job and have not produced any evidence, have not given an answer for it. When Job refutes their condemnation, they have no answer, etc. Now, let me just ask you.

If you were standing by listening to these first 30 chapters of Job, would this have made you angry, as a young man, listening to the back and forth? I am somewhat mystified by this very emphatic declaration of Elihu's anger. Why is he so frustrated? He says, I am full of words. The spirit within me compels me.

Indeed, my belly is like wine that has no vent. It is ready to burst like new wineskins. Now, this is interesting to me, because where is the other place in the Bible where you have talk about new wine and new wineskins? It's the Lord Jesus, from the tribe of Judah, descended at one point through Ram.

And this is an imaginative leap. I am not saying anything by way of dogma here. But there are three friends.

How many parts are there to the classic Old Testament? You have the law, the prophets, and the writings. It's not a big leap of the imagination to see that Eliphaz might speak of the law. He is the senior guy.

The law was revealed through messengers, through angels. He talks about the angels coming in the night. The prophets, those who have carried the traditions for Israel for hundreds of years.

The writings are the pragmatic, practical, cut to the chase, proverbial wisdom. It's not real difficult

to make at least a rough correspondence of the law, the prophets, and the writings. Although, think about it now, they don't yet exist in this day.

But in retrospect, this is why I say it's a bit of an imaginative leap, but it occurs to me. You have this testimony that declares to Job the basis for being sinful, and the basis for punishment from God. And he says, but wait, I'm not guilty of those.

And yet, he seems to be suffering the penalty anyway. Elihu is four-fold angry at this whole development, and he says, I'm about to burst. I must speak, even though I'm young.

You may run me out of the tent on a rail here, but I just have to speak. I have a spirit in me that is prompting me, and I can't help it. Well, we have plenty of scripture that talks about the spirit prompting.

It will be given to you in that hour what you should say. If any man comes to me and is thirsty, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water. There's a lot of allusion to future things that don't exist in even incipient form in Job's day.

But that's not a limitation for God who can put things in the past that are going to come to fruition in the future. So, just keep all of those observations at hand. Now, Elihu addresses himself to the three friends.

Then in verse 15, he turns and addresses himself to Job. It's real obvious. They are dismayed and answer no more.

This is part of why he's angry. They are dismayed. Words escape them.

I have waited, but because they did not speak, because they stood still and answered no more, I will answer on my part. Because something needs to be said. They have fallen short.

Their testimony, their words are insufficient. I am going to fill in the gap, is what he's saying. I will speak that I may find relief.

I must open my lips and answer. Let me not show partiality to anyone, nor let me flatter any man. For I do not know how to flatter, else my Maker would soon take me away.

Now, we got all the way to the end of this chapter, and you would expect Job to respond. That's how it's always worked before. Somebody speaks, and you would just stop and place.

Here comes Job. Job says nothing. And so, Elihu is going to deliver himself of a second speech, beginning in verse 1 of chapter 33.

He's going to give yet a third speech in chapter 34. And he's going to give a fourth speech. He's just going to keep going and going.

He's going to give these four speeches, with no answer, no interruption. Now, this is surprising, because it's unprecedented. Everything about Elihu is different.

So, what is the substance of his first speech? He introduces himself. He says why he's going to speak. He talks to the men and says, you have no answer.

He talks to Job, and he says they have no answer. And now he's going to get launched in chapter 33. Please, Job, hear my speech and listen to all my words.

Now I open my mouth. The preliminaries are out of the way. Nobody's run me out yet, so here I go.

Now I open my mouth. My tongue speaks in my mouth. My words come from my upright heart.

My lips utter pure knowledge. And here again, for the third time, he says, the Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. This is kind of fascinating, because there's very little said about the Old Testament ministry of the Holy Spirit.

You have a little bit about the tabernacle workmen and so on. You have the Spirit coming on the judges, like Samson and Gideon and so on. But in terms of the average Israelite operating under the law, someone other than an extraordinary individual, you hear very little about the Spirit of God operating in and around people.

