

20a JOB

Good evening, this is Friday the 29th of September 2006. We continue our study in the book of Job, resuming at chapter 35. Let's take a moment as we begin to, I always say, clear our minds.

I guess that's really not the best thing. I don't want everyone to utterly clear their minds. But to focus our attention, concentrate our thoughts in the direction of God's Word, and ensure that God the Holy Spirit has room to teach us, because as you well know, it is His ministry that transcends both the teaching and the hearing, so that each of us can learn and benefit from God's Word.

Shall we pray? Father, it is an exciting prospect to look forward to a time of fellowship and study in Your Word. We know that there are great and wonderful things contained in every page, every line, every word contained in the Scriptures, and we are so grateful that we have our own personal copy. We can assemble freely with fellow believers and spend time seeking a better understanding and a more thorough opportunity for application by familiarizing ourselves and learning the deeper truths of Your Word.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will find us teachable, will be able to make perspicacious to us the truths that are contained in this great passage. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

We launch tonight into chapter 35 of Job. If you have been tracking along with Elihu's presentation, you know that in chapter 35 he begins his third speech. You can easily find the markers for his speeches because the narrator breaks in at the beginning of each one and says, then Elihu answered, or Elihu answered and said.

And, of course, the only lead-in we need to this is just to quickly glance back up at the end of chapter 34. You remember last time the major point that was made, and it was kind of slow going because we don't have a real great translation to afford us a clear view of the argument. It's going to be easier going in chapter 35.

But there's a contrast between genuinely wicked men who deserve punishment from God, receive punishment from God. Other people look and say, oh look, there's a wicked man receiving his punishment from God. And someone who is suffering for one of several other reasons that occur in God's plan.

And if you know someone well enough, you often realize that here is a person that is really asking and seeking and knocking. Someone who has got their tree planted by the rivers of water and is still undergoing great challenge. So this suffering is not simple discipline for some unconfessed sin or evil.

This is for some other purpose. Elihu straightens out the three friends, talks about Job's situation and says, Job is not a man who hangs around with the wicked. He doesn't talk like the wicked.

He doesn't do the things that the wicked men do. You men ought to know this. God is looking for the man who will say, what I can't see, what I don't understand is okay.

I want to learn from this experience. I know that I am not in line for discipline and yet I know that you have set this hard answer before me, this hard task. This is the thing that God does in a more general sense for all mankind.

We saw that in Ecclesiastes. It is a hard answer that God has given the sons of men. It is a difficult answer to face death, to face mortality, to face corruption, to face the inconclusive nature of life on this planet.

It doesn't seem to right itself in terms of justice. It reminds me of the goldfish I have been working with for the past couple of weeks. I said, Patty and I have been trying to get that little guy well for months and months.

He got in a really bad way about a week ago. He flipped over and couldn't get back right side up. So I reached in with the little thing and flipped him back over.

I tried to hold him up and let him get his bearings. I take the little plastic aquarium tool away and he just flips back over like he has a bubble in the wrong spot. I flip him back over and he flips back over.

He swims around and he is trying to get right side up. He keeps flipping upside down. This is often the death knell for a goldfish.

I am happy to say that at the moment, while he is not very buoyant, he is at least vertical. So we are continuing to try different things to see if we can get him to float. Not at the top, but to have sort of a zero bubble in terms of diving or surfacing.

Just a standard little submarine maintaining a constant depth kind of a thing. But this is the problem when we look at life. It seems like we want things to turn out a certain way.

We look at politics, we look at culture, we look at entertainment, we look at the trend in our society and we say, I can see what ought to happen on this issue. I can see what ought to happen with, name your favorite thing to get wrapped around the axel on. People look at abortion.

People look at who got elected or what somebody said or which bill passed or what the Supreme Court decided or what foreign policy did or didn't take place and what other people said or didn't say or did or didn't do. There is always something that is just not satisfactory from our point of view. And it seems like no matter how concerned you get, it's like a lot of times watching the Cowboys play football, you can root and strain and wish and hope and it all ends up kind of going in the wrong direction at the end.

That's because this life is only a part of the picture. We are in a limited time frame. And so Elihu made that point in chapter 34.

So we have to understand the purposes that God has in allowing challenges that have nothing to do with punishing sin. They have everything to do with let me learn what you have for me to learn. There is something that I am only going to be able to pick up and understand and appreciate in this situation.

