

Job 31 Job Defends His Righteousness

Truth

Job's Final Defense: Discourse from Ch. 26-31

- **Ch. 26**
 1. **Rebukes:** 3 friends for being no help
 2. **Declares:** God's Wisdom. Sovereignty over Judgment/Creation/Satan
- **Ch. 27 Reaffirms:** His Integrity/ Commitment not to curse God and die
- **Ch. 28 Discourse:** Value of wisdom above riches
- **Ch. 29 Daydreams:** Earlier better days. Family, Home, Health
- **Ch. 30 Confused:** Lashes out at friends/Pours out his soul/**Cries out to God...**

I cry out to You but You do not answer me. **Yet...**

Job 31:1 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I **look upon** a young woman?"

- **Resolution:** I will not lust.

2 For what is the allotment of God from above, And the inheritance of the Almighty from on high? 3 Is it not **destruction for the wicked**, And disaster for the workers of iniquity? 4 Does [God] not **see my ways**, And count all my steps?

Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the Lord are in every place...Keeping watch on the evil/good.

5 "**If I have walked** with falsehood, Or if my foot has hastened to deceit, 6 Let me be weighed on **honest scales**, That God may know my integrity. 7 If my step has turned from the way, Or my heart walked after my eyes, Or if any spot adheres to my hands, 8 Then let me sow, and another eat; Yes, let my harvest be **rooted out**."

First of many "If I have _____ then judge me" statements

- **If I have been deceitful...**let me be judged

He is really a good man but he has this terrible blind spot...pride. [JV McGee]

9 "**If my heart has been enticed** by a woman, Or if I have lurked at my neighbor's door, 10 Then let my wife grind for another, And let others bow down over her. 11 For that would be wickedness; Yes, it would be iniquity deserving of judgment. 12 For that would be a fire that consumes to destruction, And would **root out** all my increase."

- **If I have committed adultery...**let me be judged

Matthew 5:28 ...I say to you that whoever **looks at a woman to lust** for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Job now answers Eliphaz Lies/Slander from Ch. 22...and more

13 **"If I have despised** the cause of my male or female servant When they complained against me, 14 What then shall I do when God rises up? When He punishes, how shall I answer Him? 15 Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? 16 **"If I have** kept the poor from their desire, Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, 17 Or eaten my morsel by myself, So that the fatherless could not eat of it 18 (But from my youth I reared him as a father, And from my mother's womb I guided the widow); 19 **If I have** seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, Or any poor man without covering; 20 If his heart has not blessed me, And if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; 21 **If I have** raised my hand against the fatherless, When I saw I had help in the gate; 22 Then let my arm fall from my shoulder, Let my arm be torn from the socket. 23 For destruction from God is a terror to me, And because of His magnificence I cannot endure.

- **If I have...**

1. **Mistreated** Servants
2. **Neglected** Poor/Orphans

If I have despised the most vulnerable of humanity...let me be judged
Those You created in Your image...

Proverbs 14:31 He who oppresses the poor **reproaches his Maker**, But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.

Proverbs 17:5 He who mocks the poor **reproaches his Maker**; He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

Proverbs 22:2 The rich/poor have this in common, The **Lord is the maker** of them all.

24 **"If I have** made gold my hope, Or said to fine gold, 'You are my confidence'; 25 **If I have** rejoiced because my wealth was great, And because my hand had gained much; 26 **If I have** observed the sun when it shines, Or the moon moving in brightness, 27 So that my heart has been secretly enticed, And my mouth has kissed my hand; 28 This also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, For I would have denied God who is above. 29 **"If I have** rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me, Or lifted myself up when evil found him 30 (Indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin By asking for a curse on his soul)...

- **If I have** trusted in riches...let me be judged

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Psalms 62:10 ...If riches increase, Do not set your heart on them. [I did not]

- **If I have** trusted in Astrology/Fortune Telling/Crystals...let me be judged

Deuteronomy 4:19 ...take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.

- **If I have** celebrated my enemies fall...let me be judged

Proverbs 24:17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls...do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles...

