



A YEAR
with
GOD
Daily Devotional

DAY 12



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DAY TWELVE

Job 32 - 34

The Voice You Didn't Expect

For thirty-one chapters, the conversation has had three voices on one side and Job on the other. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar have taken turns explaining Job's suffering, accusing his character, and demanding his repentance. Job has answered every one of them. And now all four of them have run dry.

Into that silence steps someone who has been there the whole time. Sitting. Listening. Waiting his turn with a patience that has finally snapped.

His name is Elihu. And he is angry.

Sometimes God sends a voice you weren't expecting, from a direction you weren't watching, to say the thing that needed to be said all along. Pay attention to those voices.

Chapter 32 introduces Elihu with unusual care. We are told he is young - younger than all the others, which is why he has held back. In the ancient world, you waited for your elders to speak first. He has done that. He has sat through everything. And he has watched

three respected, older men fail completely to help a man in pain, and he cannot stay quiet any longer.

He is angry at Job's friends because they declared Job guilty without being able to prove it. But he is also angry at Job - and this is the nuance that makes Elihu different. He does not accuse Job of secret sins the way the others did. His frustration with Job is more specific: Job has been so focused on defending his innocence that he has started to make himself sound more righteous than God. In the heat of his argument, Job has said things that, if left unchallenged, would make God seem unjust.

- There is a difference between crying out to God in pain and putting God on trial. Job has been doing both. Elihu sees the line between them.

He speaks because, he says, there is a spirit in man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives understanding. Age alone does not produce wisdom. Years do not guarantee insight. Elihu has been given something to say - and he will burst if he does not say it.

*"I am full of words, and the spirit within me compels me;
inside I am like bottled-up wine, like new wineskins ready to burst."*

- Job 32:18-19

Have you ever felt that? A word so pressing inside you that silence feels like a kind of dishonesty? That is not arrogance. That is the breath of the Almighty looking for a way out. Do not mistake compulsion for pride.

In chapter 33, Elihu turns directly to Job and offers something none of the other friends have offered: a different framework for suffering altogether. Not punishment. Not divine retribution for hidden sin. Something far more personal than that.

He says: God speaks to people. In dreams. In visions of the night. He opens their ears. He warns them. He turns them from their pride. And if that doesn't work, He speaks through suffering - not as punishment but as instruction. As redirection. As a hand on the shoulder of someone walking toward a cliff, turning them around before they fall.

*“God does all these things to a person -twice, even three times -
to turn them back from the pit,”*

- Job 33:29–30

This is a fundamentally different picture of suffering than anything Eliphaz, Bildad, or Zophar offered. They saw suffering as a verdict. Elihu sees it as a conversation. God is not punishing Job - He is speaking to him. The question is not: what did Job do to deserve this? The question is: what is God saying through this? What is He turning Job away from? What is He turning Job toward?

Your suffering may not be a verdict on your past. It may be a conversation about your future. The question is not only “why is this happening” but “what is being formed in me through this”?

Elihu also says something quietly important: he tells Job that God has someone in his corner. A mediator - an angel, a messenger - who is gracious and intercedes on his behalf, who says: spare him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom for him. The same longing Job expressed in chapter 9 - if only there were a mediator - Elihu is now saying: there is one.

*- God had been answering Job's deepest cry long before Job
heard the answer.*

Chapter 34 is Elihu pressing further, and here he is at his most bold. He addresses both Job and the friends and makes a case for the absolute justice of God. Can the One who hates justice govern? Could the Almighty be guilty of wrongdoing? If He were to withdraw His spirit and breath, all humanity would perish together. He challenges Job directly: you have said, in effect, that it profits a man nothing to try to please God. That righteousness earns nothing. Elihu says: be careful. That is not the voice of a man seeking God. That is the voice of a man putting God in the dock.

And this is the razor's edge that Elihu is walking. He is not wrong about God's justice. He is not wrong that Job has gone too far in some of his speeches. But he also does not know what we know - that Job's suffering is not about justice at all. It is about something happening in the unseen realm that Job has no access to.

We rarely have the full picture of why we are where we are. Humility is not pretending the suffering doesn't exist. It is holding our conclusions loosely when we cannot see the whole story.

What is striking about Elihu - and what sets him apart from the three friends - is that when God speaks at the end of the book, He rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar for speaking wrongly about Him. He does not rebuke Elihu. That silence is significant. Elihu was not perfectly right. But he was pointing in a truer direction than the others. He was asking a better question: what is God doing here, rather than what did Job do to deserve this?

The difference between those two questions is the difference between a theology that condemns and a theology that transforms.

Speak this over yourself today:

God is not silent in my suffering. He is speaking - through dreams, through people, through the very pressure I am feeling right now. I will ask not only "why" but "what are You forming in me?"

"TOMORROW - Day 13 Job 35-37

Elihu isn't finished. He has one more thing to say - and it is the most awe-struck, sky-gazing, thunder-describing speech in the whole book. It is almost as if he is setting the stage for Someone else to speak. Come back tomorrow.

Day 12 of 365



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