So rather than focusing on how bad it is, help me learn those lessons. This happens in education all the time. You have simulations.

When I went to the basic school in Quantico, Virginia as a Marine Lieutenant, they took us out into the field and it was hot and it was nasty and there were all kinds of no-seams biting me and it was humid. They said, okay, Lieutenant Hall, you are the platoon commander. Here is your five-paragraph order.

Here is what you are supposed to do. All the other lieutenants become your platoon. You have to split them up and you have to figure out how you are going to approach and what your plan of attack is going to be to implement these general orders.

It's a real pain. It's hard to do. Everybody screws it up.

Everybody gets embarrassed. Your guys all die. Everybody is laying there dead at the end of the exercise.

The captain who is teaching the tactics is saying all of the typical Marine Corps things that are said to somebody who screws up. It's very hard to go through. But by the time you have been through that kind of thing in your general training, by the time you have been through it as a plebe or a cadet, by the time you have been through it as a boot in boot camp, by the time you have been through it as a guy who has been put under the gun in training and in testing, it's miserable and you wish you could be a thousand other places.

But by the time you finish, you are going to go into a new environment where those skills count. You are glad that this is not the first time you have had to think under pressure. It's not the first time you have faced this type of problem.

You have been already through it. You have had your baptism of fire. It's nothing new.

It really helps you to concentrate and to think. God knows this and God does this with us. Elihu makes that point.

So, men who are saying, well, Job just needs to be pressured even harder. Obviously, what God has put him through, as severe as it is, hasn't broken his pride and hasn't gotten him to admit his mistake. And so, would the Job were tried to the limit? This is the words that Elihu puts into the

mouths of the friends, so to speak.

He is giving the answers that befit sinful men who won't admit that they have a problem, who won't admit that they need to repent. Remember, all of those things Eliphaz, Bildad, so far were saying. He is just adding more sin to his sin.

He is just sinning even more. He is just heaping insult upon injury here. And he needs to suffer even more.

And that's how chapter 34 concludes. So, this is sort of addressed to the group. Remember, Elihu stood back and he said, listen, all of you men, here is what I have to say.

And he kind of sort of addressed the room. He addressed the crowd. The friends, Job, everybody.

Now, in chapter 35, the third speech begins. And it says, Then Elihu answered, Do you think... And I wish that we still had the old English convention of you versus thee and thou. You know why we had thee and thou back in the old English? Because that was the singular.

People, the pilgrims and the Puritans and people like that, they didn't say, I love you. They said, I love thee. You can still hear remnants of this in the traditional wedding vow.

I plight thee my trove. He didn't say, I plight you my trove. Because you was the plural.

Second person. Singular was thee and thou. Well, and now everything is you and it's muddy.

It's easy to see in Hebrew. It's easy to see in Greek. It's impossible to see in English.

Is this you in verse 2, singular or plural? You think, well, we haven't seen any other marks of change. And Elihu was speaking to the group in the last chapter. Well, guess what? This is singular.

So Elihu sort of, as it were, turns and faces Job and says, Do you think this is right? And I am going to give you a very literal translation as we go through these verses. Because I don't have any other way to get this to make sense. As long as we're going with what we have in our English translations here, all of the translations are interpretive.

And surprisingly, the Hebrew can be very straightforward and plain, and yet all of the various versions have the same interpretation. I think they all kind of look at each other's papers during the test, and as soon as one of them puts something down, the other one says, well, he put that down and nobody argued with him, so I'm going to put that down. You'll see what I mean when we get to a couple of these verses.

It's really quite interesting to note, to me anyway. So Elihu replies here, and a lot of the translations leave out the Hebrew. There's two verbs here.

The first word is answer. And answered Elihu, and said. The word for answer is ya'an, which is from ana, A-N-A-H, but it starts with the evil i-n because it's an evil answer that God has given to mankind back there in Ecclesiastes.

Ana can mean other things if it starts with an aleph. But this is ana, and answered Elihu, and said. Elihu answered and said.

And people say, well, that's just redundant. We're going to leave it out in English. If it was redundant, God wouldn't bother to put the two verbs in the Bible.

He answered and said. Why? Anytime you see this phrase, by the way, which occurs frequently in the Scripture, there's a reason. Sometimes it says, and Jacob said, this, that, and the other.

And Judah said, this, that, and the other. But when it says he answered and said, this links the content of what is coming up with that which immediately precedes it. It's almost like the word therefore in English.