- Edom rejoice at Israel calamity. They still do [911]

Obadiah 1:12 ...you should not have gazed on the day of your brother In the day of his captivity; Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah In the day of their destruction; Nor should you have **spoken proudly** In the day of distress ...**15** "For the day of the Lord upon all the nations is near; As you have done, it shall be done to you; Your reprisal shall return upon your own head ...**18** The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau [Modern Jordan] shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau," For the Lord has spoken.

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you...

I have feared God: I challenge you to prove otherwise

31 **If** the men of my tent have not said, 'Who is there that has not been satisfied with his meat?' 32 (But no sojourner had to lodge in the street, For I have opened my doors to the traveler); 33 **If I have** covered my transgressions as Adam, By hiding my iniquity in my bosom, 34 Because I feared the great multitude, And dreaded the contempt of families, So that I kept silence And did not go out of the door

- **If I have** not offered hospitality...Let me be judged
- **If I have** tried to cover my sin...let me be judged

Proverbs 28:13 He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

— 35 Oh, that I had one to hear me! Here is my mark. Oh, that the Almighty would answer me, That my Prosecutor [accuser] had written a book! 36 Surely I would carry it on my shoulder, And bind it on me like a crown; 37 I would declare to Him the number of my steps; **Like a prince I would approach Him.**

- **Job's Demands** he would later repent of in Ch. 42
 1. A Hearing Before God
 2. An Answer From God
 3. A Document Declaring Job's Innocence signed by God

Like a Prince I would approach God?

38 "If my land cries out against me, And its furrows weep together; 39 If I have eaten its fruit without money, Or caused its owners to lose their lives; 40 Then let thistles grow instead of wheat, And weeds instead of barley."

- **16 If I have** statements asking God to judge
- Job did what was right/His heart and motivation were not 100% as per...

I have been so good that God is unjust in treating me as He is.
IOWs God is wrong.

If there is a dispute between us and God it is us that are wrong 100% of the time. [NJC]

40b... The words of Job are ended...

Job 32 Elihu Contradicts Job's Friends

Truth

1 So these three men ceased answering Job, **because he was righteous in his own eyes.** 2 Then **the wrath of Elihu**, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, **was aroused against Job**; his wrath was aroused because he justified himself rather than God. 3 Also against his three friends his wrath was aroused, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

- **Elihu:** lit. He is my God
- **Buzite:** lit. Contempt.
- **Wrath aroused** against...
 1. **Job** Justified himself. lit said God is wrong/I am right
 2. **3 Friends** Had no answer/Yet condemned Job

Now Elihu is going to break into the conversation. He doesn't have an answer for Job but comes closer than the others had come. And I do think that he prepares the way for God finally to break in upon this scene. [JV McGee]

- **Elihu:** Ch's. 32-37
 1. God is Speaking through me Ch. 32
 2. God is Gracious Ch. 33
 3. God is Just Ch. 34-35
 4. God is Great Ch. 36-37

4 Now because they were **years older than he**, Elihu had waited to speak to Job. 5 When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his **wrath was aroused.**

- **Elihu is Angry:** Mentioned 4x so far

Tension building in silence. Elihu comes to a Boiling Point

6 So Elihu, the son of Barachel 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. 7 I said, 'Age should speak, And multitude of years should teach wisdom.' 8 But there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty gives him **understanding**. 9 Great men are not always **wise**, Nor do the aged always understand justice.

God gives wisdom to all who humbly ask ...no matter what age

James 1:5 If **any of you** lacks wisdom, **let him ask of God**, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be **given to him**.

1 Kings 3:5 ...the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! **What shall I give you?**" ...**7**...I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. 9 Therefore give to Your servant an **understanding heart** to judge Your people, that I may **discern between good and evil** ...**10** The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, 12 behold, I have done according to your words; see, **I have given you a wise and understanding heart**, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.

- Proverbs/Song of Solomon/Ecclesiastes

10 "Therefore I say, 'Listen to me, I also will declare my opinion.' 11 Indeed I waited for your words, I listened to your reasonings, while you searched out what to say. 12 I paid close attention to you; And surely **not one of you convinced Job**, Or answered his words— 13 Lest you say, 'We have found wisdom'; **God will vanquish him**, not man.

