



Lesson 96

Job's Repentance and Restoration

Story Elements

- **Text:** Job 32:1-42:17
- **Setting:** circa 3000 B.C. in the land of Uz (northern Arabia)
- **Main Characters:** God, Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu
- **Plot:** The young Elihu offers his perspective on Job's calamities, and then God himself speaks to Job.
- **Key word(s):** _____ appears 9 times in the final 11 chapters of this book. Its significance is seen when Elihu rebukes Job and his three friends for their failure to apply truth properly, and when God rebukes Job for underestimating the Almighty's infinite wisdom.
- **Climax:** *Job 42:5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: But now mine eye seeth thee. 6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*

Elihu's Response

- (32:1-3) The dialogue between Job and his three friends came to a standstill. The friends insisted that Job was a hypocrite and needed to repent; Job maintained his innocence and demanded that God give him an answer. Then Elihu, a mysterious character, gave his speech. Here's why Elihu is so interesting:
 - He was not mentioned as one of Job's three friends in the beginning of the book but appears suddenly at the end.
 - Job didn't not respond to his words like he did the other three, and _____ didn't rebuke Elihu like he did the other three.
 - Bible scholars are split in their opinion of Elihu – some think he gave the right and needed response to Job, while others believe that he basically repeated everything that was already said. Others go further and say that Elihu was young, arrogant, and foolish in his response.¹
- Elihu's six-chapter response to Job and his three friends include...
 - (32:4-22) a request that they listen to the wisdom of a man younger than they, because wisdom comes from God, not just _____. (cf. v 8)
 - (33:1-33) a reminder that God uses suffering to _____ people. (cf. v 19)
 - (34:1-37) a rebuke against Job for accusing God of injustice. (cf. v 17)
 - (35:1-37:24) a review of God's _____, including his impassability,² omnipotence, sovereignty, and wisdom, and concluding with a plea for humility in response to God's providence.

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.

God's Rebuke

- (38:1) Jehovah, coming in a whirlwind, is the next to speak.
 - (38:3) Whereas Job thought he could demand an answer from God, it is God that demands an answer from Job, *Gird up now thy loins like a man; For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*

¹ There are three reasons why I believe Elihu's speech is beneficial: (1) Elihu's speech does not follow the same pattern of the rest, showing they are purposefully set apart, and therefore implying they are of better character; (2) Elihu is the only one that is not rebuked by God in the following chapters; and (3) Elihu's righteous motivations are explicitly stated in Job 32:1-3, *So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. 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. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*

² *Impassable* means that God is not subject to emotional change. God's impassability is connected to his immutability.

- b. (38:4-39:30) God questions Job if he understood how the universe is made, how the earth operates, and how the _____ live. All of this is intended to show Job that if he cannot “explain the phenomena of God’s *natural* government...How can he, then, hope to understand the principles of His *moral* government?”³
4. (40:1-2) Having ended his first rebuke, God asks Job if he still desires to argue with the Almighty. Job responds humbly, saying, *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.*
5. (40:15-41:34) The second half of God’s rebuke of Job is a description of two very large and untamable animals: _____ and _____.

APPLICATION → Though opinions differ as to the identity of these creatures, the lesson is clear: God is in control of even the most uncontrollable parts of creation. Even leviathan is on a leash, and the student of the Bible will immediately connect the poetry of the dragon’s dominance with the reality of Satan’s doom:

Psalms 74:14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces...

Revelation 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years

Job’s Renewal

6. (42:1-6) The final chapter begins with Job’s confession and repentance.
- God asked, *Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?* Job confessed, *Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.*
 - (v 6) Now, instead of grieving in dust and ashes, Job _____ in dust and ashes.
7. The book concludes with God blessing Job with...
- (42:7-9) _____ – Job’s three friends are rebuked by God, whereas Job is commended.
 - (42:10-12) _____ – Job’s prosperity and posterity was doubly returned.

APPLICATION → “These two things God will, sooner or later, do for his people: he will show them their faults, that they may be themselves ashamed of them, and he will show others their _____, and bring it forth as the light, that they may be ashamed of their unjust censures of them.”⁴

Revelation 3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

Answer Key: Key word(s): wisdom • 1. b. God; • 2. a. age; b. discipline; d. attributes; • 3. b. animals • 5. behemoth; leviathan • 6.b. repents; • 7. a. vindication; b. abundance → righteousness

³ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 340.

⁴ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 731.