

Elihu Addresses Job Speaking Without True Knowledge of God

Job Chapter 33:27–34:35

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;

WHAT is observed here, and then is more fully revealed in the next verse, is that the Lord both searches and seeks men out in the earth who are willing to confess their personal sin against God in order to be cleansed from it. Before forgiveness and mercy can be granted, sinners must without hesitation and without denial confess, *I have sinned, and perverted that which was right*. Confessing one's sin reveals both an admission and an acknowledgment that God's Word and God's laws are righteous. Hence, wherever there is a true and sincere repentance for sin, the Lord is justified, His ways are esteemed as right, and men agree with Him that they have broken His will for their lives. It is also an admission of sin that encapsulates the great spiritual lessons taught in the book of Job, as Job was exactly the kind of repentant man whom Elihu reveals that the Lord searches for in

the earth, one who would confess his sin, admit his guilt, and in the same breath justify his God.

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

When there is confession of sin, the Lord's promise is that the soul will be saved from death and the confessor will see the light of God in his life. There is also no true path to heaven that does not first begin with confession of sin. This is testified to throughout Scripture and evidenced in all whom the Lord has saved.¹ It is also the soul of man, and not merely his body, that the Lord is most concerned with rescuing—since Jesus instructed His followers to not be fearful of those able to kill the body but rather He who is able to destroy both the soul and the body. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell* (Matt. 10:28).

¹ Matt. 3:2 *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Mark 1:4 *John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*

Mark 6:12 *And they went out, and preached that men should repent.*

Luke 5:32 *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Luke 13:3–5 *I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? ⁵I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

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 3:19 *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

Acts 8:22 *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.*

Acts 11:18 *When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*

Acts 17:30 *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*

I Repent in Dust and Ashes

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Matt. 10:28) *Them which kill the body*—That is, people, who have no power to injure the soul, the immortal part. The body is a small matter in comparison with the soul. Temporal death is a slight thing compared with eternal death. He directs them, therefore, not to be alarmed at the prospect of temporal death, but to fear God, who can destroy both soul and body forever.

Understandably, it is only a genuine and sincere fear of God and confession of sin that are able² to save the soul, the part of man's creation that the Lord has likened to His own image.³

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, Job 33:30) *To bring back his soul.*—Here, again, is the very key-note of Elihu's doctrine.

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

This process of saving the soul from death, through many divine agencies, is something that the Lord often works with man. Other translations of this verse add more insight into Elihu's instruction.

(ESV) *“Behold, God does all these things, twice, three times, with a man,*

(NKL) *“Behold, God works all these things, Twice, in fact, three times with a man,*

(AMP) [*Elihu comments,*] *“Behold, God does all these things twice, yes, three times, with a man,*

(*Holman Christian Standard Bible*) *God certainly does all these things two or three times to a man*

The manner in which God warns man and seeks to turn him from the pit is previously mentioned by Elihu: (1) by dreams and visions in the night,⁴ (2) by bodily chastisement and affliction,⁵ (3) by the Lord sending a messenger to instruct the sinner as to the why of his affliction and how through repentance and confession of sin, forgiveness can be granted.⁶ “So the Septuagint understands it, which rendered it, ὀδοῦς τρεῖς *hodous treis* — three ways, referring to the three methods which Elihu had specified.”⁷

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

Reiterating verse 28, Elihu reveals the Lord's ultimate purpose for bringing chastisement and allowing affliction in the sinner's life—to recover his soul

2 Prov. 14:27 *The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*

Prov. 22:4 *By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.*

Ps. 145:19 *He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.*

3 Gen. 1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

Gen 2:7 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

4 Job 33:14–17 *For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. 15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; 16 Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, 17 That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*

5 Job 33:19–22 *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain:*

²⁰*So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. 21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. 22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.*

6 Job 33:23–26 *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: 24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. 25 His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth: 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.*

7 *Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 33:29

from death. Hence, Elihu reveals the great and central truth, that for those called to God, the primary and ultimate purpose of affliction is to steer God-fearing men toward that path whereby their souls can be saved.

(Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, Job 33:31) Elihu shows that God's great and gracious design toward the children of men, is, to save them from being for ever miserable, and to bring them to be for ever happy. By whatever means we are kept back from the [pit,] we shall bless the Lord for them at least, and should bless him for them though they be painful and distressing. Those that perish for ever are without excuse, for they would not be healed.