Therefore. What's this upcoming material there for? Well, it is linked to, in some way, it is a response to, in some way, what has just been said. And that's an important concept.

Elihu isn't just saying this. He's not launching into a new topic. He is answering.

He is going to address what has just been, in this case, he's answering himself or answering his own rhetorical question. So Elihu answered and said. He's now going to ping off of what he just presented and advance his argument.

So he turns to Job here, in effect, and we know this because of the singular you. Elihu answered and said, This, do you think? That's all it is. Do you think this? Job, think what? That, Job, you just need more testing.

You need more pressure so that you can change your mind. If God presses you hard enough, you'll change your mind and admit some sort of sin. You know, that forced confession idea that is often presented in courts.

Well, the police pressured him and he just admitted. So, you know, cracked under torture. Okay, I'll sign the thing that says I'm a Yankee imperialist dog or whatever.

Anything to make the pain stop type of thing. If you've read any accounts of the guys in the Hanoi Hilton, everybody resisted as long as you could and then they would break down. And this is what you're taught to do in school.

You resist as long as you can, but you're not required to resist to the point of death. You resist as long as possible, give them as little as possible, and try to drag the process out in hope of

resolution, rescue, escape, or whatever. But you're not a bad man if when it gets so severe then you say, Okay, fine, what do you want me to sign? Everybody understands this.

It's silly to expect that anyone can endure week after week after week of brutality and torture. It's physically impossible to do. There is always a way to break somebody down.

And I won't go into all the details, but the basic question on the table here is, Well, Joe, what do you think? Do you need more pressure here so that you'll change your mind and admit that you're sinful? Of course, this is a rhetorical question. The answer is no. The next phrase here says basically for righteousness or for justice.

It's La Mishpat. Shafat is the verb that means to judge. Mishpat is justice or judgment.

But I think this is actually the prelude to the next sentence. He says, Do you think this? Then he says, For justice you say my righteousness from God. That's how the verse goes.

For justice you say my righteousness from God. And I think you can probably insert the italicized verb is between righteousness and from God. So for justice you say my righteousness is from God.

So what's the idea here? Is justice going to be based on confessing enough sin? Job, what do you think? Do you think this? What you have said or what you say in your past dialogues is that your righteousness is attributed by God. God is the one who determines whether or not you are righteous. Do you think this? For justice you say my righteousness is from God.

You don't say for justice, well, I have committed some real or imaginary sin. For justice you say my righteousness is from God. Verse 3 says in your New King James, For you say, What advantage will it be to you? What profit shall I have more than if I had sin? Now, if you have anything to write with, you might want to write down the literal translation of verse 3. Verse 3 literally says, For, or because, Because you say, What benefit to you? What do I benefit from my sin? That's almost word for word from the Hebrew.

Because you say, or for you say, What benefit to you? What do I benefit from my sin? Now, remember, these are two line poetic passages. And before we get too bogged down in just getting the words straight, and kind of drifting into Never Never Land, will these verses, verse 2 and verse 3, make a complete thought? Because then in verse 4, Elihu is going to say, I myself am going to talk about your words. So all we have to do is figure out what this verse 2 and verse 3 mean.

So, for justice you say, My righteousness is from God. For you say, What benefit to you? What do I benefit from my sin? The first line in verse 3 is an indirect quote. The second line is a direct quote.

That's why the person changes. Elihu is talking to Job, it's a singular you, and he says, When you

want justice, or with a view toward justice, you say, and you get the idea that Elihu is agreeing, My righteousness is from God. This is a universal truth throughout the Bible, isn't it? Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saves us.

God is at work in us to will and to do His good purpose. God has foreordained good works that we should walk in them. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Our righteousness comes from God. Jesus Christ has been made to us righteousness and peace and sanctification. Righteousness is imputed by God.

Abraham believed God and it was credited to him by God for righteousness. We don't produce righteousness. We are obedient, we are faithful, and we are credited with righteousness.

Ultimately, the righteousness of Christ. Right? This is true all the way through the Bible. So, Elihu says to Job, When it comes to justice, you rightly say, My righteousness is from God.

Any justice that comes to us is going to be based on God's righteousness. Boy, Bob Thame went on about this for years. God imputes His righteousness to you and then His justice can bless on account of that righteousness.

Now, verse 3, Because you say, What benefit is it to you? This is an indirect quote. Or, for you say, What benefit is it to you? Now you have a direct quote in the last half of the verse. This is what you say, What do I benefit from my sin? Verse 2 talks about righteousness.

