

# The Introduction of Elihu

## Chapter 32:1–15

**Job 32:1&2** So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

<sup>2</sup>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.

THE structure of the book of Job reveals the great importance of Elihu's ministry in preparing Job to hear from the Lord directly.

The Book of Job as a Whole.

A | i. 1–5. Introduction. Historical.

B | i. 6—ii. 10. Satan's assault. Job stripped of all.

C | ii. 11–13. The Three Friends. Their arrival.

D | iii. 1 —xxxi. 40. Job and his friends.

E | xxxii.—xxxvii. Elihu.

D | xxxviii. 1. —xlii. 6. Jehovah and Job.

C | xlii. 7–9. The Three Friends. Their departure.

B | xlii. 9, 10. Satan's defeat. Job blessed with double.

A | xlii. 11–17. Conclusion. Historical.<sup>1</sup>

Elihu is the only individual whose message Job does not refute, the only

individual who could silence Job's critics,<sup>2</sup> and also the only human character in the book whom God Himself does not reprove and correct.<sup>3</sup> This alone should draw our attention to this relatively obscure biblical figure. Ultimately, then, Elihu was exactly who he claimed to be— one sent to speak on God's behalf. *Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.*<sup>4</sup>

Job could not be persuaded of his guilt or have his conscience convict him of sin because he was righteous in his own eyes. Yet when men are righteous in their own sight and claim innocence before God, He will often send a minister. This is repeated throughout human history. The blindness of men requires physical messengers led by the Holy Spirit to help open men's ears so they can hear the great lessons critical for their deliverance, like the lesson that personal righteousness is never more than God's<sup>5</sup> and that it is always a sin against heaven to justify self more than God (<sup>v</sup>2). Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite,<sup>6</sup> was chosen to introduce these lessons to Job to prepare his heart for the entrance of Jehovah.<sup>7</sup> Elihu's ministry was purposed to prepare for a much greater ministry to follow, the ministry of God Himself. As John the Baptist prepared the world for Christ,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Job: A New Translation*

<sup>2</sup> Job 32:15 They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.

<sup>3</sup> Job 42:7–9 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. <sup>8</sup>Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. <sup>9</sup>So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

<sup>4</sup> Job 36:2

<sup>5</sup> Job 35:1&2 Elihu spake moreover, and said, <sup>2</sup>Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> Job 38:1&2 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, <sup>2</sup>Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

<sup>8</sup> Mark 1:1–8 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; <sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. <sup>3</sup>The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. <sup>4</sup>John did baptize in the wilderness,

Elihu does the same in preparing Job for God. Thus, for five uninterrupted chapters Elihu speaks, and Job offers no retort or disagreement with any of his words, though he had previously done so with his other accusers.<sup>9</sup> While Job resisted his friends' harsh reasoning before, once Elihu begins his address, he remains silent.

The words of the Holy Spirit, spoken by messengers of God, often produce speechlessness in the hearers.<sup>10</sup> The sword of the Spirit pierces the sinner's heart so effectively that even the tongue is stopped from defending itself.<sup>11</sup> Observe also that it was only by Elihu's spiritual ministry that the self-righteousness in Job could be broken, as his other friends' attempts had failed. God's Holy Spirit and the wisdom He provides in giving life's answers are critical for the conviction of sin to be accomplished. It takes real prophecy from the Lord for a self-righteous man's heart to be touched so God may teach him what he needs to know about his sin, himself, and why God is displeased with his life. *But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that*

*and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*<sup>5</sup> *And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.*<sup>6</sup> *And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;*<sup>7</sup> *And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.*<sup>8</sup> *I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.*<sup>9</sup> *Job 16:2 I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.*

<sup>10</sup> *Luke 14:1-6 And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.*<sup>2</sup> *And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.*<sup>3</sup> *And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?*<sup>4</sup> *And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;*<sup>5</sup> *And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?*<sup>6</sup> *And they could not answer him again to these things.*

*John 8:1-11 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.*<sup>2</sup> *And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.*<sup>3</sup> *And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,*<sup>4</sup> *They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.*<sup>5</sup> *Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?*<sup>6</sup> *This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.*<sup>7</sup> *So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*<sup>8</sup> *And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.*<sup>9</sup> *And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.*<sup>10</sup> *When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?*<sup>11</sup> *She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*

<sup>11</sup> *Heb.4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

<sup>12</sup> *I Cor. 14:24&25*

*God is in you of a truth.*<sup>12</sup> As seen here, prophecy brought forth from the Lord will do for the unbelieving sinner what human thought and reason cannot by causing him to recognize the presence and reality of God. This is accomplished by the Holy Spirit revealing to men that God knows the thoughts and intentions of their hearts.

