

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

JOB 32-37

Charlie Brown is on the pitcher's mound with a strained look on his face. He looks at the opposing team, and mutters, "Nine runs in a row – good grief!" That's when he opens his mouth and screams, *"What can I do?"*

Schroeder walks up wearing his chest protector and catcher's mask.

Charlie Brown says, "We're getting slaughtered again, and I don't know what to do. Why do we have to suffer like this?" His catcher / philosopher quotes a verse from Job, "Man is born to suffer as the sparks fly upward."

Linus joins them on the mound, and adds, "The problem of suffering is a very profound one, and..." Lucy interrupts them, *"If a person has bad luck, it's because they've done something wrong, that's what I always say!"*

Schroeder replies, "That's what Job's friends told him, but I doubt it..."

Lucy fires back, *"What about his wife? She doesn't get enough credit."*

Schroeder tries to continue his thought, "I think a person who never suffers, never matures... Suffering is actually very important..."

Lucy breaks in again, *"Suffering, who wants to suffer? Don't be ridiculous!"* The whole time Snoopy is listening to every word.

By now the whole team is on the mound around Charlie Brown.

One of the other players state, “But pain is a part of life...”

Another guy chimes in, “A person who speaks only of the patience of Job reveals the fact that he knows very little about the book!”

A third player comments, “Now the way I see it...”

A disgusted Charlie Brown walks off the back of the mound, looks at his team, and says, “I don’t have a baseball team – I have a theological seminary!” This Peanuts comic strip sums up the last 28 chapters...

At the center of the pitcher’s mound sits Job. He’s getting slaughtered.

His wealth is gone. His kids are dead. His fame is fallen. His body is covered with boils. And his teammates – Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar – are standing around him giving their unwanted, unsolicited explanations.

They draw a common conclusion. Actually their theology allows just one conclusion. Like Lucy they figure Job’s calamity was caused by his sin.

They assert it... *Job denies it...* they insist it... *Job refutes it...* Back and forth it goes... firing verbal salvos at each other - until we reach chapter 32.

Author Don Baker writes of their dialogue, “For 28 chapters they engage in a running argument that increases in volume to a virtual shouting match.

“*You sinned,*” they said. “I did not,” Job answered.

“*You did.*” “I didn’t.” “*You did too.*” “I did not.”

Until finally three would-be comforters, turned accusers, had nothing more to say. Job sat - still in his loneliness and pain - and Eliphaz, and Bildad, and Zophar became quiet in their frustration and bewilderment.

Nothing was accomplished – no comfort delivered – no pain relieved – no insights gained... Job was still hurt, and his one dominant question, “*Why?*”, still remained unanswered.” That’s where we pick it up...

Chapter 32, “**So these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.**” Job maintained his innocence throughout.

He never said he was sinless, but he claimed to be blameless. He had offered sacrifices. And he’d done nothing specific to warrant his calamity.

“**Then the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was aroused against Job; his wrath was aroused because he justified himself rather than God.**” It’s true. In the dialogue Job spends more time trying to prove his innocence than upholding God’s justice.

Job starts out perplexed and puzzled, but in the midst of *his pain* and *God’s silence*, he loses perspective. Job becomes so concerned about substantiating his own righteousness he loses reverence for God.

A once humble Job - *accuses* God – *shouts at* God – *complains against* God – even *questions* God’s fairness. A proud Job cops an attitude.

Remember, Job's 3 friends held to a shallow, restrictive, kindergarten theology. They believed in this life *good is always rewarded* and *sin is always punished*. Thus, when bad stuff happens it means either *you sinned* or *God failed...* and since God can't fail Job must've sinned.

At first Job rests in God. The Almighty never fails. But as the dialogue drones on, his focus shifts. He stresses his innocence. *He hasn't sinned.*

In 18:6 Job is so determined to justify himself and prove his innocence, he says, "**Know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net.**" In essence Job is saying, if my only two choices are God failed or I sinned – then God failed, because I certainly haven't sinned.

Elihu thinks, *how arrogant? Who does Job think he is?*

Throughout the dialogue Elihu has been sitting on the sidelines, listening to Job vent. The more Job talked and accused God, the angrier Elihu became. Elihu could barely wait his turn to speak.

Again author Don Baker explains Elihu's role in the story as follows...

"To be told that Job was wrong was nothing new. That had been his friends' theme song for days... They had said over and over again that Job was wrong in what he said about himself – he was wrong about his innocence. But Elihu was saying something totally different. Elihu was claiming that Job was saying something wrong about God."

