

JOB – Chapters 21-25 – “Job’s Discourse on the Wicked; Eliphaz Accuses Job of Wickedness; Job Proclaims God’s Righteous Judgment; Job Complains of Violence on the Earth; Bildad: How Can Man Be Righteous?”

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” under “Bible Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

CHAPTER 21 - THEME: *Job's sixth answer.* Job is still able to come back with an answer. I think it would have been better if he had not tried to answer Zophar's brutal accusation, but he is going to defend himself again. He tells them that he is growing weary of their false charges. He appeals his case to a higher court. He agrees with them that the wicked will be punished but insists that this does not apply to his case.

CHAPTER 22 - THEME: *The third discourse of Eliphaz.* Here we come to the third time that these men get into the arena to battle an intellectual battle. This kind of thing is not so attractive today. This kind of intellectual and spiritual battle excited the people in that day. We think they were uncivilized then. We are the ones who build the multi-million dollar stadiums for physical combat and fail to emphasize the intellectual combat. You will remember that Eliphaz is the man who had the remarkable experience. He had a strange and mysterious vision. He is a spiritualist. He is the one who says, “I have seen.”

CHAPTERS 23 AND 24 - THEME: *Job's seventh answer.* This is the seventh time that Job answers his friends, and he expresses a deep longing for God. He would like to present his case before God. He is beginning to sense that he is in the sieve of God's testing and that God will bring him through his trials.

CHAPTER 25 - THEME: *Bildad's third discourse.* We are now going to have the final word from Bildad. Fortunately, it is brief. I think the light is beginning to dawn on Bildad. He is a very thoughtful and intelligent man. Perhaps he is beginning to think, *If Job is guilty, why doesn't he break under all this bombardment of argument that we have given to him?* He has still maintained his integrity. He stood up against it. Remember that Bildad is the traditionalist. He believes God follows certain laws. Things have been done this way for a thousand years, so why would there be a change? He is the scientist who pours life into the test tube, and says, “See, this is what happens every time.” The Law of God is that He will punish sinners. And yet he wonders why Job doesn't break if he is a guilty sinner.

We see a shift in Job’s agony:

1. **Before his friends showed up:** Job’s main agony concerns were his difficult physical condition; his mental and emotional condition over the losses of his children, his position, his wealth, all his property – losing everything! As bad as that was, those were the greatest problems in his life!
2. **But now after** his friends have arrived, they begin to cast doubt in Job’s mind on his standing before God and his relationship with God. This now becomes the greatest concern in his life. He does not understand why God is doing this – the situation that he is in, the physical problems that he is having, all of that is not his greatest concern, but what troubled him most was that God had allowed this to happen for no apparent cause, and if there was an apparent cause, God was not telling him. And that’s the thing he’s struggling with here.

Review of Job’s Three Friends in Dealing With Those Who Are Suffering:

- They felt they had to provide an answer for God for everything. To protect and defend! They ended up misrepresenting Him!
- If you can’t improve on silence, say nothing! Just be there and say nothing!
- A person who has an awe of God and a great knowledge of theology and His word, often has a lack of love and compassion for others!
- They were not good listeners! God has given each of us two ears and one mouth. It’s frustrates the sufferer, if you don’t ever listen but just think about your answer!
- They never put themselves in Job’s shoes! What was he thinking? What was he feeling? Not once did his “friends” do this.
- They completely ignored his mental anguish and his emotional pain!
- They never expressed any sympathy or comfort to Job! Not one time! They always went directly to their theological argument to protect God’s reputation.
- After this study in Job, no one should ever think, I don’t have enough theology to comfort someone.
- They never prayed for him! Not one time! They knew all about God, but they did not pray once for a man in that position. A most glaring problem!
- The very worst thing they did was to destroy Job’s confidence in God and of his relationship with God at the very time he needed that relationship like never before!
- They cast doubt in Job’s mind about the goodness of God! The favor of God; That God was for him; That God was worthy of his trust. When he had lost everything they even tried to take the one remaining thing - his trusting in God. God did not allow them to be successful! God is always there, leaving His fingerprints all the way!
- They would have been better off just showing up and saying I’m so sorry! Just hold on to God. We’ve got your back! God is worthy of your trust in His power and His grace. Be encouraged in the power and glory of God!
- All these chapter are for our encouragement. We need simply to point people to God and have a deep concern for them and a commitment to them that we’re there for them.
- That the most we can offer. God is faithful to do the rest!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Chapters 21-25 – “Job’s Discourse on the Wicked;