Verse 3 talks about sin. Verse 2 talks about what God provides. My righteousness is from God.

Verse 3 talks about what man is capable of producing. I get no benefit from my sinfulness. Why should I hang on to my sinfulness? Elihu is saying, Are you going to cling to your sin? Are these guys right when they say that you are just refusing to break? Your pride is too strong.

God needs to discipline you further. You have already declared that you understand that your righteousness is from God. What benefit would you gain from your sin? This is what you have already said.

This is what you typically say. This is the nature of Job. This is what distinguishes him from the three friends.

Again, it is always going to be difficult. This is some of the oldest Hebrew in the Bible. It is going to always look and sound awkward as we go through it.

But if we can grab the concepts, we are on solid ground. What is the issue here? Righteousness is from God. Sin is produced by man.

Sometimes man gets disciplined for his sin. God is trying to turn him and change his mind. Other

times those same types of challenges can come.

It is not for judging sin. So what must it be for? To be able to exercise faith and be credited with even more righteousness. Abraham had to wait a long time for his son.

Why did he have to wait so long? Why didn't God give him a son when he was 30 instead of 100? Because Abraham believed God. The longer he trusted God and had faith in that promise, the more God was able to credit him with righteousness. Every day that Abraham woke up and said, well, it hasn't happened yet, but I know God is going to fulfill His promise, that is righteousness.

Job understands this. He says, look, when it comes to justice, I get righteousness from God. There is no benefit to my sin.

Why would I sin? Why would I mistrust Him? Why would I not continue to trust? My righteousness comes from God. You have said, what benefit is it to me? Where do I gain from my sin? And these are two different words for benefit in Hebrew, and I don't have time to tell, there is not a significant level of difference. It is like saying blessing versus benefit.

So now, Elihu is going to launch into the main part of the chapter. I Myself, he says, will answer you. And I say I Myself in my translation because the pronoun is included, which is kind of unusual in Hebrew.

It is always emphatic when the pronoun is included. So he says, I Myself, Ani, I Myself will answer you. But the word here is not answer.

And we want to keep our verbs straight because there are threads, like a tapestry, like a fabric that weave through this narrative, and the verbs create those threads. There is going to be this word answer that keeps showing up, and there is going to be a word for observing or taking note that runs through like a thread. And you can't believe, well, you can believe how the English freely changes the way it translates.

You can't begin to see what the consistent words are in the English translation. So, he doesn't actually say answer here. He says, I Myself will return.

I Myself will return. This is shuv. And shuv is one of those words that has a connotation, not a denotation.

The denotation, the literal meaning of the word is to turn or return. But the connotation is kind of like MacArthur. And I'm not making much of MacArthur, but there is a real famous, legendary thing that he said.

What did he say when he left the Philippines? I'll return. What did Arnold say when he walked away from the window in that building? I'll be back. When you say something about returning, it connotes the idea of promise, of faithfulness, of constancy.

I will return. I will return. I'll be back.

It has an element of promise to it. Especially when it's in the first person. It's kind of like when God says, I will visit my people.

So, Elihu here says, I will return to you your words and your friends with you. I will return, and you is stuck right on the end of the verb here. I will return you words.

And, of course, people say, well, gee, Sam, doesn't that mean answer? I will return you words? Well, why didn't he just say answer? He has been talking to Job, and he says, you've been constant. You have said some good things. You've said your righteousness is from God.

You've said, what benefit do I get from my sin? So, I'm going to... Remember how he said he was going to be the mediator? And how he was going to impart wisdom? How these great golden words of truth were going to drip from his lips? Well, this is the same kind of promise. He says, you have given these words of faith, and of confidence in God, and have spoken a right thing. I'm going to return some words to you just like that.

I'm going to return some words to you, and I'm going to return some words to your friends. We have these verses throughout Scripture. I will have mercy upon whom I have had mercy.

I will have compassion upon whom I have had compassion. To him that has, more will be given. To him that has not, even what he has will be taken away.

This speech by Elihu, this little phrase, is another reflection, I think, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because Job has spoken a certain kind of word. He has acknowledged that his righteousness comes from God.

He has acknowledged that there's no benefit to himself of sin. And that's why he excuses sin. That's why he is an upright man, and perfect in his ways.

Why he offers the sacrifices. And Elihu says, Job, I'm going to give you a return on your words. And I'm going to give your friends a return on their words.