"In asking why Job lost his way." To vindicate himself, Job cast doubt on God – His goodness and His fairness... and this infuriated Elihu.

And Job was not the only one who raised Elihu's ire - verse 3, "Also against his 3 friends his wrath was aroused, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job."

Elihu was equally angry with Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. They lacked a single shred of evidence that Job had done anything wrong, yet they accused him anyway.

Elihu heard the last 28 chapters and was mad at both parties.

"Now because they were years older than he, Elihu had waited to speak to Job." Custom was... the old guys spoke first - the young gun had to wait.

"When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was aroused." Elihu is "*the angry young man*" in the story.

He'll speak to all four men. Elihu speaks straight through six chapters – 165 verses. In fact, Elihu speaks more in the book than anyone else.

Verse 6, "So Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said:

"I am young in years, and you are very old; therefore I was afraid, and dared not declare my opinion to you." In Elihu's culture older men were held in great esteem. Rarely did a young man rebuke an older man.

Yet he got up his nerve, and "I said, 'Age should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.' But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him

understanding.” Experience should make *older men* wiser than *younger men*. But that’s not always the case.

Often God gives spiritual wisdom to young guys and in those situations the young bucks need to teach the old geezers. *This was such a case...*

Elihu comments, “**Great men are not always wise, nor do the aged always understand justice.**” Just because you’re older and have a reputation for wisdom doesn’t guarantee you’ll always be right.

Once I took a college course where the professor missed the first day of class. Turns out the absent-minded professor failed to read the schedule. It set a tone for the semester. I learned, “**Great men are not always wise.**”

There are plenty of people who understand quantum physics and are experts in DNA, but can’t change a flat tire or balance their checkbook.

Intelligence and education are no substitute for common sense.

Verse 10 “**Therefore I say, 'Listen to me, I also will declare my opinion.'** Remember God has not yet spoken, but everyone else had an opinion.

“**Indeed I waited for your words, I listened to your reasonings, while you searched out what to say. I paid close attention to you; and surely not one of you convinced Job, or answered his words - lest you say, 'we have found wisdom'; God will vanquish him, not man.**”

Elihu reminds Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar they had 28 chapters to explain Job's plight, but failed to present a reasonable explanation.

Elihu had waited until the older men had finished. Now it's his turn.

Verse 17, "I also will answer my part, I too will declare my opinion.

For I am full of words; the spirit within me compels me. Indeed my belly is like wine that has no vent; it is ready to burst like new wineskins."

Throughout the four-way dialogue and Job's ending monologue - Elihu's thoughts and emotions had been fermenting. Now he wants to respond. In fact, he's on the verge of exploding. *Elihu is about to pop his cork...*

"I will speak, that I may find relief; I must open my lips and answer. Let me not, I pray, show partiality to anyone; nor let me flatter any man. For I do not know how to flatter, else my Maker would soon take me away."

Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Job has spoken. Now it's Elihu's turn.

In chapter 33 Elihu asks Job to listen to him. Verse 3 "My words come from my upright heart; my lips utter pure knowledge. The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. If you can answer me, set your words in order before me; take your stand.

Verse 6 "Truly I am as your spokesman before God; I also have been formed out of clay." On several occasions Job

cried out for a Mediator – someone to represent him before God. Here Elihu volunteers.

The name "Elihu" means "my God is He" or "in God's stead."

“Surely no fear of me will terrify you, nor will my hand be heavy on you.

Surely you have spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the sound of your words, saying, 'I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent, and there is no iniquity in me. Yet He finds occasions against me, He counts me as His enemy; He puts my feet in the stocks, He watches all my paths.'

Elihu had been listening – this was exactly what Job had uttered. He'd blamed God for treating him like an enemy. He accused God of torture.

God had violated the Geneva Convention and tortured His prisoner.

Elihu tells Job, "Look, in this you are not righteous."

Job's attitude toward God had soured. He grew accusatory. Sin may not have caused Job's calamity, but sadly Job had sinned in response.

Elihu adds, "I will answer you, for God is greater than man. Why do you contend with Him?" *Job, why all this attitude? You're a finite, spec of dust – you're a mere man. What right do you have to take God to task?*

Verse 13 "For He does not give an accounting of any of His words."

Here Elihu hits the nail on the head. God is God. He doesn't owe Job - or anyone else for that matter - an explanation for His actions. God never needs our permission and He doesn't owe us a reason for His ways.