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

Elihu is about to begin addressing Job's confusion, which will assist in laying the foundation upon which the Lord will build even more spiritual understanding (ch. 38–41). Practically speaking, there must be in the sinner a consideration of the messengers' words,⁸ to prompt sufficient internal awareness, so that then they can hear directly from God. Because of this, Elihu instructs Job to hold his peace and listen carefully to the truth he is about to bring forth. Through careful consideration of what is said, spiritual light and understanding can begin to illuminate Job's soul.

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

If after Job had heard Elihu's words he observed error in them, he would be given ample opportunity to defend himself. Elihu also reveals that at the core of his own heart he seeks to justify Job. Because Elihu is interested in Job and his ultimate justification of his three friends' unjust accusations, he will lay no sin upon Job

above that which has been committed. Hence, whereas Job's other three friends seemed intent on establishing nothing more than religious dominance over this grief-stricken man, Elihu seeks his justification, teaching us that the motive from which a man speaks is as critical to true spirituality as the words spoken.

(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 33:32) I desire to justify thee.—He wishes to justify Job before his friends, that is, to maintain that his afflictions are not on account of past sin, but as a preservative against possible future defection. This being so, he considers that Job's case may justly be defended, and Job himself vindicated against his friends.

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

If Job has nothing to say in response to Elihu's words, then he is asked to hold his peace in order that true wisdom may be imparted to him. No doubt there are some who infer that it is arrogance that prompts Elihu's address, but if we are honest and consider that neither Job nor the Lord corrects Elihu at any time in the book, then we must conclude that Elihu was exactly who he claimed to be, a messenger sent by God to aid in Job's deliverance. Thus, if neither the Lord nor Job expresses fault and error in Elihu's correction, then it is foolish that those greatly removed from a personal exposure to Job's situation should—establishing the reality that if the Lord never corrects Elihu and if Job never refutes his words of reproof, why should any who merely read the book do so hundreds, if not thousands, of years later?

Job 34:1–4 Furthermore Elihu answered and said,
² Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

⁸ II Tim. 2:7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

³ *For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.*

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

(*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, Job 34:4) Elihu calls upon those present to decide with him upon Job's words. The plainest Christian, whose mind is enlightened, whose heart is sanctified by the Spirit of God, and who is versed in the Scriptures, can say how far matters, words, or actions, agree with true religion, better than any that lean to their own understandings.

Whenever a man is led by the Spirit of God, he can appeal to those who are also of God and filled with the Spirit, knowing that they also will be able to discern and confirm the truth that has been spoken. Thus, it is common for those who speak after being inspired through the Spirit to call upon those who also possess the Spirit, to confirm that what has been revealed has its source in God and the higher spiritual realm.

Job 34:5–6 For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.

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

Job's words contain two improper assumptions: first, the certainty of his own righteousness, and second, the belief that his wounds were incurable. Yet the Lord would eventually prove both of these assumptions false, since Job was not nearly as righteous and innocent as he thought,⁹

and God did in fact heal his body and restore his life to an even greater level of abundance and prosperity.¹⁰

Job 34:7–8 What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?

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

(*Benson Commentary*, Job 34:7–9) *Who drinketh up scorning like water*—That is, abundantly and greedily: who doth so break forth into scornful expressions, not only against his friends, but, in some sort, even against God himself. The Hebrew may be interpreted, *What man, being like Job, would drink up scorning?* &c. That a wicked or foolish man should act thus, is not strange; but that a man of such piety, gravity, wisdom, and authority, as Job, should be guilty of such a sin, this is wonderful. *Which walketh with wicked men*—Although I dare not say he is a wicked man, yet in this matter he speaks and acts like one of the wicked.

Though Job was not wicked, in uttering false charges against God, he did to a degree walk in the company of the wicked. Job's exact words were *This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked* (Job 9:22). What this teaches us is that if even we are not evil, if we carry and espouse the same thoughts as those who are and claim injustice on God's part, then we manifest some agreement with God's detractors. To therefore speak and espouse the same sentiments as the ungodly undoubtedly reveals a level of walk and agreement with them.

⁹ *Job 10:7 Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.*

Job 13:18 Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified.

Job 27:5–6 God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me. ⁶My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

Job 31:6 Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know mine integrity.

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

¹⁰ *Job 42:10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.*

Job 42:12–13 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. ¹³He had also seven sons and three daughters.