None of you could vanquish/break Job...but God will
Ultimately true as we witness: Prayer and Holy Spirit

14 Now [Job] has not directed his words against me; So I will not answer him with your words. 15 They are dismayed and answer no more; Words escape them. 16 And I have waited, because they did not speak, Because they stood still and answered no more. 17 **I also will answer my part, I too will declare my opinion**. 18 For **I am full of words**; The spirit within me compels me. 19 Indeed my belly is like wine that has no vent; It is ready to burst like new wineskins. 20 I will speak, that I may find relief; I must open my lips and answer. 21 Let me not, I pray, show partiality to anyone; Nor let me flatter any man. 22 For I do not know how to flatter, Else my Maker would soon take me away.

- **Elihu**: Possible author of Job using pronoun "I" in v17

I'm not here to mess around...

Almost all modern interpreters have found Elihu to be insufferably wordy. Mackenzie says that it takes him twenty-four verses to say, **Look out! I'm going to speak!** [Smick]

Job 33 Elihu Contradicts Job

Truth

1 "But **please, Job, hear my speech**, And listen to **all my words**. 2 Now, I open my mouth; My tongue speaks in my mouth. 3 My words come from my upright heart; My lips utter pure knowledge. 4 The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life. 5 If you can answer me, Set your words in order before me; Take your stand. 6 Truly I am as your spokesman [lit. your mouth] before God; I also have been formed out of clay. 7 Surely no fear of me will terrify you, **Nor will my hand be heavy on you.**

- **Elihu claims the Anointing** of God's Spirit upon him to speak...

As we seek to speak by the Spirit of God to correct a brother/sister
Humbly consider we are all formed from clay...

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual **restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For **if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.**

[All] Ministry is powerless, valueless, and fruitless unless man is speaking as the oracles of God. [JV McGee]

- **V5 If you can answer me do so:** Thinks he's just a little better

Despite all the good that might be said of Elihu, the fact remains that he really is an *astoundingly pompous windbag*. [Mason]

8 "Surely you have spoken in my hearing, And I have heard the sound of your words, saying, 9 'I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent, and there is no iniquity in me. 10 Yet He finds occasions against me, He counts me as His enemy; 11 He puts my feet in the stocks, He watches all my paths.'

- This is what I remember you saying Job...
 1. I am pure/I am w/out transgression [trans-aggression/rebellion]
 2. I am innocent of sin...**yet God is punishing me anyway**

I hear you saying God is wrong...you are right

- **Irrational Logic**

1. The thing that is happening to me is wrong
2. God is Sovereign/He can stop the thing but He is not
3. Therefore God is wrong by letting this thing happen

Problem? We don't see the whole picture and neither does Job
The question is not why God allows suffering...Why does God intervene at all

12 "Look, in this you are not righteous. I will answer you, For **God is greater than man.** 13 **Why do you contend with Him?** For He does not give an accounting of any of His words. 14 For God may speak in one way, or in another, Yet man does not perceive it. 15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, When deep sleep falls upon men, While slumbering on their beds, 16 Then He opens the ears of men, And seals their instruction. 17 In order to turn man from his deed, And conceal pride from man, 18 He keeps back his soul from the Pit, And his life from perishing by the sword.

Why do you contend with God who is Greater than man?

Isaiah 45:9 "Woe to him who **strives with his Maker!** Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth! Shall the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' Or shall your handiwork say, 'He has no hands'?"

- Israel: heb. God prevails. rt. Contend with.

Jacob wrestled with God and would not let go until the Lord blessed him. Jacob's name was changed to Israel and the Lord blessed him with a lifelong limp and a new heart. [NJC]
God is greater than man and not responsible to man [JV McGee]

- God chooses to intervene
 1. God may speak to correct
 2. God may use suffering to correct...

19 "Man is also chastened with pain on his bed, And with strong pain in many of his bones, 20 So that his life abhors bread, And his soul succulent food. 21 His flesh wastes away from sight, And his bones stick out which once were not seen. 22 Yes, his soul draws near the Pit, And his life to the executioners.

