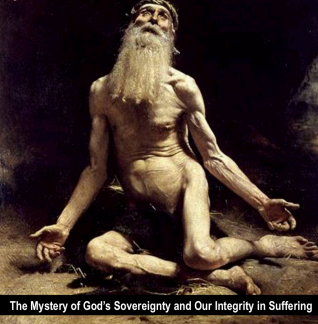


persevere  
the GOSPEL according to JOB

The Mystery of God's Sovereignty and Our Integrity in Suffering

## Who Is Elihu?

Lesson 18 • Job 32

Just When You Thought There Was Nothing More to Say...  
One Last LONGWINDED Speech at the Ash Heap of Despair!

Job 32-37 records *the introduction of Elihu* and *the instruction by Elihu*  
in *four speeches* to Job and his miserable comforters.

Introduction of Elihu	Instruction by Elihu			
<b>By the Narrator (32:1-5)</b> Ancestry • Age • Attentiveness • Anger <b>By Elihu Himself (32:6-22)</b>	<b>Speech 1 (Ch 33)</b> God Is Freely Sovereign	<b>Speech 2 (Ch 34)</b> God Is Unfailing Just	<b>Speech 3 (Ch 35)</b> God Is Absolutely Righteous	<b>Speech 4 (Ch 36-37)</b> God Is Supremely Worthy

## Who Is Elihu?

## 1. Elihu's Ancestry. 32:2, 6

- His name is **Elihu** = "My God is He" or "He is my God".
- His family name is **Ram**.
- His father's name is **Barachel** = "God Blesses".
- His tribal name is **Buz**.

## 2. Elihu's Age. 32:4, 6-7

- Elihu is a wise man that is years younger than the three but not that much younger than Job: **50-70** years old?

## 3. Elihu's Attentiveness. 32:4, 11-16; 33:1-7

"Elihu had done his duty by listening; he will now do it by talking." ~E. Dhorme

## 4. Elihu's Attitude of Anger. 32:2-5

His RIGHTEOUS Anger toward both His Elders and Job

- He is angry with the three because they could **not** make a case against Job but condemned him anyway! (32:3-5)
- He is angry with Job because Job makes himself out be **more** just/right than God! (32:2)

His RESPECTFUL Anger toward both His Elders and Job

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Elihu's Respect in Speaking to His 3 Elders (32:6-22)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Timid in approaching his elders, like a snake in the dust (6)</li> <li>2) Terrified to tell his elders what he was thinking (6)</li> <li>3) Respectful of his elders age (7)</li> <li>4) Patient in waiting for his elders to speak first (11)</li> <li>5) Attentive by listening carefully to all that was said (12)</li> <li>6) Impartial in judging, no playing favorites or using flattery (21)</li> <li>7) God-fearing so not unjust or one-sided in his words (22)</li> </ol> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Elihu's Respect in Speaking to Job (33:1-7)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Requests that Job listen to him (1)</li> <li>2) Ready to share his wisdom with Job (2; 17-22)</li> <li>3) Really sincere and upright in what he is going to say (3)</li> <li>4) Relies on God for insight and understanding (4; 32:8-9)</li> <li>5) Refute me if you can, I will let you respond (5)</li> <li>6) Remember we are both men, equals as fellow humans (6)</li> <li>7) Realize there is no need to fear me like you do God (7)</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
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## Why Listen to Elihu?

Three Ways People Answer This Question:

1. **DON'T** listen to Elihu: He is an **angry, young fool** with **nothing new to say** who **only further persecutes Job**.
2. **HALF** listen to Elihu: He is an **angry, young fool** with **some new things to say** but **provides little help to Job**.

3. **FULLY** listen to Elihu: He is an **angry, younger wise man** with **something new to say** who **actually prepares Job** to hear from the Lord in the coming storm.

Two Different Perspectives	Elihu's Role in the Book of Job	
	An Angry, Rebellious Young Fool	An Angry, Respectful Younger Wise Man
Reputation	Rebellious youngster who is an arrogant, rude fool	Righteous younger man who is truthfully, respectfully wise
Reason for Anger	Due to his own insolence	Due to God's insight.
Source of Insight	Foolishness from human reason/intellect	Wisdom from divine revelation/inspiration
Role in Debate	Brash meddler acting on his own	Bold mediator acting for God
Goal of Speeches	Further persecute Job like the Three Friends	Finally prepare Job for meeting His God in the Storm

#### Seven Reasons Why We Should Listen to Elihu

- Elihu receives **MORE SPACE** than anyone else in the debate about God's sovereignty and undeserved adversity.
- Elihu reflects **GOD'S ATTITUDE** toward the three and toward Job.
- Elihu reveals **SOMETHING NEW** that neither of the three friends nor Job has understood so far. 32:11-17
  - Elihu will reveal something new about Job and his **SIN**.  
The Three have said: "**You suffer because you sinned!**" But Elihu will say: "**You sin because you suffer!**"
  - Elihu will reveal something new about Job and his **SUFFERING**.
    - 1) Suffering is not just for the purpose of punishment but also **PROTECTING** and **PURIFYING**.
    - 2) Suffering is not just an expression of God's wrath but also God's **MERCY**.
- Elihu is able to **ACTUALLY SILENCE** Job even though he graciously gives Job the opportunity to respond. 33:32-33
- Elihu is **NEVER REBUKED** by anyone.
- Elihu is a **HUMAN HINGE** turning Job from human foolishness to true wisdom: *Fearing the Lord*. 28:28; 7:24
- Elihu is **PREPARING** Job for his encounter with God in the storm by telling him much of what God is going to say.

Five Repeated Themes	Elihu's Instruction of Job	God's Confrontation of Job
Addressing Job's response to suffering instead of the cause of suffering	32:12-14; 33:8-13; 34:5-9, 31-37; 35:1-4, 13-16	38:2-5, 18; 40:2, 7-8
Rebuking Job's defense of his righteousness at the expense of God's own	33:8-13; 34:5-12, 17-19, 31-37; 35:2-7	40:2, 8
Emphasizing the majesty and mystery of God ruling over creation	36:22-37:24	38:4-38; 40:9-14
Questioning Job's understanding of God's ways in creation much less his life	34:35; 35:16; 37:14-18	38:2-39:30
Pointing to the mercy and compassion of this sovereign and mysterious God	34:24-26, 28; 36:15, 28, 31; 37:12-13	38:25-27, 39-41; 39:1-4

#### The Intervention of Elihu Reveals the Role of a True Comforter

- Risk being a believer priest who seeks to prepare the hearts of sufferers for encountering God in their suffering.
- Cooperate with the Spirit in turning people away from focusing on self-pity and false thinking about God.
- Cooperate with the Spirit in turning people toward God and His sovereign but gracious purposes in suffering.