

Title: The Second Speech of Elihu: God is Just  
Number: 0623Job34.1-37(33)  
Text: 34:1-37  
Central Idea: God is the Gold Standard  
Date: June 4, 2023

---

**{Read Text / Prayer}**

34:1–6 1 **Then Elihu continued and said, 2 “Hear my words, you wise men, and listen to me, you who know. 3 “For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food. 4 “Let us choose for ourselves what is right; let us know among ourselves what is good. 5 “For Job has said, ‘I am righteous, but God has taken away my right; 6 Should I lie concerning my right? My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.’**

**[i] We are in chapter 34—more than 3/4 of the way thru the book**  
If you are new to this series, unfort. you don't have t/context which we have spent dozens of hours developing.

**[ii] It's like you have been transported into the middle of a movie**  
You look around, you hear t/dialogue, but you don't know what's really going on. If you have been transported into listening to this chapter to t/exclusion of t/rest, I apologize.

**[iii] I will say, by way of brief review . . .**

That this book is about a man named Job who, under t/provident rule of G., encounters trem. suffering.

He loses about all that is dear to him, including all of his kids.

That's t/beg. of t/book.

T/middle section of t/book is dom. by dialogue between Job & 3 of his friends who try to convince him that he's suffering bc he did something to deserve it. That's not true.

We told that in t/beg.: Job is a good, righteous man who fears t/LORD

Then in chapt. 32 we were intro. to a 4th friend, a man named Elihu. In that chapt. he defends his right to speak (he was t/youngest). Chapt. 33 he gives t/1st of 4 speeches directed at Job.

He doesn't criticize Job for what he did b4 his tragedy. But he does criticize Job for what he says DURING his suffering.

#### **[iv] Chapter 33 is where we finished last time**

It was in that chapter:

1. Elihu emphasizes God's sovereign rule over creation
2. In that light, he brings up some of Job's accusations he made against G. in t/prev. chapters. Namely, Job's claim to be faultless and his contention that G. is unfair & aloof.
3. Elihu answers those charges by reminding Job of 3 things:
  - 1) God is the standard of righteousness
  - 2) God answers to no one
  - 3) God provides
    - a. He provides guidance (not aloof and uncaring)
    - b. He provides a Mediator (ultimately JC)

#### **[v] That brings us to chapter 34 — Elihu's second speech**

This speech parallels t/1st. Elihu covers much of same territory - only in greater detail. Here Elihu focuses on God's justice.

Chapt. falls into two main parts. In vv. 2-15 Elihu speaks to everyone present (Job, t/3 friends EBZ, others who may have gath.)

In vv. 16-37 he addresses Job specif.

In this chapter we see that ==>

**[vi] God is the Standard by Which Everything is Weighed**

*God is the Gold Standard.*

In year 1900 Congress passed the Gold Standard Act whereby our currency was measured by t/std. of Gold (then \$21 oz.).

That lasted until 1971 when Pres. R.N. took us of that std.

Now our money is basically worth t/paper it's printed on.

Gold Std. gave our currency something of real value that was a foundation by which it could be measured.

Far greater way, God is t/Gold Standard in that He is t/absolute upon which everything else is judged.

*God is the Gold Standard.*

Overview of the outline . . .

**II. Elihu's Second Speech: Is God Fair? (34)**

**A. Announcement For All to Listen (1-4)**

**B. Allegations Made by Job (5-9)**

**C. Answers Given by Elihu (10-30)**

**D. Appeals for Job to Repent (31-37)**

**II. Elihu's Second Speech: Is God Fair? (34)**

**A. Announcement For All to Listen (1-4)**

**1 Then Elihu continued and said, 2 “Hear my words, you wise men, and listen to me, you who know.**

**1. The words here are in the plural — Elihu is speaking to everyone present**

**a. Question is: What is Elihu’s tone of voice?**

This can be read in different ways & scholars do just that.

Diff. ways this can be read {read}

**(1) Some see Elihu as being sarcastic**

I don’t know about that. But I do think his words here are subtle criticism of at t/3 friends.

He began his 1st speech (32) criticizing them for their lack of wisdom & understanding. Here he calls out to those who have it!

Maybe looking past t/3Fs to t/other bystanders who, no doubt, had gathered at t/garbage dump where Job has been since chapt. 2.

