

entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me*" (vv. 1-6).

We know that our Judge and Redeemer will do what is right. Very shortly, our God will judge this earth in righteousness, and the wicked will no more pollute the earth. Zechariah 14 is a vision of the Kingdom age, when all nations will come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles:

"In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite [read Sodomite?] in the house of the LORD of hosts" (vv. 20,21).

How we long for the time when God's judgments shall be in the earth! When no longer will people use God's grace as a means to trade for personal profit; when wickedness and evil will no longer be hidden behind a religious veneer. We long for the time when God's house will be called a house of prayer for all nations, and no longer will people rob God of the honour and praise due to His Name.

Exposition

Elihu and the prophets

2. Ezekiel

Nigel Bernard

There are several similarities between Elihu and Ezekiel. Comparisons include whirlwinds; sitting for seven days; not speaking; and rebuking elders even though they themselves were much younger.

IN [LAST MONTH'S](#) article we considered Elihu and Elijah. In this second article we consider Elihu and Ezekiel. As in the previous study, a whirlwind plays an important role.

Whirlwind

In the opening chapter of Ezekiel we read of a whirlwind: "And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire" (v. 4). Just as the speech of Elihu was terminated by a whirlwind, the first vision that Ezekiel sees begins with a whirlwind. In Job the whirlwind provided a demonstration of power out of which God spoke. The whirlwind in Ezekiel is spoken of in more detail, and from it emerge the cherubim.

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Sat seven days

When Job's friends came to him (and we know that Elihu was also there) we read, "So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great. After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day" (2:13; 3:1). Likewise, Ezekiel spent a period of seven days simply sitting with a group of people, apparently saying nothing—at least, not words from God: "Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days. And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD [Yahweh] came unto me, saying . . ." (Ezek. 3:15,16).

In Job 21:5 Job says, "Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth". Ezekiel later follows in the spirit of Job's request, being "astonished", and effectively having his hand upon his mouth. Yet, in the case of Job, all the time Elihu was indeed laying his hand

upon his mouth, no doubt humble enough to be astonished too.

Dumb

As we read the speeches of Job and his three friends, the presence of Elihu can be felt. We know that he is there listening, but he restrains himself from speaking: "And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion" (32:6). He was voluntarily dumb, a dumbness out of respect and fear for his elders, on the basis that "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom" (v. 7).

Ezekiel was also to be silent, speaking only when God caused him to speak. But his silence, unlike Elihu's, was miraculously enforced, for he was made dumb: "and I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD [Yahweh]; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house" (Ezek. 3:26,27).

Ezekiel was made dumb because the house of Israel were rebellious. In contrast, after Elihu and God had spoken, Job showed humility towards God and repented "in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6).

Elders

As we have seen, Elihu says to Job's friends, "I am young, and ye are very old". This theme of a younger person rebuking elders is also echoed in Ezekiel. Assuming that it is his age which is being spoken of, Ezekiel tells us that it was in his "thirtieth year" that he saw "visions of God" (1:1). At his comparatively young age he had to deal on more than one occasion with the elders of Israel, as the following verses show:

"And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD [Yahweh] fell there upon me" (8:1);

"Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me" (14:1);

"And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD [Yahweh], and sat before me" (20:1);

"Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD [Yahweh]; Are ye come to enquire of Me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD [Yahweh], I will not be enquired of by you" (v. 3).

In the case of both the friends of Job and the elders of Judah, old age proved to be no guarantee of wisdom or obedience. Their rebuke by younger men only served to heighten their folly.

Priest and ancestry

Ezekiel is described as "the priest, the son of Buzi". That he was both a priest and the son of Buzi provides a link with Elihu. Malachi wrote that "the priest's lips should keep knowledge" (2:7). Although not a priest, Elihu sought to live the spirit of these words, for he said, "my lips shall utter knowledge clearly" (Job 33:3).

Elihu is said to be "the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram" (32:2). That Elihu was a Buzite could mean that he was a descendant of Buz, the son of Nahor (see Gen. 22:20,21), and/or he lived in a territory called Buz. According to Strong, "Buzi" in Ezekiel 1:3 is the same word as "Buzite" in Job 32:2. This is a rare name in Scripture. That both Elihu and Ezekiel have this name mentioned in their ancestry alerts us to look for other similarities between these two men.

Other links

There are other significant connections between the book of Job and Ezekiel, which, although not relating directly to Elihu, form an important background to the links we have seen.

For example, some aspects of the cherubim reflect the words used by God of creation in His speech to Job. God asks Job, "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" (Job 38:35). In Ezekiel it is said of the cherubim, "and out of the fire went forth lightning" (1:13). God also asks Job, "Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?" (Job 39:26). The Hebrew word for "hawk" is related to the word translated "sparkled" in Ezekiel 1:7, where it is stated that the feet of the cherubim "sparkled like the colour of burnished brass". As the hawk flew swiftly south, it did so with a flashing brilliance, sparkling against the sun. As such, as the cherubim came sparkling from the north, it was like the hawk flying toward the south.

The Hebrew word *Shaddai* occurs forty-eight times in the Bible and is always translated 'Almighty'. It is a key word in Job, occurring thirty-

one times. It is used only four times in all of the prophets: once in Isaiah, once in Joel, and twice in Ezekiel. It is significant that a key word in Job, so rare in the prophets, should occur twice in Ezekiel.

Of course, Job is actually mentioned in Ezekiel: "though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD [Yahweh]" (14:14). Furthermore, the phrase "these three men" is itself taken, ironically, from the book of Job, ironic because here it refers to the three friends of Job, who were delivered as a

consequence of the prayer of Job: "So these three men ceased to answer Job . . ." (32:1).

Conclusion

As we have seen in this and the previous article, there are several connections between Elihu and the two prophets Elijah and Ezekiel. As well as helping us to understand the work of Elijah and Ezekiel, these comparisons also help us to see Elihu in a new light, supporting the view, in my opinion, that Elihu's speech was vital for preparing the mind of Job for when God would speak to him.

(Concluded)