The word here rendered "convinced" (*ἐλέγχεται elengchetai*) is rendered "reprove" in John 16:8, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin," etc. Its proper meaning is to "convict," to show one to be wrong; and then to rebuke, reprove, admonish, etc. Here it means, evidently, that the man would be convicted, or convinced of his error and of his sin; he would see that his former opinions and practice had been wrong; he would see and acknowledge the force and truth of the Christian sentiments which should be uttered, and would acknowledge the error of his former opinions and life. The following verse shows that the apostle means something more than a mere convincing of the understanding, or a mere conviction that his opinions had been erroneous. He evidently refers to what is now known also as "conviction" for sin; that is, a deep sense of the depravity of the heart, of the errors and follies of the past life, accompanied with mental anxiety, distress, and alarm. The force of truth, and the appeals which should be made, and the

observation of the happy effects of religion, would convince him that he was a sinner, and show him also his need of a Saviour.<sup>13</sup>

This is the impact when a man filled with God's Holy Spirit brings forth prophecy from the Lord—the power of God's Spirit ultimately brings men to the conviction of sin. Hence, by God's own holy Word, produced by the inspiration of the Spirit, sinners will be brought to their knees to both worship and acknowledge God as He should be.

Once Elihu is finished speaking to Job in chapters 32–37, the Lord commences His own correction of Job in chapters 38–42. The Lord reproves Job for speaking without knowledge<sup>14</sup> and dismissing His judgments so that he could maintain his own righteousness.<sup>15</sup> The carnal mind of man is often willing to condemn God and His dealings with them to maintain his innocence in its own sight. Hence, the last eleven chapters of the book of Job show us the great amount of heavenly correction needed to get Job to repent for what he genuinely did not know: that God is greater than man<sup>16</sup> and men have no proper grounds—either in thought or speech—to accuse Him of injustice.<sup>17</sup> And although Job had a fear of God,<sup>18</sup> he still lacked much understanding concerning the works and dealings of God with man. It would take both God's messenger, Elihu, and Jehovah Himself to fully instruct the self-righteous man in those things still deficient in his faith. Job's confession at the end of the book helps us understand the great lessons he learned, first through personal trial and then through the heavenly prophecy brought to him.

13 Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I Cor. 14:24

14 Job 38:2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

15 Job 40:8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

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

17 Job 37:23 Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

18 Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Job 1:8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

Job 2:3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

19 Job 42:6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

20 Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

**Job 42:1–6 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,**

**<sup>2</sup> I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.**

**<sup>3</sup> Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.**

**<sup>4</sup> Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.**

**<sup>5</sup> I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.**

**<sup>6</sup> Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.**

In Job's answer to the Lord—after both Elihu's and the Lord's correction—he confesses that indeed it was he who hid God's counsel by speaking words without knowledge and who had uttered things he did not understand. This confession ultimately led him to repent in dust and ashes.<sup>19</sup> This teaches us that when the Lord shows a God-fearing man his spiritual ignorance, he will repent. Again, little will bring a truly spiritual man to repent sooner than when he realizes that so much of what he has spoken about the Lord is wrong. Lost sheep seldom know their own condition,<sup>20</sup> which is especially true with regard to the sins men have committed against the Lord.