God is above His creation. He is not accountable to it. We exist at His prerogative and any blessing we receive is a result of His grace.

Job had yet to learn one of the first rules of theology...
“Where God has placed a period don't you change it to a question mark.” If God refuses to offer a reason, learn to live without one. Trust God – don't question Him.

Here's a question, “Can we trust God even when we can't trace Him?”

Verse 14 “For God may speak in one way, or in another, yet man does not perceive it.” Elihu suggests to Job that God may have given him a reason, but he'd not been perceptive enough to hear God's voice.

This is always a possibility. God wants to speak His will to us – but we can grow hard-hearted. Selective listening will miss His instruction.

“In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction.” God can speak in a dream or vision. He opens our ears.

He speaks to us “In order to turn man from his deed, and conceal pride from man, He keeps back his soul from the Pit,

and his life from perishing by the sword.” When we drift, God speaks to rescue us from temptation.

“Man is also chastened with pain on his bed, and with strong pain in many of his bones...” Elihu doesn’t accuse Job - but in the next few verses he says God warns men through sickness and starvation.

Verse 23 “If there is a messenger for him, a mediator, one among a thousand, to show man His uprightness...” There are times when God speaks to men through other men – through a messenger or mediator.

Our ultimate Mediator is Jesus. And there have been times when the voice of Jesus came to me through the voice of a concerned friend.

“Then He is gracious to him, and says, 'Deliver him from going down to the Pit; I have found a ransom'; his flesh shall be young like a child's, he shall return to the days of his youth.” Heed God’s message and it turns back the clock. It refreshes and restores. Obedience is the fountain of youth. When God speaks to His people it’s always a “gracious” word.

When a man takes heed to God’s message. “He shall pray to God, and He will delight in him, he shall see His face with joy, for He restores to man His righteousness. Then he looks at men and says, 'I have sinned, and perverted what was right, and it did not profit me.'

Elihu is saying when a man confesses his sin, God redeems his soul.

“He will redeem his soul from going down to the Pit, and his life shall see the light. Behold, God works all these things, twice, in fact, three times with a man, to bring back his soul from the Pit, that he may be enlightened with the light of life.” God’s mercy has no limits.

Some States have *a three strike policy*. There’re also called “*Habitual Offender Laws*.” If a person commits three felonies the court is forced to sentence him to life in prison. It’s society’s attempt to get tough on crime.

But aren’t we glad God doesn’t say three strikes and you’re out. Verse 29 says God will bring a man back from the pit even after the third strike.

A man or woman is never beyond redemption when God is at work.

In the last verses Elihu implores Job to let him speak and he’ll teach him wisdom. Actually Elihu’s words are a mixed bag. His focus is God’s glory – an emphasis Job needs. But he’s still trapped in a kindergarten theology.

The first half of the chapter 33 was right on. God didn’t need Elihu to defend him, but he did. It’s not Job’s place to question or criticize God.

But in the second half of the chapter Elihu had parroted Job’s 3 friends. It was more of the same... *life will get better when Job confesses a sin.*

Chapter 34 “Elihu further answered and said: “Hear my words, you wise men; give ear to me, you who have knowledge. For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.” Always be discerning of what you hear taught...

As an enemy can poison food, a teacher can poison words.

“Let us choose justice for ourselves; let us know among ourselves what is good. For Job has said, 'I am righteous, but God has taken away my justice; should I lie concerning my right?’” For Job to admit a sin when he was innocent would’ve been committing a sin. It would be a lie.

Job had concluded... “My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.” This was Job’s argument throughout the discourses.

Now Elihu comments, verse 7 “What man is like Job, who drinks scorn like water, who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men? For he has said, 'It profits a man nothing that he should delight in God.’” Here again, Elihu is trapped in a restrictive theology. According to his mindset, either *God failed* or *Job is a failure*.

For Job to assert his innocence in the wake of his suffering was to deny the value of a righteous life. Job is saying “*it doesn’t pay to do good...*”

Verse 10 “Therefore listen to me, you men of understanding: far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to commit iniquity.

For He repays man according to his work, and makes man to find a reward according to his way. Surely God will never

do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert justice.” Job was wrong to accuse God of torture.

God upholds justice. It’s blasphemy to say that God has not been fair. Philip Yancey says of Job, “He wanders just to the edge of blasphemy.”

“Who gave Him charge over the earth? Or who appointed Him over the whole world?” No one appointed or elected God to office. God is no politician. It’s not like He’s accountable to His constituency back home.