Job 21:1 Then Job answered and said:

Job 21:2 "Listen carefully to my speech, And let this be your consolation.

Job 21:3 Bear with me that I may speak, And after I have spoken, keep mocking.

Job 21:4 "As for me, is my complaint against man? And if it were, why should I not be impatient?

Job 21:5 Look at me and be astonished; Put your hand over your mouth.

Job 21:6 Even when I remember I am terrified, And trembling takes hold of my flesh.

Job 21:7 Why do the wicked live and become old, Yes, become mighty in power?

Job 21:8 Their descendants are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes.

Job 21:9 Their houses are safe from fear, Neither is the rod of God upon them.

Job 21:10 Their bull breeds without failure; Their cow calves without miscarriage.

Job 21:11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, And their children dance.

Job 21:12 They sing to the tambourine and harp, And rejoice to the sound of the flute.

Job 21:13 They spend their days in wealth, And in a moment go down to the grave.

Job 21:14 Yet they say to God, 'Depart from us, For we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways.

Job 21:15 Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?'

Job 21:16 Indeed their prosperity is not in their hand; The counsel of the wicked is far from me.

Job 21:17 "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?

Job 21:18 They are like straw before the wind, And like chaff that a storm carries away.

Job 21:19 They say, 'God lays up one's iniquity for his children'; Let Him recompense him, that he may know it.

Job 21:20 Let his eyes see his destruction, And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

Job 21:21 For what does he care about his household after him, When the number of his months is cut in half?

vs.1-3 Job’s opening plea. *Listen carefully to my speech:* Job felt his “friends” were not listening to him, so he keeps themselves and their arguments to him. In this his closing speech of the second cycle, Job was determined to prove that he had listened to what his counselors had said. *After I have spoken, keep mocking:* This indicates that Job’s hardness towards his friends has not lessened at all, just as their hardness towards him. They speak with sharp and sarcastic words to each other.

vs.4-16 Considering the prosperity of the wicked. *Is my complaint against man?* Job shows the real point of crisis was his conflict with God, not with man, especially with his friends. His crisis was basically spiritual in nature, much more than being a medical crisis, an economic crisis, a social crisis, or a family crisis. His struggle was against God, and he wondered where God was in the midst of this very dark time. *Look at me and be astonished:* So far Job’s friends looked at him and mostly accused and condemned him. He wanted them to take a step back and be astonished at what had happened to this good and godly man. *Why do the wicked live and become old:* Job challenged the moral order of the universe as previously understood by Job’s friends, to see that if it was possible for a wicked man to be seemingly blessed, then if also a righteous man like Job could seem to be cursed. *Their descendants are established with them in their sight:* In the following verses Job explains many of the blessings that seem to come to many of the wicked, even as they reject God, *Yet they say to God, “Depart from us”.*

vs. 17-21 God allows the wicked to prosper, at least in his own day. *How often is the lamp of the wicked put out?* The answer to Job’s rhetorical question would be, not often enough. It would not give Job any satisfaction to hear that the judgment would instead come upon the wicked man’s descendants. *Let his eyes see his destruction:* In thinking upon the seeming comfort of the wicked, Job almost despaired. He cried out to God bring destruction upon the wicked in his own day, and not in the time of his household after him. Job acknowledged that wickedness was not ultimately rewarded and was always punished in the end. The problem for Job was that it never seemed soon enough that wicked would drink of the wrath of the Almighty. **Job was suffering now. Many of the wicked weren’t and didn’t.**

