

Job

[Part 4]

Job 18:1-4 [New King James] *“Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: ‘How long till you put an end to words? Gain understanding, and afterward we will speak. Why are we counted as beasts, and regarded as stupid in your sight? You who tear yourself in anger, shall the earth be forsaken for you? Or shall the rock be removed from its place?’”*

In his second speech Bildad has nothing new to say and certainly nothing can have any significance for Job.

For the portrayal of the doom of the wicked can only speak to a person with a guilty conscience and an attitude of repentance.

These verses show how Bildad and his friends resent Job’s response to their trying to be helpful.

Job is accusing an angry God of tearing him apart, [**Job 16:9**] while in reality he is tearing himself. Job’s attitude virtually demands, in his own mind, that the whole earth, with its moral order, should be turned upside down to substantiate his criticism of God and his championship of himself.

It is easy to condemn Bildad because his errors are obvious; unfortunately, however we often act in the same way when our own ideas are threatened.

Bildad’s description of the ultimate end of all sinners is total. The term *“the king of terrors”* depicts death as a great devourer, [**verse 13**] but God’s Word, the Christian Bible, teaches that God has the power to devour even death, [**Psalms 49:15; Isaiah 25:8; 1 Corinthians 15:54-56; Revelation 21:4-5**].

Job 19:1-5 [New King James] *“Then Job answered and said: ‘How long will you torment my soul, and break me in pieces with words? These ten times you have reproached me; You are not ashamed that you have wronged me. And if indeed I have erred, my error remains with me. If indeed you exalt yourselves against me, and plead my disgrace against me,’”*

It is easy to point out someone else’s faults or sins.

Job’s friends accused him of sin to make him feel guilty, not to encourage or correct him. If we feel we need to admonish someone, we should be sure we are also comforting that person at the same time, comforting them because we love them, not because we are annoyed, inconvenienced or seeking to blame them.

Job 19:6-11 [New King James] *“Know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net. If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard. If I cry aloud, there is no justice. He has fenced up my way, so that I cannot pass; and He has set darkness in my paths. He has stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; my hope He has uprooted like a tree. He has also kindled His wrath against me, and He counts me as one of His enemies.”*

Job felt that God was treating him as an enemy when in fact God was his friend and thought highly of him, [**Job 1:8; Job 2:3**]. **In his difficulty Job was pointing to the wrong person. It was Satan, not God, who was Job’s enemy.**

Just as God allowed Satan to intervene in the life of Job, God has until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ allowed Satan to harm and bring great discouragement on all humanity, [2 Corinthians 4:4; John 8:44; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9].

Satan's attack did the very opposite to what Satan was seeking, to destroy Job. It caused Job to continue to cry out to his Creator God, [verse 7] and in the end Job's faith was confirmed in God Whom he could **not** fully understand.

Job's faith triumphs as he looks into the future that the God he loves and worships has promised.

Job 19:23-24 [New King James] *"Oh, that my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book! That they were engraved on a rock with an iron pen and lead, forever!"*

Job wanted all people down through the ages yet to come to know what a wonderful Person the True Eternal God is.

Job 19:25-27 [New King James] *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"*

This deep faith of Job is something we also should seek to be ours so we also can follow the instructions and guidance of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Matthew 6:33-34 [New King James] *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."*

It was on this trust in the True Creator God that Job relied whatever may happen to him in his short physical life.

Job was confident that God's justice would triumph, even if it took a miracle like a resurrection to accomplish it.

How true this will be in the new world that is to be enjoyed by humanity after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, this time as *"King of kings and Lord of lords,"* [**Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:11-16**].

Job 19:28-29 [New King James] *"If you should say, 'How shall we persecute him?' Since the root of the matter is found in me, be afraid of the sword for yourselves; for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, that you may know there is a judgment."*

There is an indication that Job and his friends have diagnosed the real cause of Job's affliction, Satan **not** God.

Job 20:1 [New King James] *"Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:"*

Zophar's speech again reveals his false assumption because he based his argument purely on the idea that Job was a hypocrite.

Zophar said that although Job was blessed at first for oppressing others, which often brings temporary blessings to those who practice these sins. In the end, God's justice will prevail. What Zophar missed is that judgement for these sins may **not** come in the lifetime of the sinner, [**Ecclesiastes 8:11**].

We should not be impressed with the lifelong success and power of many evil people, for God's judgement of them is certain in the end.

The whole of this speech must be interpreted in the light of the remark made in **verse 2**, *"my anxious thoughts make me answer, because of the turmoil within me."*

Psalms 116:11 [New King James] *"I said in my haste, 'All men are liars.'"*

Haste in replying can be responsible for many incorrect views of human beings, and no less for an incorrect or partial view of the Eternal God.

Suffering Job appears in a false light as sinning Job, and any false light we have of another human being could be a distorted vision of the character of the True Eternal God.

There is nothing in Zophar's words to prove that God is impatient, only that Zophar is impatient. When the Zealot makes their own opinions and sentiments the standard of divinity, there is a magnified Zophar on the throne of the universe!!