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

(*Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, Job 34:9) Job had nowhere used this precise language, though the idea is not an unnatural inference from much that he had said; comp. ch. Job 9:12, Job 21:7, Job 24:1,¹¹ and ch. 21 throughout. This charge that a man is nothing bettered by being religious Elihu refutes in ch. 35, directing his attention in the meantime to the general charge of in justice so far as it bore on God Himself.

At the base of Elihu's correction of Job is the idea that Job inferred that none of his previous religious piety had prevented the affliction he was now suffering, thus foolishly asserting that it makes little to no difference if a man seeks to walk uprightly, since he would still need to undergo the same affliction as the wicked. In short, Job had concluded, *What profit is there in serving God?* if he was punished in the very same way as those who had rejected 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.*

(*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, Job 34:10–15) Elihu had showed Job, that God meant him no hurt by afflicting him, but intended his spiritual benefit. Here he shows, that God did him no wrong by afflicting him. If the former did not satisfy him, this ought

to silence him. God cannot do wickedness, nor the Almighty commit wrong.

Elihu draws a spiritual line in the sand regarding the impossibility of God committing sin through allowing unjust trials, rejecting the foolish notion that God could ever behave improperly and commit iniquity. The sinner will often lay claims of others' wrongdoing, including the Lord's, in order that he may continue viewing himself as righteous.¹² Consequently, because of personal conceit sinners will regularly charge the Lord with crimes of which it is spiritually impossible for Him to have committed.¹³ It is man also who is accustomed to sin and has blatantly and regularly proved himself a sinner—it is not God.

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

Divine and heavenly justice demands that all men, without exception, will reap as they have sown, that the Lord will not be mocked, so that what sinners have sown they will just as surely reap. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap* (Gal. 6:7). The Lord's rendering to men exactly as they have sown proves that God is neither biased nor partial in His spiritual judgments toward man. Ultimately men determine their own fate, and the Lord only renders to them how they have chosen to live.

¹¹ Job 9:12 Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

Job 21:7 Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

Job 24:1 Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?

¹² Gen. 3:12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Num. 20:5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

¹³ Num. 21:5 And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

Deut. 1:26–27 Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God: ²⁷And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

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(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 34:11) *For the work of a man shall he render unto him—He shall treat each man as he deserves—and this is the essence of justice. Of the truth of this, also, there could have been no question. Elihu does not, indeed, apply it to the case of Job, but there can be little doubt that he intended that it should have such a reference. He regarded Job as having accused God of injustice, for having inflicted woes on him which he by no means deserved. He takes care, therefore, to state this general principle, that with God there must be impartial justice—leaving the application of this principle to the facts in the world, to be arranged as well as possible. No one can doubt that Elihu in this took the true ground, and that the great principle is to be held that God can do no wrong, and that all the facts in the universe must be consistent with this great principle, whether we can now see it to be so or not.*

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

Job maintained that God had dealt with him unjustly, either by not hearing his case or by improperly ruling before he could present his defense. To maintain himself as righteous, Job had condemned both the Lord and His justice.¹⁴ When sinners reap as they have sown and do not like the fruit they bear, they generally will transfer and lay blame upon God. Until they come to possess true humility, sinners also will assume the role of victims of divine justice, when in fact they are nothing more than criminals in God's sight.

It is worth noting that by the Lord exercising spiritual judgment in the earth and

rendering to men as they have sown, the inhabitants of the earth are instructed in, and can come to learn, God's righteousness. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness* (Isa. 26:9).

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Isa. 26:9) *For when thy judgments are in the earth— ...* The reason is, that the punishments which he [God] inflicted were intended to lead people to learn righteousness. The sentiment is expressed in a general form, though there is no doubt that the immediate reference is to the calamities which the Jews had suffered in their removal to Babylon as a punishment for their sins.

Learn righteousness—The design is to warn, to restrain, and to reform them. The immediate reference here was undoubtedly to the Jews, in whom this effect was seen in a remarkable manner in their captivity in Babylon. But it is also true of other nations; and though the effect of calamity is not always to turn a people to God, or to make them permanently righteous, yet it restrains them, and leads them at least to an external reformation. It is also true in regard to nations as well as individuals, that they make a more decided advance in virtue and piety in days of affliction than in the time of great external prosperity (compare Deuteronomy 6:11–12¹⁵).

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

All power that the Lord exerts and exercises on earth comes from the fact of His ownership of it.¹⁶ Because both the earth,

¹⁴ *Job 40:8* (NIV) "Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?"