**1 Then Elihu continued and said, 2 “Hear my words, you wise men, and listen to me, you who know.**

**3 “For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.**

**b. Job uses this same proverbs of sorts in chapter 12:11**

**3 “For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.**

**(1) Your mouth is discerning**

Foods you like & foods you hate. (My probl.: nothing I hate.)

Your mouth can discern between that which is good or bad, salty, sweet, rotten, disgusting.

Ears have taste buds. Your ears test words like t/palate tests food.

**c. With that aphorism in mind: Elihu issues a challenge in v. 4**  
**4 “Let us choose for ourselves what is right; let us know among ourselves what is good.**

**(1) That which is “right” that which is “good” — in other words let’s search for what is true (to be our focus)**

Phil. 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

*A. Announcement For All to Listen (1-4)*

**B. Allegations Made by Job (5-9)**

**1. What did Job say?**

**a. Elihu gives some examples in vv. 5-6 & v. 9**

**5 “For Job has said, ‘I am righteous, but God has taken away my right; [or “righteousness”]**

27:2a (Job) “As God lives, who has taken away my right . . .

27:6a (Job) “I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go. . .”

9:21a (Job) “I am guiltless . . .”

**(1) True in one sense . . .**

1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

Job was blameless, but not sinless. Job did nothing to deserve his suffering, but he nonetheless sinned in his response to it.

Like me w/the loss of our daughter nearly 7 yrs. ago this month, Job could say of his loss (words I said at Giana's mem. svc):

1:21b “. . . The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

That's t/right way for a believer to respond to tragedy.

Problem came in t/days & months after tragedy struck.

When I was guilty of “windy words” & worse.

As far as we know of Job, it wasn't t/worse, but it was t/windy words (6:26) — some of which could not be excused by G.

Last week (difference):

*Suffering because of your sin or sinning because of your suffering.*

Job didn't suffer because of his sin; but he did sin in his response to his suff.

**(2) He was in denial about that (v. 6)**

**6 should I lie concerning my right? [he adds] My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.'**

**(a) Words “my wound” is lit. “my arrow” (cf. NIV)**

6:4 [Job] “The arrows of the Almighty are in me.”

Verse 9 ==>

**(3) Job claimed that it was useless to obey God**

**9 “For [Job] has said, ‘It profits a man nothing when he is pleased with God.’**

**(a) Word “pleased” = Hebrew *ratsah***

A word that could be transl. “delight.”

**(b) IOW - Why bother?**

If you do t/right thing & find G. your delight you will just suffer anyway.

**(4) Remember we said early on that the book of Job asks the question: “Why does someone who truly knows God serve Him?”**

**(a) Satan’s wager**

1:9–11 9 Then Satan answered the LORD, “Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 “Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 “But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.”

G. permitted S. to afflict Job as a test of whether or not Job’s words in v. 9 were true: is there any worth in serving G. even if there are few earthly benefits?

**(b) Calvin’s Institutes . . .**

Ea. am I read a large section from t/Bible and I gen. follow that by reading thru t/Geneva ref. John Calvin’s theological treatise, “The Institutes of the Christian Religion.”

I just read thru a large section where he demonstrates that t/OT patriarchs, men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob served G. for a greater reward, an eternal one. They all suffered tremendously in this life.

**(c) NT book of Hebrews — chapter 11 (OT heroes of faith)**

Heb. 11:13, All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance [faith in t/future promises of God] . . .

Heb. 11:37–40 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated 38 (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. 39 And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

IOW: all pointed to t/coming of JC thru Whom sinners could be saved

9 “ . . . [Job] has said, ‘It profits a man nothing when he is pleased with God.’

**(5) We are to delight in the Lord**

Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart.

That doesn’t mean you will avoid suffering.

***B. Allegations Made by Job (5-9)***

These were serious, & sinful. See that when G. addresses him ==>

38:2 “Who is this that darkens counsel By words without knowledge?

Job had not cursed God, as Satan wagered . . . but he was getting perilously close to falling into Satan’s trap and doing just that.” [Walter Kaiser, 188] — I’ve been there.