**Job 32:2&3 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.**

**<sup>3</sup> Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.**

Elihu's anger is twofold. First, it is directed against Job's three friends for having found no answer for Job yet still condemning him. Second, it is directed against Job for justifying himself rather than God. Wherever there are two parties with the exact same flaw of self-righteousness (Job and his three friends prove this), the revelation needed for deliverance will remain elusive. It is a very common thing that when others cannot help the broken, they will judge them instead. Job's friends condemned their friend when in fact they should have spent more time analyzing themselves as to why they could not persuade him to admit to any sin. To simply condemn the lost and broken without having any answers to help them is strong evidence that men are not being led by God. A truly spiritual man will be more than sufficiently aware that sin is common in all men,<sup>21</sup> most importantly in himself.<sup>22</sup> A sign of true spirituality is manifested when faults are observed in others and restoration is sought rather than simple condemnation. It takes little wisdom to condemn others but much greater wisdom to help them be restored to again enjoy fellowship with God. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*<sup>23</sup>

**Job 32:4&5** Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he.

<sup>5</sup> **When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.**

<sup>21</sup> Rom. 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

<sup>22</sup> Job 33:6 Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.

<sup>23</sup> Gal. 6:1

<sup>24</sup> Prov. 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

<sup>25</sup> Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

<sup>26</sup> II Sam. 12:7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

<sup>27</sup> II Sam 12:1-6 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. <sup>2</sup>The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

<sup>3</sup>But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. <sup>4</sup>And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. <sup>5</sup>And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: <sup>6</sup>And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

<sup>28</sup> Eccl. 3:7

Elihu, maintaining proper respect for those older than himself, waited until Job's other friends had finished speaking. Only then, when it became fully evident to him that Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar could not help Job, did he feel that he had permission and spiritual authority from God to bring forth his own opinion. This teaches us that it is not simply what we bring from the Lord to people that will result in their deliverance; equally important is when it is brought. A word fitly spoken is one uttered at exactly the most opportune time.<sup>24</sup> Examples of this include Peter's words calling Israel to repent after the Holy Spirit had been sent and Israel had observed the miraculous powers of the Spirit,<sup>25</sup> and Nathan's words to David informing him he was guilty of sinning against Uriah and Bathsheba<sup>26</sup> after David had shown indignation towards the man in Nathan's story.<sup>27</sup> It is not enough to be given revelation from the Lord if we are not patient enough to wait upon Him as to when it should be spoken. There is always a proper time to boldly hold forth God's Word, even as there are times that God's Spirit will instruct us to remain silent. Elihu had the wisdom to know when to do both. *A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.*<sup>28</sup>

*a time to keep silence, and a time to speak (k); when it is an evil time, a time of calamity in a nation, it is not a time to be loquacious and talkative, especially in a vain and ludicrous way, Amos 5:13 [Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time.]; or when a particular friend or relation is in distress, as in the case of Job and his friends, Job 2:13 [So they sat down with him upon*

the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.]; or when in the presence of wicked men, who make a jest of everything serious and religious, Psalm 39:1 [I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.]; and so when under afflictive dispensations of Providence, it is a time to be still and dumb, and not open the mouth in a murmuring and complaining way, Leviticus 10:3 [Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.].<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, it is wise to know when to speak and when to keep silent.<sup>30</sup> Again, Elihu knew how to do both.

**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.**

Elihu professes to speak by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and corrects both parties. He allowed that those who had the longest experience should speak first. But God gives wisdom as he pleases; this encouraged him to state his opinion. By attention to the word of God, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit, young men may become wiser than the aged; but this wisdom will render them swift to hear, slow to speak, and disposed to give others a patient hearing.<sup>31</sup>

Youth alone does not disqualify a man from spiritual service, as Timothy was a young Christian leader when Paul gave him the charge to preach the Word. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.*<sup>32</sup> No doubt Elihu was a man

like Timothy; though he lacked in years, God still chose him for ministry. Also, David was the youngest of Jesse's sons when God anointed him.<sup>33</sup> This teaches us that as far as God is concerned, a humble young man is much more valuable to God than an aged man who does not have the humility to be taught of the Lord. The truth is that regardless of one's age in either life or ministry, the Lord Jesus said it was necessary that all men, if they desire to enter His kingdom, maintain the heart of a child. *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*<sup>34</sup> No matter a man's age and/or rank in the church, without a tender and humble heart to be taught by God as a son by his father, heaven cannot be entered.

