

Job

How Do We Know What We Think We Know?

Sunday School Lesson #13

- I. ELIHU EXPLAINS TO JOB WHY HE WAS AFFLICTED (JOB CHAPTER 36)
 - A. Elihu asks Job to restrain himself while Elihu speaks to him truth about God
 1. Elihu does not claim he gained this knowledge from his own understanding (2 Peter 1:19-21)
 - a) His knowledge was passed down by faithful men compared to the new revelation so many claim to discover in the past 200 hundred years, mainly in America
 - 1) Many religions claim the Bible as their source but teach only a system of self-righteous works
 - 2) Few teach in the normative manner directly from the Bible seeking to be taught of God while studying His Word, this number is becoming greatly reduced in this country
 - b) His knowledge only reflects the righteousness of God and not his own “goodness”
 2. Elihu claims his knowledge has moral integrity, is not developed from his own thoughts, he is actually saying that he is a spiritual elder and his words should be discerned based on their coherence with God’s testimony of Himself only (John 1:1-4, 12-13, 18)
 - B. This fundamental truth that runs throughout Scripture — God does NOT refuse or condemn anyone though He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart better than any person (Hebrews 4:12-13; Revelation 20:11-15)
 1. He never abandons the righteous
 - a) Not those who think they are doing righteously
 - b) But those who are clothed in His righteousness which is by faith through the gateway of repentance
 2. He never excuses those who are not clothed in His righteousness
 - a) Some may receive a pittance of recompense in this life
 - b) Judgment awaits all who refused to submit to Him in faith via repentance
 - c) He is no respecter of persons, all receive their justice based on their relationship with Him (Acts 10:34-35)
 3. Characteristics of those without faith in God which were (are) in us also until we are complete in Christ (Romans 1:18-28)

- a) Stiff-necked anger — Sinners rail against God rather than surrender to Him seeking understanding
 - b) Many are struck down according to His will for their refusal to seek God and as an instruction to others
 - c) The most degrading defilement that occurs with spiritual rebellion is physical rebellion
 - 1) Cult prostitution was both
 - (a) Heterosexual
 - (b) Homosexual
 - 2) Disease ridden same as today frequently resulting in debilitating afflictions and/or death
4. The worse punishment in this life is that God does nothing to warn you of the impending doom that awaits all who die in their sins
- C. God will deliver those who understand that their sin has put them in a narrow confine (between a rock and a hard place) from which there is no escape (the reason that God has sent or allowed the affliction to come to them) (Matthew 7:13-15, 21)
1. God uses adversity to make people aware of their inherent powerlessness and need for Him; thus, affliction is actually God's mercy in action (when it is not a result of our rebellious sin and even then God is able to pull good from our evil (Romans 8:28-30)
 2. Some (through God's direct intervention) awaken from their plight and turn to listen to God's call to them (John 3:16-19)
 3. God called Job through affliction
 - a) Job, despite his strict adherence to religious works was actually in a desperately cramped position — heading straight for Hell on the *self-righteous road of religion*
 - b) The affliction, though the product of Satan's hatred, was used by God to awaken Job to his true position
 - 1) This was not accomplished simply by being afflicted for this only made Job more self-righteous
 - 2) This was begun by Elihu's witness of the true God to Job after he was exhausted claiming his self-righteousness to everyone
 - c) God will reveal Himself to Job leading him to a broad way that will result in eternal life (Psalm 23)
- D. However, at the present moment Elihu must confront Job with his wickedness; confession of faith without repentance is worthless (Ezekiel 3:17-21)

1. Though Job stands in judgment of the wicked, he himself is morally wicked and in danger of being seized by God's justice (Romans 2:1-5)
 - a) This condemnation (passing of judicial sentence) of others only leads to a haughty attitude (religious, pious)
 - b) This haughty attitude traps one in continual anger against "the wicked" turning you into the (hypocrite) oppressor as evidenced by the works of your spirit
 - 1) Scoffing
 - 2) Sarcasm
 - 3) Mocking
 - 4) Fault-finding
 - 5) Dissatisfied
 - 6) Unhappy
 - 7) Works of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-21)
2. Job should not be fooled because he believed in God (James 2:19-20)
 - a) His prayers to prevent evil from occurring did not prevent affliction from coming, if anything, it attracted the affliction (Remember: it was God who pointed to Job and not Satan)
 - 1) Satan saw Job's piety for what it was and asked to use it against Job to reveal to God Job's hypocrisy
 - 2) God knew Job's true heart and allowed the affliction (within limits) so that he could
 - (a) Bring Job to salvation
 - (b) Show Satan that it is not about the unrighteousness of the people but about the mercy of the Lord
 - (1) Showing mercy to Satan in giving him example after example of repentance and salvation
 - (2) Thus, heaping hot coals on his head each time Satan rejects the visible display of God's mercy (Proverbs 25:21-22; Romans 12:19-21)
 - b) Job's strength was "as nothing" when the spiritual forces came upon him causing him to
 - 1) To plead for death which would have sealed his eternal condemnation
 - 2) Turn to iniquity, which Job did rather than turn to God for comfort (Our society would have recommended

suicide/euthanasia to alleviate his suffering and thus sealing his fate in Hell for all eternity)