vs.1-3 We see Job’s heartfelt plea to his friends to please just listen to what I’m saying. **What a great example for us! We need to hear repeatedly the importance of listening and not theologically talking when attempting to comforting others.**

vs.4-16 It’s profitable for us to listen to Job. He is saying to his friends, look at me. I’m a person suffering and in pain, not a theological problem. Your preaching the wicked suffer and righteous prosper is not helping me at all! Also it’s not true the wicked always suffer and have only a short life. **Look around! These verses are indeed good for us to consider in our approach to comforting others!**

vs. 17-21 Although not totally accurate with his assessment how God allows wickedness to go unpunished in this life, Job does effectively counter their argument that the wicked suffer and have short lives. He reconciles this to the holiness and justice of God. Though wicked people prosper thus all their days, yet we are not therefore to think that God will let their wickedness always go unpunished. So little will the gain of the world profit him that has lost his soul.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Job 21:22 "Can anyone teach God knowledge, Since He judges those on high?

Job 21:23 One dies in his full strength, Being wholly at ease and secure;

Job 21:24 His pails are full of milk, And the marrow of his bones is moist.

Job 21:25 Another man dies in the bitterness of his soul, Never having eaten with pleasure.

Job 21:26 They lie down alike in the dust, And worms cover them.

Job 21:27 "Look, I know your thoughts, And the schemes with which you would wrong me.

Job 21:28 For you say, 'Where is the house of the prince? And where is the tent, The dwelling place of the wicked?'

Job 21:29 Have you not asked those who travel the road? And do you not know their signs?

Job 21:30 For the wicked are reserved for the day of doom; They shall be brought out on the day of wrath.

(2Pe 2:9-10 then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, [10] and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.)

Job 21:31 Who condemns his way to his face? And who repays him for what he has done?

Job 21:32 Yet he shall be brought to the grave, And a vigil kept over the tomb.

Job 21:33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet to him; Everyone shall follow him, As countless have gone before him.

Job 21:34 How then can you comfort me with empty words, Since falsehood remains in your answers?"

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Wickedness;

Job 22:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

vs. 22-26 God is totally wise, yet the wicked sometimes prosper and the godly sometimes suffer. *Can anyone teach God knowledge:* In the broader context, Job is indeed questioning the ways and wisdom of God in not bringing judgment sooner upon the wicked man. At the same time he sensed that this was wrong, so he corrected himself with his own rhetorical question on this point. *dies in his full strength . . . another man dies in the bitterness of his soul . . .* they lie down alike in the dust: Job is clearly uncomfortable in questioning the ways and wisdom of God, yet at the same time it just seemed so unfair that the good and bad would seemingly have the same fate of dying and lying in the grave without any distinction. Job’s anguish over his not understanding what God was doing is proof that he was not indifferent or prideful.

vs. 27-34 Look, I know your thoughts: As Job dared to question God, he could see his “friends” were appalled that he spoke against God and His justice. But there were big differences between Job and his “friends” in how they were understanding God’s ways. His friends confidently claimed that they did understand, while Job admitted his lack of understanding. Also, for Job’s friends these were matters of theological theory and interesting topics for discussion, while for Job in his suffering, these were life-and-death questions. *Where is the house of the prince? And where is the tent, the dwelling place of the wicked?* Job’s friends thought it was all so simple to analyze; one needed only to look at the *house of the prince* and the *tent of the wicked* to see that righteousness was rewarded and wickedness was punished by God’s moral order, but Job tries to show that the matter isn’t that simple. *For the wicked are reserved for the day of doom:* Job knew that the wicked faced an ultimate unpleasant destiny. He seemed upset that it didn’t seem to happen fast enough. He believed this knowledge was so common that one could ask those who travel the road and get the correct answer. *Who condemns his way to his face?* The ultimate destiny for the wicked may be bad, but who will confront him now? Why does he get away with so much now? Why is an ultimate moral order to the universe so slow in being accomplished? *He shall be brought to the grave, and a vigil kept over his tomb . . . the clods of the valley shall be sweet to him:* Job understood that the wicked would indeed die, but often many of the wicked enjoyed honorable funerals with high honors. It all just didn’t seem fair.