¹⁵ *Deut. 6:11–12* *And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;*
¹² *Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.*

¹⁶ *Deut. 10:14* *Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.*

and man are God's creation,¹⁷ it is His right and spiritual prerogative to do with both as He wills. If the earth and those upon it were not the result of the Lord's creative power, then men could rightly claim sin on God's part concerning His dealings with them. But since the Lord possesses and maintains ownership of all creation, then He can do with it all as He wills, and there is no injustice at all in His doing so.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 34:14) If the world were not God's property, as having been made by Him, but committed to His charge by some superior, it might be possible for Him to act unjustly, as He would not thereby be injuring Himself; but as it is, for God to act unjustly would undermine the whole order of the world, and so would injure God's own property (Job 36:23¹⁸).

Job 34:14–15 If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

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

It is a spiritual reality that if God so willed it, He could choose to gather and return to Himself all the spiritual and breath life, that He has imparted to man. Because it is God Who has provided both natural and spiritual life, it is well within His authority and privilege to remove both from man if He so deems it necessary.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 34:14) The argument seems to be this. "If God wished such a thing, and should set his heart upon it, he could easily cut off the whole race. He has power to do it, and no one can deny him the right. Man has no claim to life, but he who gave it has a right to withdraw it, and the race is absolutely dependent on this infinite Sovereign. Being such a Sovereign, therefore, and having such a right, man cannot complain of his Maker as unjust, if he is called to pass through trials."

Elihu's position is this: do not question the Lord in His smaller judgments, lest He administer a far greater judgment. For if God set His heart on fully executing judgment for sin, then He could easily and without difficulty gather all life and return it to Himself. Indeed, all life has its source in God, whether it is manifested in men's bodies or imparted through the Lord's Spirit.¹⁹ Thus, all life, either flesh or spirit, will be either extended or shortened according to divine will. This is the Lord's right and something that should never be thought to be the right of sinners. *Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die* (Ezek. 18:4).

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Ezek. 18:4) All souls are mine—Man is not simply to ascribe his existence to earthly parents, but to acknowledge as his Father Him who created man in His own image, and who gave and gives him the spirit of life.

Ps. 89:11 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

Ps. 95:4–5 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. ⁵The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

17 Ps. 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

1 Cor. 10:26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

1 Cor. 10:28 But if any man say unto you, this is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

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

19 Neh. 9:6 Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

Acts 17:25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

Job 34:16–20 *If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.*

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

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

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.*

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 argues the fact that God has a legal and just right to govern His own creation. If worldly kings have this prerogative, does not He Who rules all the universe? This is also not only a very accurate observation but a very profound one as well, that God, Who is both the world's and man's Creator, has full right to judge and administer justice as He sees fit. The world and the creation surrounding it are God's; they are the work of His hands,²⁰ and man has absolutely no true ownership of anything, including even his own soul.

Job 34:21–23 *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.*

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

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

Because God has universal sight of all worldly creatures²¹ and is able to see their goings, decisions, and motives throughout the earth, He is in a unique and knowledgeable position to judge the earth's inhabitants righteously.²² Because the Lord is able to observe all of man's goings, then it is impossible for Him to either incorrectly or improperly exercise unjust judgment upon man. Hence, because the Lord both knows and sees all, then every piece of vital evidence is directly before Him, allowing Him to properly and without bias judge justly all men and the lives they live.

(Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible, Job 34:21) For his eyes are upon the ways of man, . . . This may denote all their inward thoughts, the workings of their mind, the imaginations of their heart; all their secret purposes, designs, and schemes; and all the desires and affections of their soul; and all these, whether good or bad:

and he seeth all his goings; the whole of his walk and conversation, conduct and behaviour; all his external ways, works, and actions; and these whether of good or bad men, see Psalm 139:1 [O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.]

Job 34:24–30 *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.*

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

²⁶ *He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others;*

20 Ps. 19:1 *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.*

21 I Chr. 28:9 *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.* Ps. 139:2–4 *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. ³Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. ⁴For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.*

Ezek. 11:5 *And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.*

22 Jer. 16:17 *For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.*

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

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

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:

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

It is not within man's power to overthrow the will of God, not within his power to find the Lord if the Lord so chooses to hide Himself from man. It is also the Lord Who retains the power to overturn not only the leaders of nations but also entire nations themselves. Because He knows the works of the mighty, and those in the highest positions in the earth, and is fully aware if they turn back from Him, then all heavenly judgment descending from heaven is based on firm legal grounds.

Job 34:31–32 Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more:

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

A variety of translations provide even clearer insight on these two verses.

