

The Book of Job Home Group Notes 8
Job 32:1 – 37:24 More of how not to?

Set the scene: Do you like suspense? Is the edge of your seat a place you quite enjoy being? Why? Or why not?

Do you think it is more worthwhile listening to the contributions of someone older or younger or the same age as you? Who do you tend to listen to?

The listener who couldn't resist doing the longest speech

1. Hear from God:– Read Job 32:1-33:12.

What can you discover about who Elihu is?

2. Why hasn't he spoken until now?

3. Is it worth listening to someone who has listened?

4. Why doesn't he let Job's friends summarise their own case?

5. What is Elihu's opinion of Job?

6. Which of these might be reasons to reject Elihu?

His long-windedness (32:18),

his pretensions to divine inspiration (33:1-4),

his content (34:11,25f) so like the friends,

his repetition:- there seemed to be some new thinking (36:8-12) but even this was in early Eliphaz (5:17f),

his brutal treatment of Job (33:8-12 (has he misquoted Job?), 34:5-9, 34:36f, 36:17-21),

his arrogance and anger (32:2-5, 33:33, 36:4)

his lack of empathy (37:21-24)

Kept on tenterhooks by a red-herring seller?

1. When it was announced Job's words were ended as 31 ended, what did you expect next?
2. Is it typical that God pauses before providing an answer?
3. Is it typical that some people like Elihu prefer to fill in the pauses with the sound of their own voice?
4. What do you make of such people?
5. What is God's response to Elihu (see 38:1f)?
6. What does that tell us?
7. Are you impatient to hear God's response to Job?

Apply these things to your life

8. Elihu is not unlike many young people today. He is driven to distraction by older people's rationalisations, closed circles, traditionalism, dogmatism on minor issues. There must be sympathy with the frustrated rebellion of youth. And yet young people often end up offering the same criticisms and errors as their elders, offering little that is genuinely new or different, going round the same circles. Discuss.
9. Read 1 Peter 1:6-7, Romans 5:3-5, 2 Cor.12:7-10. These three passages give a clear idea of the great value of suffering in the hand of God. How do they help you to understand your own suffering?
10. [At home?] : We all suffer in some form or other. Verbalise your suffering and ask yourself what light these passages throw on them.

Prayer ideas

- Pray that we might be genuinely good listeners
- Pray that we might be fair and gracious in quoting others
- Pray for our readiness to speak sparingly and succinctly