

In chapter 35, Elihu continues his counsel to Job. Although his tone remains direct, Elihu challenges not Job's character, but his *theology*—particularly his view of righteousness, justice, and God's response to human behavior. Elihu perceives that Job's words have begun to elevate his own righteousness above God's justice, and he sees this as spiritually dangerous.

While Elihu does overstate some of Job's words, his central concern is clear: Job has begun to speak as if God is indifferent—as if there is no real benefit to righteousness or consequence for sin. Elihu wants Job (and us) to remember that God is not answerable to us, yet He is deeply involved in human affairs.

### Verses 1–3: Twisting the Implication of Job's Complaint

*“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?’” (vv. 2–3, NKJV)*

Job never directly claimed to be more righteous than God, but Elihu draws out the implication of his complaint. By arguing that his integrity has brought him no benefit, Job is edging toward the conclusion that God does not reward righteousness justly, and thus, indirectly, that his understanding of justice is higher than God's.

#### Personal Application:

When we suffer without understanding, it's easy to slide from *confusion* into *accusation*. If we begin to think, *“Doing right gains me nothing”* or *“God should have treated me better,”* we place our sense of justice above God's wisdom. We must learn to trust God's heart even when we can't trace His hand (cf. Proverbs 3:5-6).

### Verses 4–8: God Is Not Changed by Human Righteousness or Sin

*“Look to the heavens... If you sin, what do you accomplish against Him?... Your wickedness affects a man such as you, and your righteousness may profit a son of man.” (vv. 4–8)*

Elihu points out the transcendence of God. Unlike human rulers who may gain or lose based on our behavior, God remains eternally complete and unchanged. Our obedience does not enrich Him, nor does our rebellion diminish Him. However, our actions do affect people. Righteousness benefits others; sin harms others.

This is a helpful correction to the idea that our good behavior can somehow manipulate God into responding the way we want. God is not a transactional being; He is relational, moral, and sovereign—not reactive.

#### Personal Application:

God is not impressed or obligated by our righteousness. He calls us to live holy lives not because He needs us, but because others do—and because we were made to reflect His image. Our righteousness brings no leverage before God, but it does honor Him and serve others. Likewise, our sin grieves God—not because it wounds Him—but because it destroys what He loves.

### Verses 9–11: The Cry of the Oppressed and the Silence of Self-Reliance

*“Because of the multitude of oppressions they cry out... But no one says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night?’” (vv. 9–10)*

Here, Elihu makes a deep observation. He says that when people suffer oppression, they cry out—but not to God their Maker. Their cries are born out of pain, not repentance or humility. They are desperate for relief, but not seeking relationship.

God gives “songs in the night”—that is, hope in hardship—but these are for those who look to Him with trust. Elihu suggests that God’s silence is sometimes due to human pride, not divine indifference.

#### Personal Application:

In hardship, are we seeking God—or merely escape? It’s one thing to cry out for help; it’s another to cry out *to Him*. Pain should push us toward dependence, not resentment. If we want to experience God’s “songs in the night,” we must stop demanding answers and start seeking His presence.

### Verses 12–13: Why Some Prayers Go Unanswered

*“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.” (vv. 12–13)*

Elihu offers a sobering truth: not all cries are sincere. God is not bound to respond to proud hearts or shallow words. He listens for humility and contrition. Crying out in pain is not the same as calling out in repentance.

This is not to say that God only hears the perfect—but He does oppose the proud and give grace to the humble (James 4:6). Elihu’s warning is that pride often disguises itself as prayer.

#### Personal Application:

Ask yourself: *Am I seeking God, or just relief?* God honors honest, humble cries—even when they’re confused or weak. But He resists proud hearts that demand justice on their own terms. When prayer feels unanswered, take time to ask: *Is there pride I need to release?*

### Verses 14–16: Wait on the God Who Sees, Even When You Don’t

*“Although you say you do not see Him, yet justice is before Him, and you must wait for Him... Job opens his mouth in vain; he multiplies words without knowledge.” (vv. 14–16)*

Elihu acknowledges Job’s complaint: *“I can’t see God.”* But he reminds Job that God still sees everything—His justice is ever-present. The call is to wait, not to accuse. Elihu ends with a rebuke: Job is speaking much, but his words lack understanding.

Again, Elihu is not attacking Job’s pain—he’s confronting the drift into self-justification and divine critique. In Job’s dark night of the soul, Elihu invites him to return to trust in God’s unchanging justice.

**Personal Application:**

When God feels distant and silence stretches long, wait well. Don't rush to conclusions. Don't justify yourself. Don't accuse Him. Wait in worshipful trust, knowing that His justice never sleeps. As Isaiah 30:18 says, *"Blessed are all those who wait for Him."*

**Conclusion: God Is Just—Even When It Doesn't Feel That Way**

Job 35 is a necessary correction to the dangerous thinking that creeps in during deep suffering: the belief that righteousness is pointless, that God is unmoved, or that He must answer us on our terms. Elihu reminds us:

- God is not obligated by our righteousness.
- God is not diminished by our sin.
- God is not deaf—but He listens for humility.
- God is just—even when He is silent.

When life seems unfair, God invites us to wait—not because He's absent, but because He's doing something deeper than we can see.

*"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* (Genesis 18:25)