

Sunday Morning Worship March 1

Mar 1, 2026

Summary

Seeing God Aright in Suffering

Scripture References

Job 1:21; Job 2:10; Job 35; Job 36:1–21; Isaiah 40:12–31; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 50:12; Ecclesiastes 1:2; Genesis 1:4; Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 3:5–6; Psalm 119:9; Acts 2

Introduction

- The congregation is approaching the close of the Book of Job.
- Elihu's final speech (Job 35–37) functions as a bridge between Job's complaints and God's forthcoming response.
- Focus: correcting Job's view of righteousness, interpreting affliction rightly, and guarding the heart from pride.
- Illustration: Missionary Amy Carmichael's quote on staying “single-hearted” sets the frame for steadfast trust amid hardship.

Key Points / Exposition

1. A Misreading of Righteousness (Job 35:1–16)

- Elihu summarizes Job's charge: “It is my right before God… what advantage have I?”
- Call to “look at the heavens” (v. 5): creation exposes human smallness and God's transcendence.
 - Our sin or goodness does not add to or diminish God (vv. 6–8; cf. Psalm 50:12).
- Wrong question: “What do I gain by being righteous?” reveals a transactional mindset.
- God is not indebted to humanity; therefore He is not obliged to answer faithless demands (vv. 12–14).
- Job's escalating words are labeled “empty talk” (v. 16) because they spring from pain-clouded logic instead of faith.

2. The Right View of Affliction (Job 36:1–16)

- Source of Elihu's counsel: “knowledge from afar” (v. 3) – divine, not personal opinion.

- Behold God as He is—mighty yet non-despising (v. 5).
- Purposes of affliction:
 1. To humble the proud (vv. 8–9) – exposing arrogance.
 2. To open ears to instruction (v. 10) – driving sinners to repentance.
 3. To deliver through adversity itself (v. 15) – “He delivers the afflicted by their affliction.”
- Two responses outlined (vv. 11–12):
 - Listening ⇒ “days in prosperity” (tov, the God-defined goodness of Genesis 1:4).
 - Refusing ⇒ death “without knowledge.”

3. Guard the Heart (Job 36:17–21)

- Job is “full of the judgment of the wicked” (v. 17) – consumed with personal vindication.
- Warnings:
 - Beware wrath that births scoffing (v. 18).
 - Do not let “the greatness of the ransom” turn you aside (v. 18b) – pointer to the ultimate Redeemer.
 - “Take care, do not turn to iniquity” (v. 21) – suffering should lead to surrender, not sin.
- Scriptural lens: the heart is deceitful (Jer 17:9); therefore trust the Lord, not self-reasoning (Prov 3:5–6).

Major Lessons & Revelations

- God's sovereignty means our deeds neither obligate Him nor thwart Him.
- Affliction is not pointless; it is a divinely-tooled classroom for humility, repentance, and deliverance.
- True righteousness is relational (trust & worship), not contractual (works for wages).
- Pride distorts perception; only beholding God as He is restores clarity.
- Christ is the “great ransom” foreshadowed—only His substitution answers the cry for vindication.

Practical Application

- Gaze upward: regularly meditate on creation and Scripture to regain a high view of God.
- In suffering, shift from “Why me?” to “Where is God my Maker?” —seek His presence first.
- Pray in faith, not complaint: convert anxious thoughts into petitions and thanksgiving (Phil 4 implied).

- Employ the means of grace:
 - Scripture intake (Ps 119:9).
 - Persistent prayer.
 - Faithful fellowship—do not withdraw from the body (Acts 2 model).
- When others suffer: show up, listen, speak truth in love, model Christ-like patience.

Conclusion & Call to Response

Elihu's counsel urges every believer to:

1. Repent of transactional views of righteousness.
2. Embrace affliction as God's refining tool.
3. Guard the heart through Word, prayer, and community.
Trust the “great ransom” provided in Christ; let suffering press you toward, not away from, your Redeemer.

Prayer

“Lord, open our ears through adversity; align our hearts to Your Word. Grant us grace to behold You as mighty and good, to rest in Christ's ransom, and to walk in obedience—whether in blessing or in pain. Amen.”

References & Resources

- Amy Carmichael, missionary writings on single-hearted devotion.
- Christopher Ash, “Job: The Wisdom of the Cross” – commentary cited for insights on God's transcendence.