Job 21:1-6 [New King James] *“Then Job answered and said: ‘Listen carefully to my speech, and let this be your consolation. Bear with me that I may speak, and after I have spoken, keep mocking. As for me, is my complaint against man? And if it were, why should I not be impatient? Look at me and be astonished; put your hand over your mouth. Even when I remember I am terrified, and trembling takes hold of my flesh.’”*

Job appeals for a fair hearing, his task is difficult enough without any co-operation from fellow human beings, for his complain is directed against the Eternal God. The very thought of what he is doing fills him with dread, [verses 5-6].

Job flatly contradicts Zophar's dogmatic picture of the wicked, [Job 20:4-5, 11, etc.]. In bold colours Job paints their enduring prosperity in home, family, field and flock, [Job 21:7-12] and end their days without a struggle in peace, [verse 13].

All of this happens in spite of their attitude towards their Creator God, [verses 14-15]. They are masters of their fortunes, [verse 16].

Job 21:17-19 [New King James] *“How often is the lamp of the wicked put out? How often does their destruction come upon them, the sorrows God distributes in His anger? They are like straw before the wind, and like chaff that a storm carries away. They say, ‘God lays up one's iniquity for his children’; let Him recompense him, that he may know it.”*

It is no defence of their position for Job's friends to say that the children of the wicked will feel the weight of Divine displeasure. That would imply that the wicked would get off “scot-free.” They cannot feel the pain and woe of their children after their death.

Job 21:22 [New King James] *“Can anyone teach God knowledge, since He judges those on high?”*

Job accuses his friends of presumption in their “cut-and-dried” theories about divine government. Job tells them that they are virtually teaching God how to govern, instead of facing the facts as they are.

Although baffled by the reasons for his suffering, Job affirmed God's superior understandings.

The way we respond to our personal struggles shows our attitude towards God.

Rather than become angry with God, continue to trust Him, no matter what our circumstances may become. Although it is sometimes difficult to see God is in control, [John 14:15-18; Hebrews 13:5-6] never leaving our side.

We must commit ourselves to God so we will not resent His timing for intervention on our behalf.

The facts as Job sees them –

One person dies in effortless prosperity, another in abject misery, [Job 21:23-26]. Who has the right to assume that virtue explains the former and vice the latter? That is a theory that is destroy by facts, [Job 21:27-33].

Job 21:34 [New King James] *“How then can you comfort me with empty words, since falsehood remains in your answers?”*

Job asks how can I be comforted by such falsehoods?

Job 22:1-5 [New King James] *“Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: ‘Can a man be profitable to God, though he who is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous? Or is it gain to Him that you make your ways blameless? Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you, and enters into judgment with you? Is not your wickedness great, and your iniquity without end?’”*

Eliphaz in his third and final speech to Job proceeds to demonstrate that there must be some reason for human suffering. The answer cannot be found in God, for human morality **cannot** affect His Almighty Power.

The explanation must then be sought, therefore, in human beings.

Is Job being punished for piety? That is inconceivable.

Then Job must be paying the price for his wickedness!

To Eliphaz the answer is undoubtedly negative.

Yet many writers in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, have a very positive understanding of the Eternal God, [**Jeremiah 31:20; Hosea 11:8; Matthew 23:37**].

Eliphaz instead of understanding *“God so loved the world,”* [**John 3:16-17**] believed *“God so legislated for the world.”* Eliphaz had no cross on Calvary to inform him of the love and the agony God has and endured for sinning human beings.

Eliphaz then openly accuses Job of sins.

That of being a tyrant, [**Job 22:6-9**].

Instead of giving God the respect that is due, [**Job 22:12**], Job had wrongfully assumed that God’s remoteness guarantees the slackness of His supervision of human affairs, [**Job 22:13-14**].

Eliphaz tells Job that if he knew the intense personal interest that God had in him, he would not take his sins so lightly.

Eliphaz made a good point: some people do take their sins lightly because they think that God is far away and does not notice all that we do, which is completely untrue, [Psalms 139:1-16].

Eliphaz’s remark was completely untrue about the relationship Job had with the Eternal Creator God.

But we all have to ask how do we see the character and power of the Eternal God that we worship?

Job 22:19-22 [New King James] *“The righteous see it and are glad, and the innocent laugh at them: ‘Surely our adversaries are cut down, and the fire consumes their remnant.’ Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you. Receive, please, instruction from His mouth, and lay up His words in your heart.”*

The moral conscience of the righteous person approves the judgement of the Eternal Creator God, and Eliphaz invites Job to return to a close relationship with him.

The benefits of such a response are then expounded, [**Job 22:23-30**].

Several times Job's friends showed a partial knowledge of God's truth and character, but they had trouble accurately applying this to life.

Eliphaz gives us a summary of repentance, that we must ask God to forgive us for our sins, but his statement did **not** apply to Job, who had lived closely in touch with God for a long time and had already sought God's forgiveness, [**Job 7:20-21; Job 9:20; Job 13:23**].