Chapter 22 – Eliphaz speaks for the last time beginning the third round of debate.

Although the three rounds are similar, a certain movement can be detected. In the first round his “friends” are content to **talk generalities**, without venturing to apply their doctrine directly to Job. In the second round the **-main theme is the fate of the wicked** and Job’s point of view comes into open contradiction with that of his friends. Now, in the round, **the breach between them is complete.** Having reached this point, further dialogue is useless and the discussion grinds to a halt.

vs. 22-26 Job is saying you can’t come to a conclusion as to the goodness, Godliness or wickedness of a man based on his wealth or on his health! God’s ways are so far above our ways. We must not try to bring Him down to our level in trying to reduce everything to where we can explain or fully understand it!

vs. 27-34 Job continues to plead, How then can you comfort me with empty words: The complexity of Job’s situation was far beyond the ability of his friends to adequately analyze. They had no comfort for him with their empty words and their false answers. There is no way to bring comfort to one suffering!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

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Job 22:2 "Can a man be profitable to God, Though he who is wise may be profitable to himself?

Job 22:3 Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous? Or is it gain to Him that you make your ways blameless?

Job 22:4 "Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you, And enters into judgment with you?

Job 22:5 Is not your wickedness great, And your iniquity without end?

Job 22:6 For you have taken pledges from your brother for no reason, And stripped the naked of their clothing.

Job 22:7 You have not given the weary water to drink, And you have withheld bread from the hungry.

Job 22:8 But the mighty man possessed the land, And the honorable man dwelt in it.

Job 22:9 You have sent widows away empty, And the strength of the fatherless was crushed.

Job 22:10 Therefore snares are all around you, And sudden fear troubles you.

Job 22:11 Or darkness so that you cannot see; And an abundance of water covers you.

Job 22:12 "Is not God in the height of heaven? And see the highest stars, how lofty they are!

Job 22:13 And you say, 'What does God know? Can He judge through the deep darkness?

Job 22:14 Thick clouds cover Him, so that He cannot see, And He walks above the circle of heaven.'

Job 22:15 Will you keep to the old way Which wicked men have trod,

Job 22:16 Who were cut down before their time, Whose foundations were swept away by a flood?

Job 22:17 They said to God, 'Depart from us! What can the Almighty do to them?'

Job 22:18 Yet He filled their houses with good things; But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

Job 22:19 "The righteous see it and are glad, And the innocent laugh at them:

Job 22:20 'Surely our adversaries are cut down, And the fire consumes their remnant.'

vs.1-3 Eliphaz attacks Job’s character. *Can a man be profitable to God, though he who is wise may be profitable to himself?* Eliphaz heard all of Job’s outpourings to God, and thought that Job simply thought too highly of himself. Why did think he was so special, so profitable to God and why he thought God owed him so much. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous?* Eliphaz thought Job was arrogant, and believed himself to be a special favorite to God because he thought he was so righteous. He wanted Job to consider that God needed nothing from him, and Job added nothing to God.

