

**Job 36:1 ¶ Elihu also proceeded, and said,**

**Job 36:2 Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that *I have* yet to speak on God's behalf.**

**Job 36:3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.**

**Job 36:4 For truly my words *shall not be* false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.**

Elihu continues his counsel by declaring that he still has a lot to say about the righteousness of God, a truth that should not be questioned. He assures Job that he speaks truth in sincerity (from Hebrew for "perfect").

I liked Stedman's comment: "That is the place to start in all human reasoning. God is right, and therefore anything that deviates from what he says is wrong. That is the way you can tell the difference. Do not start with, 'I'm right because I feel this way.' That is what gets us into trouble. Start with, 'God is right, and I must agree with him.'"

**Job 36:5 ¶ Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not *any*: he is mighty in strength and wisdom.**

**Job 36:6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.**

**Job 36:7 He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings *are they* on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.**

Elihu declares that God is strong and powerful, yet He does not spurn or reject anyone. I loved this comment from Spurgeon: "If God were little, he might despise the little; if he were weak he would disdain the weak; if he were untrue he would be supercilious to those about him; but, seeing he is none of these, but is God over all blessed for ever, the only wise God, we have to deal with one who, though he be high, hath respect unto the lowly; who, though he humbleth himself even to observe the things which are done in heaven, yet despiseth not the cry of the humble. The magnanimity of God is the reason why he despiseth not any."

Elihu continues...God is powerful in strength of understanding. He does not save the life of the wicked. He gives the poor due justice. His eyes are always on the righteous men that seek to honor Him.

I'm not too sure what he is saying in the last part of verse 7; the translations differ. The NIV ties it to the righteous: "*He does not take his eyes off the righteous; he enthrones them with kings and exalts them forever.*" The CJB states it this way: "*He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous; but when he sets kings on their throne forever, they may become proud....*" The NAS makes a contrast: "*He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous; But with kings on the throne He has seated them forever, and they are exalted.*"

I tend to think that the NIV is more on the right track in context with the following verses. It is sad, but not unusual for righteous men to fall to the temptation of pride.

**Job 36:8** And if *they be* bound in fetters, *and* be holden in cords of affliction;  
**Job 36:9** Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

**Job 36:10** He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

**Job 36:11** If they obey and serve *him*, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

**Job 36:12** But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.

Elihu shares that God is ready to discipline and call to repentance those who become bound by their pride. (You can almost hear him thinking—Men like you Job.) Those who choose to obey and serve God will be blessed with prosperity and the ability to enjoy life. Those who choose not to obey Him will die without understanding the consequences of that choice.

**Job 36:13** But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.

**Job 36:14** They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

Elihu continues...Those who are morally corrupt (from the Hebrew for “hypocrites”) refuse to cry out to God when He acts against them. They die young, having followed idolatry. Anything to which we give our devotion other than God is an idol.

Some translations of verse 14 are a bit more pointed and have support from the Hebrew.

NAS – “*They die in youth, And their life perishes among the cult prostitutes.*”

NIV – “*They die in their youth, among male prostitutes of the shrines.*”

I liked the wording of the CJB. It makes a distinct difference between the effect on body and soul, and that makes better sense to me. “*Their soul perishes in their youth, and their life becomes depraved.*”

**Job 36:15** ¶ He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.

**Job 36:16** Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait *into* a broad place, where *there is* no straitness; and that which should be set on thy table *should be* full of fatness.

Elihu states that God delivers the poor from their troubles and speaks to them in their distress; in other words, he uses troubles to get one’s attention. I like the NIV translation of verse 16: “*He is wooing you from the jaws of distress to a spacious place free from restriction, to the comfort of your table laden with choice food.*”

I agree with Guzik’s comment: “For Elihu, Job’s problems were easy to diagnose. Job did not have the blessings God gives to the obedient and repentant;

therefore Job was not obedient and repentant. Instead he was filled with the judgment due the wicked.”

**Job 36:17** But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold *on thee*.

**Job 36:18** Because *there is wrath, beware* lest he take thee away with *his* stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.

**Job 36:19** Will he esteem thy riches? *no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.*

It seems that Elihu is saying that Job is experiencing God’s just judgment because of his wickedness. He then warns Job that he can’t expect God to accept a ransom to deliver him from judgment of his sin. God cannot be influenced by gold or might.

**Job 36:20** Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

**Job 36:21** Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

Elihu continues to warn Job. I liked both the CJB and the NLT translations of these verses.

CJB: *“Don’t desire the night, when people suddenly die. Be careful; turn away from wrongdoing; for because of this, you have been tested by affliction.”*

NLT: *“Do not long for the cover of night, for that is when people will be destroyed. Be on guard! Turn back from evil, for it was to prevent you from getting into a life of evil that God sent this suffering.”*

**Job 36:22** Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?

**Job 36:23** Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?

Elihu continues by again pointing out that there is no other being as powerful as God, no teacher like Him. I like the wording of the CJB for verse 23: *“No one can tell him what to do. No one can say to him, ‘You have done wrong.’”* And this is all true.

**Job 36:24** ¶ Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.

**Job 36:25** Every man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.

**Job 36:26** Behold, God is great, and we know *him* not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.

Elihu urges Job to praise God for His great work as evidenced in creation for all to see. God is so great that He is beyond man’s understanding. Can’t argue with this truth!

*Isaiah 55:8–9* “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

*Isaiah 46:9 "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me...."*

**Job 36:27** For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof:

**Job 36:28** Which the clouds do drop *and* distil upon man abundantly.

**Job 36:29** Also can *any* understand the spreadings of the clouds, *or* the noise of his tabernacle?

**Job 36:30** Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.

**Job 36:31** For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance.

**Job 36:32** With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt.

**Job 36:33** The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.

Elihu uses the example of how God provides rain to emphasize his point. Many commentators note that Elihu is inspired by an approaching storm since chapter 38 begins with God speaking "out of the whirlwind."

I'll quote the translations I like best for each verse explaining it better than I can.

27-28 CJB: *"He makes the droplets of water, which condense into rain from his mist. The clouds pour it down upon humankind in abundance."* I liked this quote from JFB: *"The suspension of such a mass of water, and its descent not in a deluge, but in drops of vapory rain, are the marvel."*

29-30 NIV – *"Who can understand how he spreads out the clouds, how he thunders from his pavilion? See how he scatters his lightning about him, bathing the depths of the sea."*

31-32 CJB – *"By these things he judges the people and also gives food in plenty. He gathers the lightning into his hands and commands it to strike the target."* In other words, God uses the forces of nature—in this instance rain—to judge people as well as to provide for their needs.

33 NIV – *"His thunder announces the coming storm; even the cattle make known its approach."*