

Job 33:1 ¶ Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

Job 33:2 Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

Job 33:3 My words *shall be of the uprightness of my heart*: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

After reading through this chapter it is obvious that Elihu is a very confident young man. He urges Job to listen to him carefully and promises that he will speak clearly from an upright and sincere heart.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

Job 33:5 If thou canst answer me, set *thy words* in order before me, stand up.

Job 33:6 Behold, I *am* according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.

Job 33:7 Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

Elihu acknowledges that he is just another one of God's creations along with Job. Verse 6 seems to indicate that he is presenting himself as an answer to Job's prayer in asking to hear from God—a bit presumptuous and cocky I think. He wants Job to answer him if he can and promises not to come down heavily against him.

Job 33:8 ¶ Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of *thy words, saying,*

Job 33:9 I am clean without transgression, I *am* innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.

Job 33:10 Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy,

Job 33:11 He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

Elihu notes that he had heard Job declare that he was innocent of any sin that would call forth God's judgment; yet, he acknowledged that God was treating him like his enemy.

Job 33:12 Behold, *in this* thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

Job 33:13 Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

Job 33:14 ¶ For God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not.

It is on this point that Elihu takes issue with Job. He rightly declares that God is greater than man. As with the other three men, Elihu's problem is that he assumes that both Job and God cannot be in the right. I liked Stedman's comment: "Job, like the friends, had a narrow, limited theology which did not include room for God's way beyond the normal thinking of men. This is what often happens with our theology. We try to narrow God down to our way of

thinking and what this book teaches us, more than anything else, is to see that God is always beyond man.”

Elihu proceeded to ask Job why he insists on complaining about his circumstances. Obviously, God does not have to account for His actions to anyone.

I liked the NIV translation for verse 14: *“For God does speak — now one way, now another — though man may not perceive it.”*

Elihu seemed to be implying that God had already spoken to Job, but that Job had failed to recognize it.

Chuck Smith drew an interesting analogy on the subject of hearing God: “Would you believe me if I told you that in this room tonight there are all kinds of pictures and all kinds of voices? There is beautiful symphonic music in this room right now. And there’s hard rock. And there’s all kinds of sounds in this room right now. Now if you had a little radio and you would tune it, you could pick up all of the music that’s floating through the air. Just by turning your tuner. Tuning in. You could see all of the pictures that are floating through the air. Hear the voices. But you’ve got to be tuned into them. Even so, God is speaking, but we’re not always tuned in to the voice of God.”

Job 33:15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

Job 33:16 Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

Job 33:17 That he may withdraw man *from his purpose*, and hide pride from man.

Job 33:18 He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

Elihu notes that sometimes God speaks to men through dreams or visions in the night. Sometimes His purpose is to get a man to turn from what he is doing and keep him from acting in pride. It is God’s will to keep men’s souls from being destroyed and save lives.

Job 33:19 ¶ He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*:

Job 33:20 So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.

Job 33:21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones *that were not seen* stick out.

Job 33:22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

Sometimes God purposes to chasten a man by afflicting him with pain so severe that he refuses food. In his time of suffering, his flesh wastes away to the point that he looks like a bag of bones; his soul draws closer to the grave and his life to death.

Can't help but think that Job would assume that Elihu is referencing him as he paints this picture even though he made no blatant accusation against Job as had the other three men. He seems to leave the door open to the possibility that God is chastening Job before he could commit a much more grievous sin.

Job 33:23 If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:

Job 33:24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.

Job 33:25 His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth:

Job 33:26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.

Job 33:27 He looketh upon men, and *if any* say, I have sinned, and perverted *that which was right, and it profited me not;*

Job 33:28 He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

Elihu poses the highly improbable possibility of such a man having an angel or prophet speak on his behalf and testify to his righteous character; he might then expect that God might be gracious to him and deliver him. In that case, his flesh would once again become healthy. He could once again pray to God and expect that his prayers would be answered. He could once again enjoy fellowship with God and experience God's blessing in reward for his righteousness. Such a man would be willing to admit that he had sinned and realized that it wasn't worth it. He would rejoice in God's deliverance and look forward to life.

It seems obvious that Elihu is hoping that with a gentler approach, he can induce Job to repent of his sin.

Job 33:29 ¶ Lo, all these *things* worketh God oftentimes with man,

Job 33:30 To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

Job 33:31 Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.

Job 33:32 If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee.

Job 33:33 If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

Elihu seems to be saying that God likes to show mercy and give men opportunities to repent and change their ways. He then encourages Job to speak up if he has something to say; if not, he has more to say on Job's behalf. He confidently declares that he has wisdom to share with Job.

I liked Smith's application: "Now, what he is saying is basically pretty sound, and that is that God oftentimes uses chastisement to turn us away from the pit. You know, as a child of God, you're in a very good position, because God's not going to let you get away with evil. Now everyone around you may get away with it, that's because they are not children of God. But because He's your

Father, and He's watching over you, He's not going to let you get by with perversity, with crookedness. And God uses chastisement to keep His children out of the pit.... If you can do evil and get by with it, then I would be very worried. If you can cheat and get by with it, then you have cause to really be worried. But if you're a child of God, He's not going to let you get by. You're going to get caught up with. That's because He's trying to save you from the snare, from the pit."