“If He should set His heart on it, if He should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.” Remember when God formed Adam out of the dust of the ground He breathed into him the breath of life. Life itself is the breath of God.

But what if God inhaled, and drew in his breath? We’d all vaporize.

"If you have understanding, hear this; listen to the sound of my words: should one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn Him who is most just? Is it fitting to say to a king, 'You are worthless,' and to nobles, 'You are wicked'?" Job hadn’t just condemned the king – he questioned God.

“Yet He is not partial to princes, nor does He regard the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of His hands.” God is never prejudice.

He doesn’t favor the rich over the poor – or prince over pauper.

“In a moment they die, in the middle of the night; the people are shaken and pass away; the mighty are taken away without a hand.

For His eyes are on the ways of man, and He sees all his steps.

There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” Every man on earth is subject to God’s scrutiny.

Elihu says a lot that’s true and right and good. He’s restoring God’s honor. He’s paving the way for God to speak to Job in chapter 38.

“For He need not further consider a man, that he should go before God in judgment.” In other words, if you died tonight and stood before God, He wouldn’t need to scan your file before he judged. He already knows you.

“He breaks in pieces mighty men without inquiry, and sets others in their place.” God doesn’t consult with his counselors. “Therefore he knows their works; He overthrows them in the night, and they are crushed.

He strikes them as wicked men In the open sight of others, because they turned back from Him, and would not consider any of His ways, so that they caused the cry of the poor to come to Him; for He hears the cry of the afflicted.” Beware, God knows the bullies by name. If you mistreat or abuse one of His kids, God knows where you live!

Verse 29 “When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble? And when He hides His face, who then can see

Him..." Whether God is silent or hidden we play the hand we're dealt. God consult with us beforehand.

Verse 31 "For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne chastening; I will offend no more; teach me what I do not see; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more'?" All men sin... Elihu is saying, "*Job you shouldn't have to look so hard to find a sin in your life...*" and in one sense he was right.

Job's sin had not caused his calamity, but Job *had sinned*.

"Should He repay it according to your terms, just because you disavow it? You must choose, and not I; therefore speak what you know." Should God atone for a sin in Job's life that Job refuses to even admit exists?

Verse 34 "Men of understanding say to me, wise men who listen to me: 'Job speaks without knowledge, his words are without wisdom.'

Oh, that Job were tried to the utmost, because his answers are like those of wicked men! For he adds rebellion to his sin; he claps his hands among us, and multiplies his words against God."

Here's how *Elihu* differed from *Eliphaz*... He didn't argue over whether Job had sinned. But he did say Job went too far in vindicating himself...

Even if Job had done everything right – Job's innocence didn't make God guilty. *You don't make God look bad so you can look good.*

Eliphaz was trapped in a restrictive theology. To him when bad stuff happened it meant *God had failed* or *man had sinned* – so Job sinned.

But Job was just as trapped in his theology. He erred on the other side. Since he hadn't sinned Job concluded God had failed. He too was wrong.

Elihu points out that the real tragedy in Job's life was not the loss of his wealth, or health, or status, or even his family...
Job lost his fear of God.

When we experience pain we can make a lot of statements we really don't mean... *"Why does God want to make my life so miserable?"*

"I feel like God has forsaken me. Why won't he answer my prayers?"

"If this is how God is going to treat me – why even be a Christian?"

After the death of his beloved wife, CS Lewis wrote in his journal, *"Not that I am in much danger of ceasing to believe in God. The real danger is coming to believe such dreadful things about Him. The conclusion I dread is not, 'So there is no God after all,' but 'So this is what God's really like. Deceive yourself no longer.'"* Pain cast doubt on God's goodness.

This was Job. His confusion and hurt almost suffocated his faith.

Joe Bayly was a prolific Christian author. When he died he was the president of David C. Cook – a publisher of Sunday School curriculum.

During his lifetime, he and his wife buried three of their kids. One at 18 days old - after surgery... One at 5 years old - from

leukemia... One at 18 years old - from a sledding accident... Joe experienced his share of pain.

Yet he had a saying he lived by, “Remember in the darkness what you have learned in the light.” When the lights go out don’t forget what you’ve learned about God. Remember who He is even in the dark places.

Chapter 35, “Moreover Elihu answered and said: "Do you think this is right? Do you say, 'my righteousness is more than God's'?"