More than any of the other friends, Elihu develops the idea of **suffering as a form of spiritual discipline** or chastening... Where the others view suffering as punishment for sinners, Elihu sees it as the Lord's way of correcting and healing...[Mason]

God has no obligation to stop suffering in sinful man
If He chooses to do so...It is out of His Mercy not obligation

23 "If there is a messenger for him, A mediator [interpreter], one among a thousand, To show man His uprightness, 24 Then He is **gracious** to him, and says, 'Deliver him from going down to the Pit; **I have found a ransom**'; 25 His flesh shall be young **like a child's**, He shall return to the days of his youth. 26 He shall **pray to God**, and He will delight in him, He shall see His face with joy, For He **restores** to man His righteousness. 27 Then he looks at men and says, 'I have sinned, and perverted what was right, And it did not profit me.' 28 He will redeem his soul from going down to the Pit, And his life shall **see the light.**

I have found a Ransom: Payment for my sin

- V 24 God's Grace Providing a Ransom through the cross
- V 25 Born Again Childlike faith, Curiosity and Awe
- V 26 Restored to God At-One-Ment with our Creator
- V 27 Public Repentance Humility attracting others
- V 28 Eternal Life Soul redeemed from the pit into Glorious Light

Romans 6:21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the **gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

29 "Behold, **God works all these things,** Twice, in fact, three times with a man, 30 To bring back his soul from the Pit, That he may be enlightened with the light of life.

Salvation/Sanctification/Glorification are God's Work:
God of Fresh New Mercies Every Morning!

31 "Give ear, Job, listen to me; **Hold your peace,** and I will speak. 32 If you have anything to say, answer me; Speak, for I desire to justify you. 33 If not, listen to me; Hold your peace, and **I will teach you wisdom."**

Job is stirred to speak.
Elihu: Hold your peace...I will teach you Wisdom

I. Job 34 Elihu Proclaims God's Justice

Truth

1 Elihu further answered and said: 2 "Hear my words, **you wise men;** Give ear to me, you who have knowledge. 3 For the ear tests words As the palate tastes food. 4 Let us choose justice for ourselves; Let us know among ourselves what is good. 5 "For Job has said, 'I am righteous, But God has taken away my justice; 6 Should I lie concerning my right? My wound [lit. arrow] is incurable, though I am without transgression.' 7 What man is like Job, Who drinks scorn like water, 8 Who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, And walks with wicked men? 9 For he has said, 'It profits a man nothing That he should delight in God.'

- Elihu to Job's friends...

Job said it's not worth it to follow God. [Job didn't say that]

10 "Therefore listen to me, you men of understanding: Far be it from God to do wickedness, And from the Almighty to commit iniquity. 11 For He **repays man according to his work,** And makes man to find a reward according to his way.

- God repays man according to their works? True.

1. **Unsaved** Works are judged at White Throne for degrees of Punishment

2. **Saved** Works evaluated at Bema seat of Christ for degrees of Reward
3. **Salvation** Based solely on the work of Christ on the Cross

12 **Surely God will never do wickedly**, Nor will the Almighty pervert justice.
13 Who gave Him charge over the earth? Or who appointed Him over the whole world?

- God tells Abraham Sodom will be destroyed. Everybody?

Genesis 18:25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**

2 Peter 2:6 [God turned...] the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; 7 and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked 8 (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)— 9 then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment

God is always Righteous and always Just
No sin goes without payment. Either Jesus paid or we will

14 If [God] should set His heart on it, If He should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath, 15 All flesh would perish together, And man would return to dust.

What if God really does decide not to intervene in the affairs of man?
Welcome to the first half of the Tribulation...God's Passive Judgment

2 Thessalonians 2:6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of **lawlessness** is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8...then the lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

16 "If you have understanding, hear this; Listen to the sound of my words:
17 Should **one who hates justice govern**? Will you condemn Him who is most just? 18 Is it fitting to say to a king, 'You are worthless,' And to nobles, 'You are wicked'? 19 Yet He is not partial to princes, Nor does He regard the rich more than the poor; For they are all the work of His hands. 20 In a moment they die, in the middle of the night; The people are shaken and pass away; The mighty are taken away without a hand.

