

I liked Coffman's introductory remarks to this chapter: "The whole cycle of speeches in Job is a marvel of human failure to understand. The relation between sin and suffering Job never for a moment disputed. The thing that confronted Job was that, in spite of his integrity toward God and the absence of any gross wickedness that could possibly have deserved the terrible misfortunes that had overtaken him, he was judged by his friends, and everyone else, as a wicked sinner who was getting exactly what his wicked conduct deserved.

It appears to this writer that one of the primary purposes of this book was that of contradicting that nearly universal fallacy. The false idea that wickedness is at once punished by God with retribution in kind is not true. It was not true in the days of Job; it was not true in the days of Christ; and it is not true today."

Job 34:1 ¶ Furthermore Elihu answered and said,

Job 34:2 Hear my words, O ye wise *men*; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

Job 34:3 For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

Job 34:4 Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

As Elihu continues, he encourages his elders to listen to what he is saying and judge for themselves if he is not right (obviously confident that they will agree with him).

Job 34:5 For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.

Job 34:6 Should I lie against my right? my wound *is* incurable without transgression.

Elihu notes that Job had declared himself blameless and complained that God hath not given him the opportunity to defend himself. Did they think he should admit to wrongdoing when he is innocent? He is suffering judgment with fatal consequences even though he is innocent of egregious sin.

Job 34:7 What man *is* like Job, *who* drinketh up scorning like water?

Job 34:8 Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

Job 34:9 For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

Elihu questions (my paraphrase): Is there another man like Job who endures such scorn from his fellow man—a man who puts himself in the company of wicked men by concluding that it was of no benefit to a man to please God.

I think Elihu was wrong in both of his assumptions. We know that Job was not a wicked man. We also know that Job looked forward to a future in the presence of God, so he certainly did not conclude that there was no profit to living to please God.

Job 34:10 ¶ Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

Job 34:11 For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

Job 34:12 Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

Elihu speaks up to defend God and confidently declared that God would never do anything wrong. God rewards a man according to his actions. These are true statements. He seems, however, to assume that Job has accused God of wrongdoing—he hasn't. Job believes he is innocent of any sin worthy of God's judgment against him. What he wants from God is a hearing to find out why God seems to have turned against him.

How blessed we are to know that when we face God's judgment, we will appear before Him clothed in the righteousness of Jesus!

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Romans 3:21–22 "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...."

Stedman interpret's Elihu's remarks with more grace than most commentators. I liked his thoughts on this section: Elihu "is saying God is mighty, it is true, but when he does something it is always in accordance with his nature. Scripture teaches us that. In James we learn that God is called the Father of lights with whom is no variation or shadow due to change. There is no changeability in God; he is always true to his character of love and we are invited to believe that no matter what it looks like at the moment. That is where faith will rescue us from the kind of temptation that Job is confronted with now."

Job 34:13 Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?

Job 34:14 If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

Job 34:15 All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

I think the questions in verse 13 are meant to convey the truth that God was not appointed by any being to rule the world because there is no other being that exceeds or even equals his might and sovereignty. He is the Creator; man's very spirit and the breath that gives him life are from God. Should He take them away, all flesh would die and return to dust. These are facts that one cannot dispute.

Job 34:16 ¶ If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.

Job 34:17 Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Job 34:18 *Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly?*

Job 34:19 *How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.*

Job 34:20 *In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hand.*

Elihu declares that he that is wise will listen to what he has to say. I liked the CJB translation of verses 17-19: *"Should a hater of justice be in control? If you wouldn't tell a king, 'You're a scoundrel!' or nobles, 'You are wicked men!' then you shouldn't condemn the Just and Mighty One, who is neither partial toward princes nor favors the rich over the poor, since they all are the work of his hands."*

Verse 20 is again emphasizing that man is not guaranteed tomorrow. There is no difference between the weak and poor and the strongest and most important people in that regard.

Job 34:21 *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.*

Job 34:22 *There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*

Job 34:23 *For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God.*

Job 34:24 *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.*

Elihu continues by declaring that God sees all that men do and where they go. Though they may try, they cannot hide their wicked deeds from God. He is basically saying that God's judgment is always right and that a formal court setting is not needed because He sees and knows everything. He takes down men as He pleases and replaces them with whomsoever He chooses.

This truth reminds me of the words of Daniel.

Daniel 2:20–21 "Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings...."

This truth gives me great comfort as I observe those in power in the world today. I can rest in the fact that there is no person in power that can thwart the will of God. Those in power are there for a reason in accordance with God's will in setting the stage for the return of Jesus to take the throne of David in Jerusalem. I can hardly wait! I know that when He returns, I will be among the multitude of saints that accompany Him to celebrate His victory.

1 Thessalonians 3:12–13 "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming

of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

Luke 1:31–32 "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David...."

Job 34:25 Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* in the night, so that they are destroyed.

Job 34:26 He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others;

Job 34:27 Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways:

Job 34:28 So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Elihu elaborates on God's judgment against wicked men, emphasizing again that he can destroy them at any time for turning away from Him and refusing to follow Him in obedience. Their rejection of God is manifest in their treatment of those that are helpless and in need.

Job 34:29 When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth *his* face, who then can behold him? whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man only:

Job 34:30 That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

Elihu admits that sometimes it seems as if God is silent and not involved, and not available to answer our questions. He has the authority to act against man or nation to prevent them from taking advantage of others.

Job 34:31 ¶ Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne *chastisement*, I will not offend *any more*:

Job 34:32 *That which* I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

Job 34:33 *Should it be* according to thy mind? he will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.

I liked the CJB translation of this section: "*For has anyone said to God, 'I have been chastised without having offended; teach me what I have failed to see; and if I have done wrong, I will do it no more'? Must his rewards meet your approval? Well, you are the one who doesn't like them, so you, not I, should pick the alternative; come on, say what you think!*"

Elihu is again challenging Job and rebuking him for thinking that God owes him any type of answer.

Job 34:34 Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

Job 34:35 Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom.

Job 34:36 My desire *is that* Job may be tried unto the end because of *his* answers for wicked men.

Job 34:37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth *his hands* among us, and multiplieth his words against God.

Elihu confidently boasts that any wise person would agree with him that Job has spoken without thinking and without wisdom in response to God's judgment against him. It is his desire that Job's suffering continue since he is talking like a wicked man. He accuses Job of rebellion in addition to his other sin as he mocks those trying to counsel him and keeps speaking more words against God.