vs.4-11 Eliphaz describes Job’s supposed great wickedness. *Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you:* Eliphaz pressed the point to Job. Job’s terrible suffering come upon Job because he feared God, it came because Job’s wickedness was great and his iniquity was without end. *For you have taken pledges from your brother for no reason, and stripped the naked of their clothing:* Eliphaz begins a whole list of groundless accusations against Job, accusing him mainly of greed and cruelty for the sake of riches. None of this was true but Eliphaz assumed it was because Job was once rich and was now beset by such tragedy. The only evidence he could offer was Job’s condition and he could not think any reason for Job’s crisis. *Therefore snares are all around you, and sudden fear troubles you:* Eliphaz repeats the continues to beat the drum of the simple formula that dominated the analysis of Job’s friends.

vs.12-20 Now Eliphaz attacks Job’s theology, contrasting the wicked and the righteous. *Is not God in the height of heaven?* Beginning with the basic idea of the might, majesty, and sovereignty of God, Eliphaz instructs instructing Job in the basics of theology. He thought that because Job would not admit his error, he must be fundamentally wrong in his understanding of God. *Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have trod?* Eliphaz warned Job to not harden his heart and mind as those did who were swept away by a flood. This is possibly an obscure reference to the flood in Noah’s time, and Eliphaz warned Job to not follow in the wickedness of those pre-flood people. *The righteous see it and are glad:* In contrast to the previously mentioned wicked men, the righteous are happy for the judgments of God. This was another way for Eliphaz to say that Job was wicked and not righteous, because he did not rejoice in the judgments of God.

vs.1-3 Notice how wrong a comforter Eliphaz begins, he immediately challenges Job of thinking that his righteous is profitable and brings pleasure to God, basically that God needed nothing from Job and Job added nothing to God! No comfort there!

vs.4-11 Eliphaz sinks to a new low! He is going to accuse of Job of extreme wickedness and will mention supposedly specific sin. But there is no basis in fact in Job’s case. A pathetic response from Eliphaz – may we never do this!

vs.12-20 Eliphaz here states a direct untruth as to what Job said, 'What does God know?' Job never said that. His contention was that God does indeed know everything, so why isn’t He speaking to me and telling me why I’m in the trial that I’m in? Eliphaz continues to try to prove Job’s wickedness by Eliphaz’ own lies. What a miserable comforter!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

*Job 22:21 "Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; Thereby good will come to you.
Job 22:22 Receive, please, instruction from His mouth, And lay up His words in your heart.
Job 22:23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; You will remove iniquity far from your tents.
Job 22:24 Then you will lay your gold in the dust, And the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks.
Job 22:25 Yes, the Almighty will be your gold And your precious silver;
Job 22:26 For then you will have your delight in the Almighty, And lift up your face to God.
Job 22:27 You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you, And you will pay your vows.
Job 22:28 You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you; So light will shine on your ways.
Job 22:29 When they cast you down, and you say, 'Exaltation will come!' Then He will save the humble person.
Job 22:30 He will even deliver one who is not innocent; Yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands."*

Job Proclaims God’s Righteous Judgment:

*Job 23:1 Then Job answered and said:
Job 23:2 "Even today my complaint is bitter; My hand is listless because of my groaning.
Job 23:3 Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, That I might come to His seat!
Job 23:4 I would present my case before Him, And fill my mouth with arguments. (Only the desire of a righteous man)
Job 23:5 I would know the words which He would answer me, And understand what He would say to me.
Job 23:6 Would He contend with me in His great power? No! But He would take note of me.
Job 23:7 There the upright could reason with Him, And I would be delivered forever from my Judge.*

vs. 21-30 Eliphaz counsels Job to make himself right with God. *Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you:* This was great advice for Job, assuming that the problem was sin in Job’s life. Yet we know that this assumption was wrong, and therefore the advice was wrong. *For then you will have your delight in the Almighty:* Eliphaz assumed much because Job was agonizing with God instead of finding delight in Him. Job’s agony with God was a real, though temporary phenomenon. *So light will shine on your ways . . . He will save the humble person:* For Eliphaz and his friends, their cause and effect formula was rather simple. All Job needed to do was to confess the deep and great sins that had brought this calamity on to his life, and then receive God’s restoration. So, we have an end Eliphaz the Temanite. He began with a tissue of the bitter charges, continued with very cruel insinuations, and ended with common-place exhortations to repentance and get right with the LORD and everything would be fine!