- 3) The afflictions unmasked his inner sinfulness which he masked with pious words in the early stages of the afflictions
3. God is a teacher like no other and who can say that He has done wrong? (Romans 9:14-16)
 - a) Man only sees the tiniest fraction of His mighty works
 - b) God is infinite beyond our capacity to understand and therefore to question
 - c) Even in the materialistic, physical aspects of this creation of which we are aware, we cannot explain the everyday occurrences we take for granted
 - 1) Rain — How clouds form, why rain falls when it does
 - 2) Storms — Why they strike as they do resulting in powerful
 - (a) Winds
 - (b) Hail
 - (c) Tornados
 - (d) Lightning
 - d) Yet, even in these materialistic displays of His power He judges peoples declaring His presence that frequently brings only cursing rather than cries for help (Revelation 16)

II. ELIHU PROCLAIMS GOD'S MAJESTY (JOB CHAPTER 37)

- A. Elihu acknowledges the power, and rightness, of God in His displays of His power in this physical, material creation; and, he stands in awe of God rather than in cursing God as Job has
 1. Nothing is so certain that man cannot control the weather (let alone accurately predict it and its severity)
 2. Yet, the weather does all that He commands
 - a) Whether for correction
 - b) Or for love
- B. Elihu begins the questioning of Job's power that God will take up and expand upon
 1. If one is to sit in judgment of God then one must be able to demonstrate at least the same power as God

- a) Does Job know how God controls the weather demonstrating the completeness of His knowledge of the workings of this physical creation?
- b) Can Job duplicate any of the weather conditions even if it is only the beating sun in a clear, cloudless sky?
2. If Job can do *any* of these things then Elihu will be silent and learn from Job how to talk to God because Elihu admits he is ignorant of how God works in this physical, material creation (as are we)
- C. Elihu closes in humility
 1. Elihu is not speaking to Job so he can “preen” himself before God, to appear gracious and pious
 2. Who one can compare with God who is great and cannot violate His
 - a) Power
 - b) Justice
 - c) Righteousness
 3. Men therefore should fear God because He is God and does not regard anyone who is *wise* in their own mind
 - a) God is outside of this universe — we are trapped on a tiny planet insignificant in this universe
 - b) God does not *have* to save anyone — He chooses to save based on His own death, burial and resurrection at the hands of His creation
 - c) There is more distinction between the intelligence of man to God than there is of an bacterium to a person
 - d) Recognizing this is the beginning of wisdom
 - 1) You will stand before Him realizing His love based on your repentance and acceptance of His salvation, or
 - 2) You will stand before Him recognizing the rightness of His condemnation based on your works, your own religious system which will stand in condemnation of you

III. COMMON ATHEISTIC ARGUMENT AGAINST THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

A. Premises

1. Premise 1: If God were all-powerful (omnipotent), he would prevent evil
2. Premise 2: If God were all-good (benevolent), he would desire to prevent evil
3. Conclusion: Thus, if God were omnipotent and benevolent, there would be no evil
4. Premise 3: But, there is evil

5. Conclusion: Therefore, there is no omnipotent, benevolent God; therefore, God does not exist

B. Problems with this argument

1. Self-defeating argument as it presupposes the existence of God (Source of moral goodness) to *prove* that God cannot exist thus violating the Law of Noncontradiction.
2. Does not define omnipotence of God and its limitations (God cannot do evil)
3. Presupposes that the only sphere God works with is this material, physical temporal sphere whereas God starts His work in this sphere but continues it in the next sphere (eternity future) where everyone receives what they want
 - a) Those who have a relationship with God will have an intimate relationship with God
 - b) Those who do not desire a relationship with God will be judged by their own religious systems AND FOUND NONCOMPLIANT! They will then spend eternity without God expressing their unmitigated hatred against God away from God and those who have a relationship with God.
4. Presupposes that God can create good people made in His image without experiential development to understand:
 - a) To know difference between good and evil
 - b) To know when to choose the good and reject the evil
 - c) This argument places man in judgment over God demonstrating that at its heart
 - 1) Secular humanism is man elevating himself above God as god
 - 2) Atheism, despite its definition of being a non-religion, is actually a religion since man is its deity
 - d) This argument does not disprove God's existence but only shows that those who hold to this argument do not like God and thus try to ignore Him

C. The "evil" that occurs is designed

- 1) To show everyone their powerlessness
- 2) A sampling of the total depravity of those who would be gods, but are not
- 3) The realization of one's need for the Savior