So Job's words are good? He's going to get a return on those words. The friends' words, what were they like? Well, they were saying the right thing in a wrong way. Zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

And they're going to get a return on those words. So it's a lot more than just, I will answer. Remember, Elihu answered up in verse 1 and said, I will return words to you and to your companions with you.

Now, we get a beautiful image. It's always nice when we're in the middle of a lot of didactic ideas, a lot of teaching points, a lot of conversation about ideas, to get something you can kind of hook

your imagination on. This is why, by the way, guys like me, after a difficult slogging through of something, will take a break and give an illustration or give an anecdote.

Or a lot of guys who are more humorous than me will tell a joke or a funny story or something in the middle of their monologue or their teaching lecture. Why? Because it's difficult to sustain our concentration endlessly in what amounts to a one-sided conversation. So you need something to kind of wake you up.

Well, guess what? Elihu is doing the very same thing here. He says, look, in verse 5, look at the heavens and see and take note. Three different verbs for observation here.

Look at the heavens. This is from the Hebrew verb nabat. We used to have Bible records and they had a little kid running around, his name was Nebat.

Well, that name derives from this verb. And this means to look in a particular direction, to gaze fixedly. You can imagine that this would have been used if the guys watching Jesus disappeared out of sight at the ascension.

Nabat. So, look fixedly, nabat, and see. Ra-ah.

This is your classic word. You remember ra-ah with the aleph means to see. Ra-ah with the vav is the word for evil.

Look in the direction of the heavens. Shemayim. Same word you find in Genesis 1. And see and, now we have a really interesting word, shur.

Oh, shur. S-H-U-R. Shur.

And it means to, and it's translated a lot of different ways. It's translated observe. I like the translation which I believe the Tanakh uses.

No, it's not the Tanakh. It's the New English, well, they don't do it either. I don't know who does it.

Somebody got it. Well, they're not consistent. Nobody does it like I think they should have.

Take note. Take note is the idea here. Register what you see.

It's not just, observe is good if you understand it in the scientific sense. We're going to pour these three chemicals in a test tube and observe the result. We're going to watch closely.

We're going to take note. So, turn your eyes toward the heavens. Look at them and take note.

Look at the clouds. This is the shakak. Now, depending on who you read, the Jewish Publication Society says this is the skies.

But, shakak means dust or clouds, fine dust, thin clouds. There is something up there. It's not just

clear sky.

It's not blue skies smiling at me. This is stormy weather. This is clouds.

This is some kind of thing that you can gaze at and register. So, they are higher from you. That's the whole point of the observation exercise.

So, I translate this. Look at the heavens and see and take note of the clouds. They are high from you.

That's a very literal translation. They are high from you. They are separated from you.

They are up there and you are down here. Remember Jimi Hendrix, Purple Haze. Excuse me while I do what? Kiss the sky.

I'm sorry, but whatever else Jimi Hendrix did, he did not kiss the sky. He didn't touch. You can't reach up and touch the clouds.

They are higher than us. You can climb a very tall mountain maybe, but even then you can't see the cloud once you get up in it. It's a thing that seems to have substance, but it's way up there high and you can't touch it.

So, what's the idea? Elihu is trying to get this point across for the innocent bystanders. Look at the heavens, see them, and take note of the clouds. What's the first thing you notice? Can't reach them.

They are too high. Now, a lot of times we make a point and then we give an illustration. He's giving the illustration and now he's going to make the point.

If you sin, what do you accomplish against Him? In the New King James, that is perfect. That's exactly from my point of view. That's exactly the way I translate it.

If you sin, what do you accomplish against Him? The preposition is by, which is in, by, or with. What do you accomplish with Him? What do you accomplish? Do you get close to Him? Do you hurt Him in some way if you sin? And, they translate it or, but it's just the wow, which is just a connective. It connects the thought.

And, you multiply your transgressions. What do you do to Him? Different preposition here. Instead of by, which is in, by, or with, now you have la, which is to or for Him.

You sin and you multiply your transgressions. It's no different than standing there gazing up at the clouds. In the same way that the clouds are way too high for you to have any influence on them.

You can't wave your hand and mess them up. You can't exercise the power of thought and smudge them or make them go away. You have no power over the clouds because they're so

much higher than you.

