

Job 32:1 ¶ So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he *was* righteous in his own eyes.

Job 32:2 Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.

Job 32:3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and *yet* had condemned Job.

It is noted that not only had Job made his final statement, so too had his “friends.” They felt that nothing they said would impact such a self-righteous man.

Suddenly, we find out that there has been a younger man present and listening to the debate between Job and his three “friends.” The young man is identified as Elihu, son of Barachel the Buzite of the family of Ram. Elihu is angry at Job for continuing to justify himself rather than justifying God—for, in effect, saying God was not being just. He was also mad at the three friends because they had condemned Job without evidence.

I liked Guzik’s comment: “We can easily understand how Elihu felt this. Yet what he did not understand was that *both* Job and God were right. The friends had forced themselves and Job into a false dilemma: either Job is right or God is right. They could not see or understand how *both* were right.”

The presence of Elihu reminds us that Job and his friends were in a public area. It could be that he was not the only witness to these dialogues. Maybe he was one of the younger men of the city that had looked up to Job.

Job 32:4 Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they *were* elder than he.

Job 32:5 When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of *these* three men, then his wrath was kindled.

Job 32:6 ¶ And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, *I am* young, and ye *are* very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.

Job 32:7 I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

Job 32:8 But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Job 32:9 Great men are not *always* wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.

Point is made that Elihu waited until all his elders had finished speaking before taking the opportunity to present his opinion. He became angry because the arguments of all had resulted in no good conclusion. He admitted that he was afraid to speak at first because of his youth. He thought that age and experience should produce wisdom. Then he realized that it is “the Almighty” that provides understanding to man—not position or age.

Job 32:10 Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.
Job 32:11 Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.
Job 32:12 Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that answered his words:
Job 32:13 Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.

Evidently, Elihu decided that God had given him some words of wisdom to share with his elders. He prefaces his remarks by noting that he had listened carefully to what the three “friends” had to say to Job, but they had failed in convincing Job that he was wrong. They had concluded that they should just trust God to deal with Job since they couldn’t get anywhere with him.

Job 32:14 Now he hath not directed *his* words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.
Job 32:15 ¶ They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.
Job 32:16 When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more;)
Job 32:17 *I said*, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.
Job 32:18 For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.
Job 32:19 Behold, my belly *is* as wine *which* hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.
Job 32:20 I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.
Job 32:21 Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man.
Job 32:22 For I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my maker would soon take me away.

Elihu notes that Job had not directed his words toward him, and he was not going to fall in line with the speeches of the other three. Since their responses had not been effective, he determined to share his own opinion. In fact, he felt like he would burst if he didn’t share his thoughts. Elihu promised to show no partiality or make use of flattery. In fact, he didn’t know how to flatter and felt if he did so, God would judge him for that sin.

The NIV Commentary made an astute observation: “To us Elihu is insufferably wordy. It takes him twenty-four verses to say, ‘Look out! I’m going to speak.’ Elihu meant to be eloquent; and in his culture, wordiness was the essence.”

Stedman makes these introductory observations about Elihu: “First, when you come to the end of the book and you read the rebuke that God gives to the three friends of Job, you will note that Elihu is not included. He is not rebuked for what he says, and he does not have to ask Job to pray for him, as they have to do. The second thing is that he is given an obvious, prominent part in this drama. His message occupies the next five chapters, and he is allowed to give one of the major discourses of this book. And third, he always speaks with courtesy and sensitiveness to Job, despite the strong feelings which he admits he has. The other friends were caustic and sarcastic in their approach to Job but this young

man is very courteous when he addresses him. He recognizes the depth of Job's suffering, and he always speaks with understanding."