For you say, 'What advantage will it be to You? What profit shall I have, more than if I had sinned?' Job had drawn rash conclusions. He’d claimed it made no difference what kind of life a man lived. What did it matter if he lived a righteous life or a wicked life? The reward could be identical.

Job’s perspective was so *cloudy*, yet he’d spoken with such *certainty*. There was no longer any humility in Job. He’d gotten too full of himself.

Elihu continues "I will answer you, and your companions with you.

Look to the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds - they are higher than you.” From the rest of his speech we assume that Elihu pointed to some real clouds. Storm clouds were gathering on the horizon.

“If you sin, what do you accomplish against Him?

Or, if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him?

If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? Your wickedness affects a man such as you, and your righteousness a son of man. Because of the multitude of oppressions they cry out; they cry out for help because of the arm of the mighty.”

Elihu is saying that the impact of our wickedness or righteousness has more of an effect on us and the people around us, than it does on God.

Verse 10 “But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker, Who gives songs in the night...'” Notice God does speak to us. He is never totally silent.

Even in the dark. In the night of life – when the sun doesn't shine – and you lay in bed tossing and turning waiting for the break of day - God gives “songs in the night.” His Spirit sings of His *grace* even in the dark *place*.

Just because God is quiet or hidden – don't believe He's absent.

At our house we have a night-light in the hallway. It doesn't give off a lot of light – it won't illuminate a parking lot. But if someone has to get up in the middle of the night they have enough light to maneuver around.

God also provides His people night-lights. Just because you're in a dark place don't believe the sun no longer shines. God still loves you. He's still in control, and He communicates it in gentle and subtle, yet glowing ways.

“Who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of heaven?” Obviously, God is

our teacher. There they cry out, but He does not answer, because of the pride of evil men.

Surely God will not listen to empty talk, nor will the Almighty regard it.

Although you say you do not see Him, yet justice is before Him, and you must wait for Him. And now, because He has not punished in His anger, nor taken much notice of folly, therefore Job opens his mouth in vain; he multiplies words without knowledge." Job has been challenging God to speak. He should be thankful God has not punished him.

Job wants God's to speak, but he's not willing to wait. He's impatient. Job has filled the air with "empty talk" and "words without knowledge."

Elihu is fulfilling an important function in God's plan.

If God appeared at that moment, Job couldn't digest what He'd say. Job has a *hard heart* and *closed mind*. Elihu is preparing Job for God's visit.

Chapter 36, "Elihu also proceeded and said: "Bear with me a little, and I will show you that there are yet words to speak on God's behalf." Job was so busy defending his character – it's time now to defend God's character.

"I will fetch my knowledge from afar; I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker. For truly my words are not false; one who is perfect in knowledge is with you." This is a little arrogant. Elihu is like a young man fresh out of Bible College. He's a know-it-all. He's the one "perfect in knowledge."

"Behold, God is mighty, but despises no one; He is mighty in strength of understanding." God hasn't picked Job out to be His whipping boy. God despises no one. God loves us all, wants the best for each of us.

Elihu goes on to describe the righteous reign of God. "He does not preserve the life of the wicked, but gives justice to the oppressed.

He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous; but they are on the throne with kings, for He has seated them forever, and they are exalted.

And if they are bound in fetters, held in the cords of affliction, then He tells them their work and their transgressions - that they have acted defiantly." Elihu addresses a major issue on Job's mind. God doesn't punish without an explanation. He tells us what we've done wrong.

Elihu is correct. The issue with Job was not some wrongdoing. His suffering was not a punishment – it was an opportunity to glorify God.

"(God) also opens their ear to instruction, and commands that they turn from iniquity. If they obey and serve Him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they do not obey, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge. "

Here's a classic example of kindergarten theology.

In verse 13 Elihu talks about God's judgment on the hypocrites. But then he numbers Job among them. Verse 16, "Indeed He would have brought you out of dire distress, into a

broad place where there is no restraint; and what is set on your table would be full of richness.

But you are filled with the judgment due the wicked; judgment and justice take hold of you. Because there is wrath, beware lest He take you away with one blow; for a large ransom would not help you avoid it. Will your riches, or all the mighty forces, keep you from distress?

Do not desire the night, when people are cut off in their place.”

To me, Elihu is a great disappointment. He fears God and upholds His righteousness, but in places like here he reverts back to the kindergarten theology of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. He falls right back in the trap

Verse 21 “Take heed, do not turn to iniquity, for you have chosen this rather than affliction. Behold, God is exalted by His power; Who teaches like Him? Who has assigned Him His way, or who has said, 'You have done wrong'?