In the same way, do you seriously think that your sins are a problem for God? Do they injure Him in some way? Do you accomplish something against Him? Have you advanced some sort of big agenda? Have you taken away territory? Have you destroyed commerce? Have you interrupted lines of supply? Have you in any way disrupted the plan and purpose of God with your sin? Just about as much as you standing on the ground, looking up in the heavens, taking close note of the clouds and realizing what a big difference there is. So, what's the real point here? Everybody's been making much of Job's sin and how angry God is going to get and how God's going to come down and land on him with both cleated boots because he must have done some horrible thing to the poor or he's been insensitive to this and the other. Look, your sins don't even make a ripple in God's pond.

You don't do anything to Him. Get over yourself. Don't think your sins are this big deal.

Sin is not an issue for God in the sense of damage. Sin is an issue for us in the sense of damage. It doesn't damage God.

It doesn't do anything to Him. People say, oh, God must be horrified. God must be this and that and the other by sin.

God is untouched by sin. He is as high over us as the clouds. And let's look at the other end of the spectrum in verse 7. If you are righteous, what do you give to Him? If you do some kind of a good deed, if you just really helped God out, He's gained some sort of benefit.

This is the word natan that we get Nathan from. Ma-bi-ten-lo. What have you given to Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? Oh, here, God.

Thought I'd help you out. Here's my helping hand. I know you were having trouble getting this person saved, but hey, I stepped in and handed him a tract and gave him the gospel and disciplined him and pestered him over my back fence.

And look, now they're saved. So I hope you appreciate my hard work on your behalf. If you are righteous, now here we've seen this word righteous again.

Where was the last place we saw it? Job said, my righteousness is from God. Now your translation here says more than God's. Where did Job ever say his righteousness was more than God? Where did he ever imply it? This interpretive translation comes from trying to find a way to get these speeches to make sense.

So you'll notice in the New King James, this whole chapter is titled, Ellen Who Condemns Job's Self-Righteousness. Job has puffed himself up. Well, this won't fly if you know where we're going in the book when God says Job is the only one that got it right.

So whatever else is going on, Job is not self-righteous. God would hardly condone self-righteousness later in the book. And we find when we translate this correctly, that's not what he's saying at all.

And you can also understand why a lot of translators probably would not be sensitive to the theological issues that are being discussed here, because these are high. I think there's this sort of unconscious tendency to look down on the ancient man and the ancient writer and say, well, the poor, benighted, agrarian, uneducated, these are just simple staff-wielding goat herds and stuff. And so let's try and see if we can make sense out of their ramblings instead of realizing that these men are probably a whole lot smarter than us.

And the issues that they address and the images that they paint with their narrative are something that we have to work our way up to, not condescend down to. So Elihu understands what Job said, and Job appreciates that Elihu picked it up, that Job has been relying all along for his righteousness from God. He's not saying, I'm more righteous than God.

What did Job say? I could not stand before God, because even when I haven't done anything wrong, I would still be guilty standing before Him. He didn't say anything like, well, I'd hold God to account. So when you look at the clouds and realize that they're high, you realize that it gives you perspective.

Whether it's man's sin or man's righteousness, this doesn't harm or benefit God in any way. His ways are higher than our ways. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts.

He says in verse 8, New King James says, Your wickedness affects a man such as you, and your righteousness a son of man. Literally, to a man like yourself is your wickedness, and for a son of man is your righteousness. Your wickedness can have a deleterious effect, a bad effect on someone like yourself, someone down on the same ground level that you're on.

And for a son of man is your righteousness. Now what I find interesting about this is the juxtaposition of man and son of man in these two lines. Where else have we seen this? Later on, hundreds of years later, David the psalmist is going to write, What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him? And it's this same idea turned almost literally on its head.

In the same way that what we do neither benefits nor harms God, if you look at it from God's perspective, David says, when I gaze up at the heavens, you know what I see when I gaze at the heavens? You know what I think? I think God is so far up there, why does he bother with me? What is man that God would bother with him? Or the son of man that God would come down and visit him, would come down and benefit him? And when you put these two passages together and you speculate on, you know, did David know the book of Job? It's really fascinating because David of course gets it. You read Psalm 51, he understands sin and repentance. Man can only make a difference to people on his own level.

God is far higher. So where is Elihu going to take this point? We need to pause here and take our break. When we come back we'll pick up at verse 9 and we'll see now what is the effect that people have on each other and what is the remedy for that effect.

So we're down at ground level and that's where we'll pick up as soon as we come back.