*Whosoever shall not receive* - Whosoever shall not manifest the spirit of a little child. ...

*As a little child* - With the temper and spirit of a child - teachable, mild, humble, and free from prejudice and obstinacy.<sup>35</sup>

*And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*<sup>36</sup> Humility should be the trait that should most manifest in the children of God, even as spiritual humility will both reveal and prove who are God's true children.

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

It is reasonable to think that the older men get, the wiser they become, but this is hardly the case, for true wisdom is not imparted by years but solely by God. It is the Lord who imparts wisdom to men's hearts, not simply the length

<sup>29</sup> Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible, Eccl. 3:7

<sup>30</sup> Prov. 29:11 A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

<sup>31</sup> Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, Job 32:6

<sup>32</sup> II Tim. 4:1&2

<sup>33</sup> I Sam. 16: 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

<sup>34</sup> Mark 10:15

<sup>35</sup> Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Mark 10:15

<sup>36</sup> Matt. 18:3&4

of years they live on the earth.<sup>37</sup> *For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*<sup>38</sup> Wisdom is the first gift of the Spirit listed in I Corinthians 12. *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.*<sup>39</sup> This teaches us that for a man to possess the wisdom of God, the Spirit of God must dwell in him, for it is from the Spirit that God's holy wisdom comes. It is also true that one cannot possess any of the gifts of the Spirit if he first lacks the Holy Spirit Himself. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*<sup>40</sup> Just as the Holy Spirit is a gift to man,<sup>41</sup> so also is the special gift of wisdom given by God's grace to men.<sup>42</sup> King Solomon is recorded

in Scripture as a man who was given by God, through His divine favor, the gifts of wisdom and understanding. *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.*<sup>43</sup> Men generally have very small minds constrained by rigidity and simpleness of thought. Yet God gave Solomon *largeness of heart*. The Lord enlarged his mind so he could receive the great degree of spiritual wisdom and understanding that He had purposed for him. This teaches us that the Lord can open the mind of man so he can then be taught the spiritual mysteries of God. By the Lord's own spiritual power, men can be brought to both perceive and believe in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. *He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know*

<sup>37</sup> *Exod. 28:3 And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.*

*Exod. 35:31 And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;*

*Exod. 35:35 Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.*

*Exod. 36:1&2 Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded. <sup>2</sup>And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:*

*I Kgs. 10:24 And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.*

*II Chrn. 9:23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.*

*Ps. 51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Dan. 2:20-23 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: <sup>21</sup>And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: <sup>22</sup>He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. <sup>23</sup>I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.*

*Acts 7:10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.*

*I Cor. 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

<sup>38</sup> *Prov. 2:6*

<sup>39</sup> *I Cor. 12:8*

<sup>40</sup> *Rom. 8:9*

<sup>41</sup> *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

*Acts 8:20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.*

*Acts 10:45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

*Acts 11:17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?*

<sup>42</sup> *Exod. 31:3 And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,*

*Exod. 31:6 And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee;*

*Jas. 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

<sup>43</sup> *I Kgs. 4:29*

the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.<sup>44</sup> Yet if the Lord desires to withhold wisdom from men, then nothing they do can help them to gain it. God has kept it as His right either to give wisdom to men or to withhold it from them. *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea farther; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.*<sup>45</sup>

*that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: he can find out that it is done, but not the reason why it is done: the ways of God are in the deep, and not to be traced; they are unsearchable and past finding out; there is a depth of wisdom and knowledge, in them, inscrutable by the wisest of men...*<sup>46</sup>

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

What God taught Elihu about the source of wisdom few know today.