***B. Allegations Made by Job (5-9)***

**C. Answers Given by Elihu (10-30)**

**1. To All (10-15)**

10a **“Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding. . . .**

Elihu is still addressing everyone. This parallels v. 2

**2 “Hear my words, you wise men, & listen to me, you who know.**

**10b . . . Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to do wrong.**

**a. Elihu’s Axiom: God Cannot Err (10-11)**

**(1) The same response Apostle Paul gave in Romans 9**

In t/midst of addressing G’s absolute sov. over all creation ==>

14: “Is there injustice with God? By no means (μη γένοιτο!)”

**10b . . . Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to do wrong.**

**(2) Phrase “Far be it from” is also found in Genesis 18:25**

[Abraham in response to G’s judgement of Sodom] “Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”

***a. Elihu’s Axiom: God Cannot Err (10-11)***

He judges with a righteous, a correct, fair judgement.

*God is the Gold Standard*

**(3) This is hard for us to accept sometimes**

There was nothing unjust in G’s permitting us to be hit by that drunk driver on Dec. 24, 2015. Nothing unjust in G. calling Giana home while allowing me to survive. I had a horrible time accepting that.

Giana was a true believer in JC. She had been born again by His grace I'm confident in that. Great comfort.

What happens when we lose loved ones & we have no such confidence?

False religion of Mormonism has "proxy baptism" whereby you can participate in t/eternal salv. of lost loved ones. RC has its "Purgatory." Both are a lie of Satan.

We who have t/WOG as our axiom have to rest in G's good judgment An unjust G. would be as illog. as a square circle or a round triangle.

#### **(4) God is just**

It's interesting that all people have a univ. sense of fairness & justice. Part of our being created in G's image. That sense isn't always accurate, but it's there. There would be no such thing apart from G.

How common is it for a man who has no fear of G. or judgment to kill someone and then take his own life?

Ppl. w/o understanding read about that & say, "the guy killed others & then himself. He gets away w/judgement." No he doesn't!

#### **(a) God will settle every account**

**11 "For He pays a man according to his work, and makes him find it according to his way.**

Rom. 2:6-8 6 [He will] WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: ==>

7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

That doesn't mean that heaven is earned by doing good.  
For that we can be thankful, bc no one can be good enough.

That doesn't mean there's no judgement. Everyone will get exactly what they deserve according to that they have done & what they know

**(b) We who know JC ultimately don't get perfect justice**

He died so that we don't have to.

**(5) God's Nature (12-15)**

**(a) In verse 12 we hear a repeat of what Elihu said in v. 10**

**12 "Surely, God will not act wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice.**

*God is the Gold Standard*

**(b) God is answerable to no one**

**13 "Who gave Him authority over the earth? And who has laid on Him the whole world?**

**i. Implied answer: "No one"**

He created t/world; He's t/gold standard; He's t/authority (sov.)

9:12 (Job) "Were He to snatch away, who could restrain Him? Who could say to Him, 'What are You doing?'

When I was around 13 like most adolescents I was getting brazen w/my attitude toward my parents. One day I was upset w/my dad's auth. & I said to him, "Who died and left you boss?" As soon as those words came out of my mouth I knew I made a big mistake. My dad verbally & phys. let me know exactly who was boss.

There's an even greater auth. than dads, magistrates or kings. God.

### **ii. Bible uses the analogy of the Potter (God) and clay (us)**

Prophet Isaiah 45:9 "Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker—  
An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, 'What are you doing?' Or the thing you are making say, 'He has no hands'?"

64:8 But now, O LORD, You are our Father, We are the clay, and You our potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand.

TAP in Rom. 9:21 . . . does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?

"[This] can make sense in the context only if we understand that God's undisputed sovereignty over the world ensures that whatever he wants to happen does happen, and thus, implicitly, that if some humans are rewarded and some are punished, that is God's implementation of his ruling principle . . ." [Clines]

### **iii. God is Ex Lex**

He is o/s of t/law. Only thing that constrains Him is His own Nature  
This is t/theological doctrine of God's aseity {explain}

**(6) Our continued existence depends on Him (14-15)**

**14 “If He should determine to do so, if He should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath, 15 all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.**

**(a) Paul in Colossians 1:16–17 speaking of JC (God)**

16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

If it wasn't for JC everything would cease to exist!