God judges impartially w/out regard for position
IOWs If the poor are guilty they will be judged. If a King is evil he will be judged.

Exodus 12:29 [Pharaoh had no advantage] And it came to pass at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.

21 "For [God's] eyes are on the ways of man, And He sees all his steps. 22 There is no darkness nor shadow of death Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. 23 For He need not further consider a man, That he should go before God in judgment. 24 He breaks in pieces mighty men without inquiry, And sets others in their place. 25 Therefore He knows their works; He overthrows them in the night, And they are crushed. 26 He strikes them as wicked men In the open sight of others, 27 Because they turned back from Him, And would not consider any of His ways, 28 So that they caused the cry of the poor to come to Him; For He hears the cry of the afflicted. 29 When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble? And when He hides His face, who then can see Him, Whether it is against a nation or a man alone?— 30 That the hypocrite should not reign, Lest the people be ensnared. 31 "For has anyone said to God, '**I have borne chastening**; I will offend no more; 32 Teach me what I do not see; If I have done iniquity, I will do no more'? 33 **Should He repay it according to your terms**, Just because you disavow it? You must choose, and not I; Therefore speak what you know.

God will chasten His kids whether we want it or not

Q. Will we learn from it? Appreciate it?

Hebrews 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with [children]; for what [child] is there whom a father does not chasten? ... **10** [Our human fathers] chastened us as seemed best to them, but [God] for our profit, that **we may be partakers of His holiness**. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

- **No?** Okay let do it again. God does not want spoiled brats as His kids

34 "Men of understanding say to me, Wise men who listen to me: 35 'Job speaks without knowledge, His words are without wisdom.' 36 Oh, that Job were tried to the utmost, Because his answers are like those of wicked men! 37 For he **adds rebellion to his sin**; He claps his hands among us, And multiplies his words against God."

What Elihu is saying is that he hopes God will try Job until Job will be able to defend God instead of defending himself. [JV McGee]

Job 35 Elihu Condemns Self-Righteousness

Truth

1 Moreover Elihu answered and said: 2 "**Do you think this is right?** Do you say, 'My righteousness is more than God's'? 3 For you say, 'What advantage will it be to You? **What profit shall I have, more than if I had sinned?**'

- **Do you think this is right?** Ch. 34:35-37
 1. Speak words w/out wisdom? Add rebellion to sin?
 2. Mock those trying to help? **And you also said...**

What profit is there in following God?
I'd have the same trouble if I were a sinner? [Job never said that]

4 "I will answer you, And your companions with you. 5 Look to the heavens and see; And behold the clouds— They are higher than you. 6 If you sin, what do you accomplish against Him? Or, if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him? 7 If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? 8 Your wickedness affects a man such as you, And your righteousness a son of man.

What we do affects us and those around us. True.

- Our lives may be the only Bible people read
 1. **Wickedness** is a witness that God is not good/will not judge
 2. **Righteousness** is a witness that God is good/will judge

Our sin affects us and those around us and goes on before us
E.g. Abraham's sin with Hagar is still the world's biggest problem after 400 years

9 "Because of the multitude of oppressions they cry out; They cry out for help because of the arm of the mighty. 10 But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker, Who gives songs in the night, 11 Who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, And makes us wiser than the birds of heaven?' 12 There they cry out, but He does not answer, Because of the **pride of evil men**. 13 Surely **God will not listen to empty talk**, Nor will the Almighty regard it. 14 Although you say you do not see Him, Yet justice is before Him, and you must wait for Him.

- People cry out to God when in trouble
- Yet rarely give thanks when things are going well

Songs in the Night

Psalm 42:8 The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, And **in the night His song shall be with me**— A prayer to the **God of my life**.

Psalm 77:6 I call to **remembrance my song in the night**; I meditate within my heart, And my spirit makes diligent search.

15 And now, **because He has not punished** in His anger, Nor taken much notice of folly, 16 Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain; He multiplies words without knowledge."

You sin freely because God has not punished you yet Job
Job: It sure feels like it

- Elihu continues in Ch. 36

Job 36:2 "Bear with me a little, and I will show you That **there are yet words to speak on God's behalf**.