Chapter 23 vs. 1-7 Job longs to take his case to God. *Even today my complaint is bitter:* At the close of Eliphaz’s speech, Job continued to feel desperate. The wisdom and counsel of Eliphaz and others was of no relief to him, and just made his mental and spiritual agony worse. *Oh, that I knew where I might find Him:* Job felt separated from God. Surely, this was not the first crisis in his life (though of course it was far beyond any previous suffering). He had found comfort and solace in God in prior times, but in this catastrophe he felt he could not find God. *I would present my case before Him:* Job did not only want the sense of the presence of God for the sake of spiritual comfort; he also wanted it so he might be vindicated in the court of God, especially in the face of the accusations of his friends. *I would know the words which He would answer me . . . I would be delivered forever from my Judge:* Job thought that in his conscience that he would find mercy and favor at the throne of God. His friends insisted that God was against Job in his affliction, but Job held on stubbornly clung to his innocence.

vs. 21-30 These are fabulous statements of exhortation for one who is in sin and needs to repent. But it doesn’t fit Job in his situation. Had Eliphaz applied these statements to himself he would have found that his own imperfect acquaintance with God was the reason why he was not able to bring any real comfort to his suffering friend.

vs. 1-7 Notice in Job’s uttermost extremity he cried after the Lord. The longing desire of an innocent but afflicted child of God is once more to see his Father’s face. His first prayer is not that I might be healed of the disease which now festers in every part of my body or that I might see my children restored from the jaws of the grave and my property once more brought from the hand of the spoiler!’ But the first and uppermost cry is, ‘*Oh that I knew where I might find HIM — who is my God! that I might come even to him! What a wonderful testimony from Job!*

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

*Job 23:8 "Look, I go forward, but He is not there, And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;
Job 23:9 When He works on the left hand, I cannot behold Him; When He turns to the right hand, I cannot see Him.*

*Job 23:10 But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.
Job 23:11 My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and not turned aside.
Job 23:12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.*

*Job 23:13 "But He is unique, and who can make Him change? And whatever His soul desires, that He does.
Job 23:14 For He performs what is appointed for me, And many such things are with Him.
Job 23:15 Therefore I am terrified at His presence; When I consider this, I am afraid of Him.
Job 23:16 For God made my heart weak, And the Almighty terrifies me;
Job 23:17 Because I was not cut off from the presence of darkness, And He did not hide deep darkness from my face.*

*Job Complains of Violence on the Earth;
Job 24:1 "Since times are not hidden from the Almighty, Why do those who know Him see not His days?
Job 24:2 "Some remove landmarks; They seize flocks violently and feed on them;
Job 24:3 They drive away the donkey of the fatherless; They take the widow's ox as a pledge.
Job 24:4 They push the needy off the road; All the poor of the land are forced to hide.
Job 24:5 Indeed, like wild donkeys in the desert, They go out to their work, searching for food. The wilderness yields food for them and for their children.
Job 24:6 They gather their fodder in the field And glean in the vineyard of the wicked.
Job 24:7 They spend the night naked, without clothing, And have no covering in the cold.
Job 24:8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains, And huddle around the rock for want of shelter.*

vs. 8-9 Job confesses his lack of understanding and need of revelation from God. *I go forward . . . backward . . . left hand . . . right hand:* Job insisted that he had sought God in the midst of his crisis. He looked in every direction he could. *But He is not there . . . I cannot perceive Him:* No matter how hard and sincerely Job looked, he could not find God. It seemed that God remained hidden through a barrier that was impossible to penetrate.

