

## Enter Elihu

*Opening Prayer:* Lord Jesus Christ, we thank and praise you for the Gospel—for there is no other way whereby we can find rest and peace with our God. Through infinite compassion you lived for us and out of eternal love you faced death, even death on the cross. Through your Holy Spirit enliven us with this Gospel so that we may show others this most glorious way. We ask it in your name. Amen.

*Synopsis of the Theme:* Elihu helps the Job recover from the faulty advice of his three friends. In doing so Elihu also functions as a bridge for Job to finally meet the LORD in chapters 38–42.

*Topic for Sharing/Ice Breaker:* When was a time someone was hurting and you pointed out their faults? How did this work for you? For them?

*Question:* How is the introduction of Elihu in Job 32:1–6 unique in the book?

**Job 32:1-6 ESV** So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.<sup>2</sup> Then Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, burned with anger. He burned with anger at Job because he justified himself rather than God.<sup>3</sup> He burned with anger also at Job's three friends because they had found no answer, although they had declared Job to be in the wrong.<sup>4</sup> Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were older than he.<sup>5</sup> And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, he burned with anger.<sup>6</sup> And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said: "I am young in years, and you are aged; therefore I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you.

*Question:* After skimming chapters 32–37 what do you see that differs Elihu from Job's three friends?

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*Question:* How does Elihu interpret suffering?

*Question:* Read James 1:19 and discuss how these words describe Elihu as well as how they relate to helping someone who is suffering.

**Jas. 1:19 ESV** Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;

*Question:* Mark was raised in a Christian home where his family implicitly believed that God would always protect believers from evil and calamities. Then Mark's fiancé was killed in a car accident by a drunk driver. He told his pastor that he wasn't sure he believed in God any more. Then he asked his pastor, "Why did this happen?" Based upon what you know of Elihu and how he responded to Job's acute pain, how would you help Mark?

*Question:* From 1942–1945 Viktor Frankl endured imprisonment in Auschwitz and three other Nazi concentration camps. Those who survived had hope. They had something to live for beyond the barbed wire. He writes in his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*:

The prisoner who had lost faith in the future—his future—was doomed. Usually it began with the prisoner refusing one morning to get dressed and wash or to go out on the parade grounds. No entreaties, no blows, no threats had any effect. He just lay there, hardly moving. If this crisis was brought about by an illness, he refused to be taken to the sickbay or to do anything to help himself. He simply gave up (Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy* [New York: Washington Square Press, 1969 reprint] 117, 118).

How does this relate to the suffering describe in the book of Job? What does it teach you about giving people hope, as Elihu does for Job?

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*Closing Prayer:* Heavenly Father, hear us as we pray: “God knows full well when times of gladness, Shall be the needful thing for thee. When He has tried thy soul with sadness, And from all guile has found thee free, He comes to thee all unaware, And makes thee own His loving care.” In Jesus’ most holy name we pray. Amen.

*Assignment:* Read Job 38–41 and answer these questions:

- 1) What is God trying to tell Job?
- 2) Describe Behemoth and Leviathan.
- 3) How do these chapters comfort you? How do they alarm you?