

Job Chapters 32-37

The Fatalistic Counsel of Elihu

Some Lessons

- * Elihu ("God is Himself") does better than his elders, but neither Job nor our Lord responds to him
- * He is willing to say that divine discipline may be for the shaping of godly character (Hebrews 12: 5-9, note "Father of spirits")
- * He illustrates the attitudes of younger Christian men - the elders fail and he is angry with them, he knows better they do, he is willing to come forward and do what he can, but he does not succeed either
- * Possibly Elihu wrote the book (Ch. 32: 16-20)

Key Themes and Representative Verses

- * Elihu I (Chs 32-33) - God is just (32: 2), the friends condemned Job without specific reason (32: 3), it is possible for the counsellor to do better by divine grace (32: 8); he understands divine creation and divinely given life, that debate must be conducted with these in view (33: 4-6); for it is for God to decide whether or not to respond (33: 14-17), and vindication requires a ransom (33: 24)
- * Elihu II (Ch. 34) - God is just (34: 12) and Job should submit whatever the cause of his suffering (34: 36-37)
- * Elihu III (Ch. 35) - he says that Job's problem is lack of faith, a common accusation in difficult counselling (35: 14)
- * Elihu IV (Chs. 36-37) - he knows that God is great (36: 26), but not that God is love; to him, God is ultimately unknowable, though fully trustworthy (37: 23); here are the seeds of Islamic fatalism