"Remember to magnify His work, of which men have sung.

Everyone has seen it; man looks on it from afar. Behold, God is great, and we do not know Him; nor can the number of His years be discovered.”

Job needs this encouragement. He needs to get his eyes off his pain – and back on God. He’s been so fixated on the **what** he’s endured and the **why** he can’t explain - he’s forgotten the **Who** he loves and that loves him.

So much of God is a mystery. Let’s remember what we do know.

Verse 27 “For He draws up drops of water, which distill as rain from the mist, which the clouds drop down and pour abundantly on man. Indeed, can anyone understand the spreading of clouds, the thunder from His canopy?” Elihu marvels at nature’s hydrological system.

Water turns to gas and evaporates. It distills into rain. As hot and cold air collide thunder shakes the canopy... There is a beauty in a storm.

“Look, He scatters his light upon it, and covers the depths of the sea.”

An actual thunderstorm must’ve been brewing at that very moment.

Job doesn’t know it yet, but God is riding on this storm. He’ll appear to Job in chapter 38 - *in the whirlwind*. God speaks to Job from this storm.

“For by these (thunderstorms) He judges the peoples; He gives food in abundance. He covers His hands with lightning, and commands it to strike. His thunder declares it, the cattle also, concerning the rising storm.”

Chapter 37... “At this also my heart trembles, and leaps from its place.

Hear attentively the thunder of His voice, and the rumbling that comes from His mouth. He sends it forth under the whole heaven, His lightning to the ends of the earth. After it a voice roars; He thunders with His majestic voice, and He does not restrain them when His voice is heard.

God thunders marvelously with His voice; He does great things which we cannot comprehend.” God has things to say to Job from this storm.

“For He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth'; likewise to the gentle rain and the heavy rain of His strength. He seals the hand of every man, that all men may know His work.” I love a southern snowstorm. Atlanta is a fast pace city. Busy people - can't wait projects – can't miss appointments...

Yet one day God sends the snow – and life comes to a screeching halt. You can't get your car out of your driveway... and guess what happens?

You play with the kids, and build a family snowman, and sit by a roaring fireplace with your spouse. God forces us to revisit our priorities - He puts life back in perspective - with just a couple of inches of the white stuff.

It's still September, but “Let it snow. Let it snow. Let it snow.”

Verse 8 “The beasts go into dens, and remain in their lairs.” Elihu explains how God sends the animals into their winter hibernation.

“From the chamber of the south comes the whirlwind, and cold from the scattering winds of the north.” Storms result from colliding air masses.

“By the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen.

Also with moisture He saturates the thick clouds; He scatters His bright clouds. And they swirl about, being turned by His guidance, that they may do whatever He commands

them on the face of the whole earth.” Even in light of the science of meteorology wind is still a mysterious force. With all the computer models available we still can predict the path of a hurricane.

“(God) causes (the storms) to come, whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy.” Isn’t it interesting how storms can serve a wide variety of purposes... *storms can punish... storms water... storms can bless...*

Verse 14 "Listen to this, O Job; stand still and consider the wondrous works of God. Do you know when God dispatches them, and causes the light of His cloud to shine? Do you know how the clouds are balanced, those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?

Why are your garments hot, when He quiets the earth by the south wind?" The Mediterranean breezes cooled the land of Uz. When they stopped blowing the desert heated up and your garments got hot.

“With (God), have you spread out the skies, strong as a cast metal mirror? Teach us what we should say to Him, for we can prepare nothing because of the darkness. Should He be told that I wish to speak?

If a man were to speak, surely he would be swallowed up.”

Job has demanded an audience with God to plead his case. But Elihu doubts if a fragile Job will fare very well in the presence of the Almighty.

“Even now men cannot look at the light when it is bright in the skies (the sun is blinding), when the wind has passed and cleared them. He comes from the north as golden splendor; with God is awesome majesty.

As for the Almighty, we cannot find Him; He is excellent in power, in judgment and abundant justice; He does not oppress. Therefore men fear Him... It's as if Elihu is asking, *“Job do you still fear God?”*

“He shows no partiality to any who are wise of heart.”

Later God will restore Job and rebuke Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

It's interesting that Elihu isn't mentioned in God's rebuke. His words weren't perfect – but they served God's purpose in Job's life. Elihu got Job's eyes off himself and back on God. He restored perspective.

Job is now as ready as he can be for what happens in chapter 38...