*But there is a spirit in man - ...He now finds that wisdom is not the attribute of rank or station, but that it is the gift of God, and therefore it may be found in a youth. All true wisdom, is the sentiment, is from above; and where the inspiration of the Almighty is, no matter whether with the aged or the young, there is understanding. Elihu undoubtedly means to say, that though he was much younger than they were, and though, according to the common estimate in which the aged and the young were held, he might be supposed to have much less acquaintance with the subjects under consideration, yet, as all true wisdom came from above, he might be qualified to speak. The word "spirit" here, therefore, refers to the spirit which God gives; and the passage is a proof that it was an early opinion that certain men were under the teachings of divine inspiration.*<sup>47</sup>

Through the influence and instruction of God's Spirit, men are brought by God

<sup>44</sup> Matt. 13:11

<sup>45</sup> Eccl. 8:17

<sup>46</sup> Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible, Eccl. 8:17

<sup>47</sup> Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 32:8

<sup>48</sup> I Cor. 2:14

<sup>49</sup> Prov. 10:21

<sup>50</sup> Pulpit Commentary, Job 32:10

to know things beyond this earthly realm. God can teach those who have received His heavenly Spirit things that no natural man can come to know by his five senses. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*<sup>48</sup> It is impossible for a natural man, a man who does not possess God's Spirit, to know the things of the Spirit of God. If a man has not the Spirit, then he can neither know God nor presume to know either why or how He deals with men as He does. This wisdom comes only through inspired spiritual action. Hence, for men to know anything truly right concerning the Lord, God's Spirit must teach it to them. Fools will die simply because they lack the necessary wisdom to be saved. *The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.*<sup>49</sup>

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

Here Elihu reinforces his point that though Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar eclipse him in years, it does not mean that they are wiser or more perceptive when it comes to God's judgments or thoughts.

**Job 32:10** *Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.*

Elihu, understanding that the situation is ripe for needed instruction, now harkens for those present to listen to him.

*Therefore I said, Hearken to me.* Elihu evidently claims, not exactly what is ordinarily understood by inspiration, but that his spirit, is divinely enlightened, and that therefore he is more competent to take part in the controversy that has been raised than many of the aged. I also will show mine opinion. "I also," or "even I" - i.e. I, young as I am, "will show my opinion," or "utter what I know on the subject." Elihu does not speak of his convictions as mere "opinions," but claims to be in possession of actual "knowledge."<sup>50</sup>

It is not prideful to speak boldly for the Lord, especially when God speaks through His Spirit to you.<sup>51</sup> Demanding men's attention is also often important if God's deliverance is to be given to them. Just as Peter and John did at the gate Beautiful when they instructed the lame man to *look on us*,<sup>52</sup> so does Elihu demand the same attention here. Observe that when spiritual men know they have something useful and profitable to say on God's behalf, they will not lack the courage to challenge men to "listen up." This can also be seen by how Jonah heralded the prophecy of Nineveh's destruction if it did not repent of its sin,<sup>53</sup> when Jeremiah cried in the ears of Jerusalem for its sin against God,<sup>54</sup> and when John the Baptist with great boldness publicly proclaimed Christ's coming.<sup>55</sup> Hesitancy of speech, though, if it continues in one's life, will always indicate either timidity of faith or no faith at all since it is not fear that God's Spirit will produce in man but rather the boldness to openly hold forth God's Word.<sup>56</sup> *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*<sup>57</sup>

The point is that if a man knows that God is inspiring him to bring forth a

message from God and God's Spirit is working mightily in him, then he will express great urgency that people need to listen to his message.

*Job 32:11&12 Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.*

*<sup>12</sup> Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words:*

It is here that we should consider that Elihu is the author of the book of Job. Elihu's words *Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons* indicate that it was he who penned this marvelous historical account of a man afflicted by Satan but then delivered by God. This would explain a lot, as really only two candidates fit the mold as to who would be most qualified to record the events of Job's life, either Elihu or Job himself. Personally, I find it quite amazing that the Lord very likely used one of the most obscure men in the Bible to bring forth some of its most important and oldest truths. This teaches us that men need not possess a well-known name to be used as servants for God but rather simply need to move as the Holy Spirit inspires them to.

<sup>51</sup> Acts 5:20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

<sup>52</sup> Acts 3:4-7 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. <sup>5</sup>And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. <sup>6</sup>Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. <sup>7</sup>And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

<sup>53</sup> Jonah 3:4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

<sup>54</sup> Jer. 2:1&2 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup>Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

Jer. 7:1-3 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, <sup>2</sup>Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD. <sup>3</sup>Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

Jer. 11:6 Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them.

