

Comments About Job 32

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss the book of Job. There will be times when we talk about (1) a group of chapters, (2) one chapter and (3) a portion of a chapter. Today, we will discuss Job 32.

I hope this project encourages you to review the valuable history and lessons found in the book of Job.

Words of Elihu

Although I did not mention this at the beginning of this series of articles, I believe that the book of Job can be organized into five stages.

- The trial—Job 1-2
- The discussion with the three friends—Job 3-31
- Elihu confronts Job—Job 32-37
- God confronts Job—Job 38-41
- The conclusion—Job 42

Different from three friends

In earlier articles, we already mentioned the following—(1) Job's initial reaction to the two trials was exemplary, (2) God was not pleased with Job's later reactions and (3) that the three friends were a bad influence upon him.

At various times, I have heard some Bible teachers lump Elihu with the three friends. In other words, these Bible teachers evaluate the words of Elihu to be as useless as the words of the three friends.

Do you know the reason why I don't lump the words of Elihu with the words of the three friends? Job 42:7 mentioned that God criticized the words of the three friends—and didn't include the words of Elihu.

As you may remember, I didn't spend much time discussing the section of Scripture from Job 4-31. I spent a little time mentioning Job 4:12-16 and the whisper of the spirit that caused fear upon Eliphaz.

However, I am going to spend more time talking about the section involving Elihu (chapters 32-37) than the section talking about Job's discussion with the three friends (chapters 3-31).

This week, I want to mention the reason why Elihu talked (chapter 32). Next week, I want to mention Elihu's evaluation of Job's sin (chapters 33-37).

Why did Elihu speak?

- Elihu was irritated with Job (Job 32:2).

Job 32:2—"The wrath of Elihu . . . was aroused against Job . . . because he justified himself rather than God."

- Elihu was irritated with the three friends (verses 3 and 5).
- Elihu originally withheld his opinion because he was younger than Job and the three friends (verses 6-7).
- Elihu mentioned that he paid attention to what the three friends said and he was disappointed in their words (verses 11-12).

Interesting observations

Next time, we will discuss how Elihu summarized Job's sin. However, I want to mention two verses.

Earlier in Job's discussion with the three friends, Job mentioned having someone act as an arbiter between himself and God.

Notice Job 9:32-33 in various translations.

- King James—"daysman" (margin says "umpire")
- Moffatt, Revised Standard and American Standard—"umpire"
- New American Bible—"arbiter"
- New King James and Emphasized Bible—"mediator"

For the record, I believe that Elihu acted as a spokesman for God (Job 33:6-7) before God Himself confronted Job (Job 38-41).

Job 33:6-7—"Truly I am as your spokesman before God; I also have been formed out of clay. Surely no fear of me will terrify you, nor will my hand be heavy on you."