And yet here, before the law, before Moses, before the prophets, before the writings, we have all of this talk from Elihu about God's Spirit, the Ruach of God. He says, I'm going to speak. Verse 5, if you can answer me, set your words in order before me.

Take your stand. Truly, I am as your spokesman before God. Now we're getting to the meat of it.

Now we're getting to the heart of it. You talked about needing a mediator. You wanted a daisman.

You wanted an intermediary who would represent you. I am as your spokesman before God. I also have been formed out of clay.

Surely no fear of me will terrify you, nor will my hand be heavy on you. Now, this is, as they say in literature, pregnant language. This carries some freight.

This has some meat in it. I am as your spokesman before God. Who is our spokesman before God? Who sits at God's right hand making intercession? Who declares every day the acceptability of humanity in God's sight because he's sitting right there in God's presence? Who is made out of the clay just like we are? It's the Lord Jesus Christ.

Elihu. He is my God. This is the man's name.

The man's name is, if you say Elihu, if you see him and you say, Oh, Elihu, he is my God. If you

say Barak El, his family is the family of Barak El. Blessing of God.

So, of all possible names, of all possible families, why do we have these and why is it emphasized for us twice in the context? They used to tell us in seminary, well, you can't see anything in a passage that the original audience would not have seen. And to me, this means you can never see Christ in the Levitical offerings. You can never see a lot of the archetypes and the symbols that God put into the Old Testament types because if you refuse to look at the anti-type or the fulfillment and look at the Bible as a whole, you're giving yourself an artificial limitation.

All these things were written for our instruction, the New Testament says about the Old. All these things were written for our instruction. So, I say that's a bad rule.

I see nothing in the Bible that says you can't look at the Old Testament and anticipate what's coming in the New. And when you see Joshua leading the people across the Jordan where Moses could not, that's significant. Moses representing the law couldn't bring people, couldn't bring sons to glory, couldn't bring them to the place of maturity and blessing and fulfillment.

It took Yeshua to do that. Nothing wrong at all with thinking about Jesus Christ being foreshadowed by the man who bore the identical name in the Old Testament in the same way. I think we're going to see in these speeches by Elihu, elements.

I'm not saying every single thing he says, but there are going to be elements of his argument that are going to foreshadow the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is one of them right here. Set your words in order before me.

Take your stand. You know what this means? I will be the arbitrator. Bring your case to me.

What does Jesus say in the New Testament? All authority has been given to me in heaven and in earth. My Father has delegated judgment to me. What judgment seat are you and I going to stand at? It's the judgment seat of Christ.

He is the one to whom we have to make our case for every thought and every word. Set your words in order before me. Take your stand.

I am as your spokesman before God. I also have been formed out of clay. No fear of me will terrify you.

Let not your heart be troubled, Jesus says. God has not given us the spirit of fear, but power and love and a sound mind in Christ. Perfect love casts out fear.

No fear of me will terrify you, nor will my hand be heavy on you. What did Jesus say? Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Surely you have spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the sound of your words, saying, I am pure without transgression.

I am innocent and there is no iniquity in me. Yet he finds occasions against me. He counts me as his enemy.

He puts my feet in the stocks. He watches all my path. Who is Elihu talking to here? Job.

What is the nature of Job's complaint? I have done nothing wrong, and yet I am suffering. And I don't understand this. He finds occasions against me.

He puts my feet in the stocks. He watches all my paths. Now, this is a quote of Job.

This is a summary of Job's argument. Eliphaz said, I am unhappy. My nose is on fire because you have said these things.

And he is going to respond in verse 12 and give an analysis of Job's words. Is Elihu right? Is he wrong? Does he properly or improperly characterize Job? Well, now we're getting into the heart of the matter. So we're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we'll pick up in chapter 33, verse 12. We're going to analyze Elihu's analysis and see if this pattern of seeming to foreshadow the Lord Jesus Christ continues.