“From an ecological point of view, it is breathable air that sustains all life on earth. From a theological point of view, it is God’s mercy that sustains the life of rebellious humanity. Imagine an uninhabited earth.” [Robert L. Alden]

*God is the Gold Standard*

***B. Allegations Made by Job (5-9)***

***C. Answers Given by Elihu (10-30)***

***1. To All (10-15)***

***2. To Job (16-30)***

***a. Job Sits in Judgement Over God (16-17)***

**16 “But if you have understanding, hear this; listen to the sound of my words.**

***a. Elihu uses the singular, so he is speaking directly to Job***

**17 “Shall one who hates justice rule? And will you condemn the righteous mighty One, [cf. v. 10 “Almighty”]**

40:8 (God to Job) “Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?”

Expected response from Job would be emphatic “no!”

God is King. He is the standard of what it means to be an absolute, good, righteous King.

*God is the Gold Standard*

**b. God is the Standard of Righteous Judgment (18-30)**

5 points:

*(1) He Judges Without Partiality (18-19)*

*(2) He Judges Without Uncertainty (20)*

*(3) He Judges Without Ignorance (21-25)*

*(4) He Judges Without Secrecy (26-28)*

*(5) He Judges Without Impatience (29-30)*

**(1) He Judges Without Partiality (18-19)**

18 **Who says to a king, ‘Worthless one,’ to nobles [princes], ‘Wicked ones’;**

**(a) For a mere man to address a king as “worthless” was punishable by death — God has that right**

19 **who shows no partiality to princes [lit. “does not lift up the face of princes”] nor regards the rich above the poor, for they all are the work of His hands?**

## **(b) Creator-creature distinction**

### ***(1) He Judges Without Partiality (18-19)***

### **(2) He Judges Without Uncertainty (20)**

20 **“In a moment they [spec. “ruler”] die, and at midnight people are shaken and pass away, and the mighty are taken away without a hand.**

### **(a) There’s no uncertainty in God’s judgment**

It was at midnight that t/Angel of t/LORD executed judgment against Egypt (Exo. 11:4–5).

#### **i. Emphasis isn’t on the time but on the certainty**

### **(3) He Judges Without Ignorance (21-25)**

### **(a) God is not only omnipotent, He’s omniscient**

21 **“For His eyes are upon the ways of a man, and He sees all his steps. 22 “There is no darkness or deep shadow where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.**

Jer. 23:24 **“Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?” declares the LORD. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.**

23 **“For He does not need to consider a man further, that he should go before God in judgment. 24 “He breaks in pieces mighty men without inquiry, and sets others in their place.**

Dan. 2:21a **“It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings . . .**

In words that echo those of v. 20 ==>

**25 “Therefore He knows their works, and He overthrows them in the night, and they are crushed.**

***b. God is the Standard of Righteous Judgment (18-30)***

***(1) He Judges Without Partiality (18-19)***

***(2) He Judges Without Uncertainty (20)***

***(3) He Judges Without Ignorance (21-25)***

***(4) He Judges Without Secrecy (26-28)***

**26 “He strikes them like the wicked in a public place, 27 [why?] Because they turned aside from following Him, and had no regard for any of His ways; 28 So that they caused the cry of the poor to come to Him, and that He might hear the cry of the afflicted—**

“. . . he will judge publicly, ‘in a place for all to see. . .’ There will be nothing secretive about his judgment. When men and women turn ‘aside from following him . . .’ he will give them the punishment they deserve, and he will do so publicly, so that the whole universe will see his justice.” [Ash, 349]

**(a) Someone may object: “This isn’t what we experience”**

IOW - this sounds like G. punishes every ruler that rules unjustly.

Or that He always rights every wrong in this life. He doesn’t.

He doesn’t right every wrong in this life, but He will at t/final judgement. Often, G. is patient. That’s our 5th point ==>

**(5) He Judges Without Impatience (29-30)**



**29 When He keeps quiet, who then can condemn? And when He hides His face, who then can behold Him, that is, in regard to both nation and man?— 30 so that godless men would not rule nor be snares of the people.**

NIV 29 But if he remains silent, who can condemn him? If he hides his face, who can see him? Yet he is over individual and nation alike, 30 to keep the godless from ruling, from laying snares for the people.

Sometimes G. restrains evil. Sometimes He doesn't.