Job 34:31–32 (NIV) "Suppose someone says to God, 'I am guilty but will offend no more.' ³²Teach me what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, I will not do so again."

Job 34:31–32 (ESV) "For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne punishment; I will not offend any more; ³²teach me what I

²³ Job 40:3–5 Then Job answered the LORD, and said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. ⁵Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. Mic. 7:9 I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

Lev. 26:41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

²⁴ Job 34:6 Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.

do not see; if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more?'

Job 34:31–32 (NKJV) "For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne chastening; I will offend no more; ³²Teach me what I do not see; If I have done iniquity, I will do no more?'

Job 34:31–32 (AMP) "For has anyone said to God, 'I have endured my chastisement; I will not offend anymore; ³²Teach me what I do not see [in regard to how I have sinned]; If I have done wrong (injustice, unrighteousness), I will not do it again?'

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 34:31) Job accordingly says so (Job 40:3–5; Mic 7:9; Le 26:41).²³ It was to lead him to this that Elihu was sent. Though no hypocrite, Job, like all, had sin; therefore through affliction he was to be brought to humble himself under God. All sorrow is a proof of the common heritage of sin, in which the godly shares; and therefore he ought to regard it as a merciful correction. Umbreit and Maurer lose this by translating, as the Hebrew will bear, "Has any a right to say to God, I have borne chastisement and yet have not sinned?" (so Job 34:6).²⁴

What this teaches us is that many times, if not at all times, for men to clearly understand their sin against God, they must seek divine enlightenment so that their transgression may become known and therefore enable them to repent. So also is the degree of darkness in the sinner's soul, so much so that if divine light were never to enter into it, then he would remain completely oblivious to the harmful nature of sin, and God will eternally judge unrepentant sinners for it.

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.*

Other translations of this verse are as follows:

(NIV) *Should God then reward you on your terms, when you refuse to repent? You must decide, not I; so tell me what you know.*

(NKJV) *Should He repay it according to your terms, Just because you disavow it? You must choose, and not I; Therefore speak what you know.*

(Holman Christian Standard Bible) *Should God repay you on your terms when you have rejected His? You must choose, not I! So declare what you know.*

(Benson Commentary, Job 34:33) *Should it be according to thy mind?*—Having advised and directed Job how to conduct himself, and what to say to God in his afflicted state, he now proceeds to enforce his advice with solid arguments; *should it*—Namely, God's chastening of thee, about which the great controversy was; *be according to thy mind?*—Or, as thou wouldst have it? Shall thy opinion or affection give laws and measures to God, that he shall afflict only such persons, and in such a manner and measure, and so long, as thou chooseth? Does God need, or should he seek for, thy advice how to govern the world, and whom and when to reward or punish? Dost thou quarrel with him because he chastises thee more severely and longer than thou expectedst?

Only when men spiritually realize and agree with the fact that God sets the terms for all things, including the spiritual trials in their lives, will they then yield to divine sovereignty. It is also pride and ignorant worldly narcissism that assume that the Lord must meet man's terms, and not man, God's.

25 Job 42:3 *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.*

Job 34:34–35 *Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.*

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

Elihu's claims were not that Job was truly wicked, as his three friends had implied, but only that he was a man without true understanding of the Lord, who had also spoken many things concerning the Lord that he was actually totally ignorant of. This is also the precise sin that the Lord charges Job with, that he had both spoken and uttered *words without knowledge*, that Job, though he had at great length spoken of God, had uttered words without any true understanding of Him. Yes, Job was sincere in his faith and feared the Lord, and this should be reckoned to his credit, but there was still much lacking in his understanding of God's ways and his dealings with man. *Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38:1–2).

(Benson Commentary, Job 38:2) Who is this that disparages my counsels, and darkens the wisdom of my dispensations with his ignorant discourses about them? This language becomes not a creature, much less a professor of the true religion. The person here intended is not Elihu, who spoke last, but Job, who had spoken most, as is manifest from the former verse, in which it is said, The Lord answered Job; and from Job 42:3,²⁵ where Job takes the following reproof to himself, as also from the following discourse, wherein God convinces Job by divers of the same kind of arguments which Elihu had used against him. With a single question God shows the absolute emptiness of human abilities, strikes Job to the heart, and puts an end to the dispute.

Just because a man is sincere and authentic in his love and affection for God, it does not mean that he truly knows God.

Hence whatever a man may think he knows of the Lord is surely not equal to what the Scriptures reveal he should know. This is true of all men, including ourselves. *And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know* (I Cor. 8:2).