Jer. 18:11 Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

<sup>55</sup> Matt. 3:1-5 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, <sup>2</sup>And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. <sup>3</sup>For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. <sup>4</sup>And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

<sup>56</sup> John 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

<sup>57</sup> Acts 4:31



*Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out {g} what to say.*

(g) To prove that Job's affliction came from his sins.<sup>58</sup>

Human reason cannot understand the mysteries of God. Such understanding can be given only through divine inspiration. Hence, though men may search their minds, they will never discover the answers to life's great problems.

***Job 32:13 Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.***

Here we have, perhaps, the spiritual reason why Job's friends were never given the wisdom to help Job—simply because in prideful human arrogance they would claim once they were successful that the wisdom had come from them. However, just as a fool cannot find God, neither will the wisdom of God be brought to a fool so that he may glorify himself.

You were not permitted to refute or convince him, for if you had been you would have been lifted up with pride, and would have attributed to yourselves what belongs to God.<sup>59</sup>

What was true of Job's friends is true of many today. God will not give any man a spiritual gift if after it is given, the man attributes the power to himself. God will never work His power through men if they inwardly desire to take credit for it themselves. He who desires praise for himself and not God will never be given extraordinary power from Him. Hence, when any might say *we have found out wisdom*, you can be sure that God will deprive them of His true wisdom.

*God thrusteth him down, not man* - These are the words of Elihu. The meaning is, "God only can drive Job from his position,

<sup>58</sup> Geneva Study Bible, Job. 32:11

<sup>59</sup> Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 32:13

<sup>60</sup> Job 33:4 *The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

<sup>61</sup> Job 33:6 *Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.*

<sup>62</sup> Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 32:13

<sup>63</sup> Pulpit Commentary, Job 32:14

<sup>64</sup> Job 36:3

<sup>65</sup> Deut. 4:2 *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.*

and show him the truth, and humble him. The wisdom of man fails. The aged, the experienced, and the wise have been unable to meet his arguments and bring him down from the positions which he has taken. That work can be done only by God himself, or by the wisdom which he only can give." Accordingly Elihu, who proposes to meet the arguments of Job, makes no appeal to experience or observation; he does not ground what he says on the maxims of sages or the results of reflection, but proposes to adduce the precepts of wisdom which God had imparted to him; Job 33:4, Job 33:6.<sup>60,61</sup>

Elihu knew that God alone could convict Job of sin, that God alone could take Job off his high perch so He could deliver him from his pride of heart and Satan's attacks.

***Job 32:14 Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.***

*Now he hath not directed his words against me.* Elihu thinks that he can interfere in the controversy with the better prospect of a good result, since he is untouched by any of Job's words, and can therefore speak without passion or resentment. *Neither will I answer him with your speeches.* He is also going to bring forward fresh arguments, which, as they avoid the line taken by the three friends, may soothe, instead of exasperating, the patriarch.<sup>62</sup>

Elihu makes it very clear that he had absolutely no role whatsoever in the failed attempts to help Job. Elihu's spiritual wisdom was brought from afar and did not rely on any of the previously failed arguments of Job's three friends. *I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.*<sup>63</sup> It is only when divine wisdom comes solely from the Lord and is not mixed with human wisdom that it can help men.<sup>64</sup> This is why whenever God's Word is given to men, either in written form or through the Spirit, God commands them

that they should not add to or take away from anything that He has said. *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*<sup>65</sup>

***Job 32:15 They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.***

Where previously Job's friends had been filled with conjecture, supposition, and reason, now, when exposed to one speaking directly by the Spirit of God,

they knew the waters of understandings were far too deep for them. After all the spiritual confusion produced by human reason, truth would now have its opportunity to utter knowledge of God, which is exactly what Job needed to be reconciled to God. *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words. Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth. My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.*<sup>66</sup>

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Rev. 22:18–20 *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: <sup>19</sup>And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. <sup>20</sup>He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

<sup>65</sup> Deut. 12:32

<sup>66</sup> Job 33:1–3