That's His prerogative. He is patient.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

*God is the Gold Standard*

## ***II. Elihu's Second Speech: Is God Fair? (34)***

### ***A. Announcement For All to Listen (1-4)***

### ***B. Allegations Made by Job (5-9)***

### ***C. Answers Given by Elihu (10-30)***

### ***D. Appeals for Job to Repent (31-37)***

These are considered some of the most diff. vv. in t/entire book.

#### **1. Elihu's Proposition: Change Your Ways Job (31-33)**

**a. Elihu gives an example of how someone [Job] should act (31-32)**

**31 "For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne chastisement; I will not offend anymore; 32 Teach me what I do not see; if I have done iniquity, I will not do it again'?"**

### **(1) NASB - Very Cumbersome and Difficult**

Cf. HCSB: 31 Suppose someone says to God, “I have endured my punishment; I will no longer act wickedly. 32 Teach me what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, I won’t do it again.”

### **(2) Better — Try this paraphrase**

31 Suppose someone (like you Job) said to God, “I have endured my suffering; I will no longer offend. 32 If I’m wrong, help me to see, and if I’ve sinned, I will stop.”

Best case scenario: Elihu wants Job to stop misrepresenting God.

Worst case scenario: Elihu is overstating his case here & has fallen prey to the mistake Job’s 3 friends made: assuming Job is suffering bc of his sin.”

#### ***1. Elihu’s Proposition: Change Your Ways Job (31-33)***

#### **2. Elihu’s Challenge: The Trial Must Continue Until Job Reforms (34-37)**

##### **a. I use the word “trial” with a double meaning**

Trial as in “test” + “trial” as in a “court of law.”

The Trial Must Continue Until Job Reforms

**34 “Men of understanding will say to me, and a wise man who hears me,**

“If you have been listening, and if you’re wise & have understanding, this is what your opinion of Job will be.”

35 ‘Job speaks without knowledge, and his words are without wisdom. 36 ‘Job ought to be tried to the limit, because he answers like wicked men. 37 ‘For he adds rebellion to his sin; he claps his hands among us, and multiplies his words against God.’ ”

This opinion that Elihu believes t/wise will have of Job centers on two things: Job’s speech; Job’s attitude.

SPEECH:

Job speaks without knowledge. His words are without wisdom. He multiplies his words against God.

ATTITUDE:

He answers *like* wicked men. Cf. 2:10.  
He adds rebellion to his sin; he claps his hands among us.

Therefore,

36 ‘Job ought to be tried to the limit . . .’

Job’s trial will be to the limit. He will stand b4 God.  
That trial begins in chapt. 38.

-----

*God is the Gold Standard*

Three closing points of application ==>

### **1. You Can’t Know A Standard Without a Voice**

You don’t know t/will of an authority if that authority doesn’t make that will known. Here in t/US we have a found. written auth. USC.  
G. has a higher auth. His Vox Dei ==> Bible (Standard/axiom).

Last week there was headline news from Uganda in East Africa. T/govt. passed legislation criminalizing same-sex sexual behaviors. Not t/inclination, but t/practice.

Around t/world there has been outrage. President Biden declared t/law, “A tragic violation of universal human rights.’

*A tragic violation of universal human rights.*

By what std? If it’s univ. it should apply everywhere, all t/time. Why? Didn’t used to be that way. Cultures change if there’s no standard.

Take this example of how quickly the sexual revolution has impacted our culture since the 1990s. In former Tonight Show host Johnny Carson's opening monologue, he expressed astonishment at a recent TV stunt where two men were married in a civil ceremony:

"Today, during a civil ceremony on the Donahue Show, two men married each other. It is true; I'm not making this up. . . . I mean, what the [heck] is the world coming to - two men got married on television on a daytime show? I'm not lying to you. . . . Where are our standards? [Program dated May 16, 1991]

. . . .

We have t/highest authority, an absolute standard in God’s W. He has clearly criminalized SS behaviors. He has criminalized all violations of His law. *God is the Gold Standard*

## **2. Standards Are Violated, We Call That Sin**

God's standard is his perfect holiness. His holiness reflect his glory.  
Rom. 3:23 . . . all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,  
Ezek. 10:4 . . . the soul who sins will die.

Our default position when we enter this life is death. We are all born spiritually dead; we will one day die phys. & apart from a Savior we will all die eternally. Hell. Brings us to JC and t/3d point ==>

## **3. The Ultimate Standard Came to Set Us Free**

{Gospel}