vs.10-12 He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold: Job admits he could not get through to God, yet he clung to the confidence that God was still over this crisis. He indicated that God still observed him had not forgotten him; *He know the way that I take* - that God had a purpose in the suffering affliction crisis; *when He has tested me* - that the purpose of the affliction was not to punish Job; *I shall come forth* - God would one day bring the trial to an end; *I shall come forth as gold* - God would bring something good would from it all; God still valued Job; only precious metal is put through the fire *as gold! My foot has held fast to His steps:* This was a dramatic defense of his integrity before his accusing friends. *I have kept His way* - Job declared that he still followed God and loved His word - *I have treasured the words of His mouth.*

vs.13-17 But He is unique, and who can make Him change? Job here argued back with himself against his previous great declaration of faith. He understood though he did deeply and sincerely trust in God, at the same time he could not make God do anything. *He performs what is appointed for me, and many such things are with Him:* Job had to admit that God would do as He pleased in Job’s life and would not be held hostage to Job’s demands. He understood that the reasons and wisdom of God’s work are ultimately with Him and not know to Job or others. *Therefore I was terrified at His presence . . . God has made my heart weak:* Knowing what he could not know about God made Job appreciate the distance between himself and God. It made him rightly feel an awe of God, though it felt like deep darkness because it was little comfort to him in his crisis.

Chapter 24 vs.1-8 The conduct of the wicked. *Since times are not hidden from the Almighty, why do those who know Him see not His days?* This somewhat difficult verse seems to say, “Since God knows and will judge everything, why are the godly kept in the dark about His ways?” It seems it had special application to the question of why God allows the seeming prosperity of the wicked, discussed in the following verses. *Some remove landmarks . . . they take the widow’s ox as a pledge . . . all the poor of the land are forced to hide:* Job described the mostly financial sins of the wicked, rooted in greed and cruelty. In chapter 22, Eliphaz said that Job’s calamity came upon him because he acted this way towards others, and his riches were therefore gained by greed and wickedness. Job agreed with Eliphaz that this is how wicked people act, without agreeing with him that he himself acted this way.

vs. 8-9 We see in Job one of the marks of a true child of God. Even when Job thinks God smites him, he still longs for His presence.

vs.10-12 God spoke to Job. Did God ever speak to you? Most likely Job didn’t have a single page of inspired writing. No man will ever serve God the right way God has spoken to him. Job had treasured up what God had spoken. Do we treasure up what God has spoken to us? Could we ever say, I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food? (Job would rather die from physical starvation rather than spiritual starvation!)

vs.13-17 Job here seemed to come closer and closer to the place God wanted him to be in his crisis, realizing that God can be trusted, that God does in fact love and care for him; but at the same time He is sovereign and at least some of His ways are beyond our knowing.

vs.1-8 Job indicates that he believes that God is interested in him and in what is going on, but he incorrectly observes what he thinks is an apparent indifference of God against the violence on the earth and toward the wicked.

JOB – Chapters 21-25 – “Job’s Discourse on the Wicked; Eliphaz Accuses Job of Wickedness; Job Proclaims God’s Righteous Judgment; Job Complains of Violence on the Earth; Bildad: How Can Man Be Righteous?”

OBSERVATION

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Job 24:9 "Some snatch the fatherless from the breast, And take a pledge from the poor.

Job 24:10 They cause the poor to go naked, without clothing; And they take away the sheaves from the hungry.

Job 24:11 They press out oil within their walls, And tread winepresses, yet suffer thirst.

Job 24:12 The dying groan in the city, And the souls of the wounded cry out; Yet God does not charge them with wrong.

Job 24:13 "There are those who rebel against the light; They do not know its ways Nor abide in its paths.

Job 24:14 The murderer rises with the light; He kills the poor and needy; And in the night he is like a thief.

Job 24:15 The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, Saying, 'No eye will see me'; And he disguises his face.

Job 24:16 In the dark they break into houses Which they marked for themselves in the daytime; They do not know the light.

Job 24:17 For the morning is the same to them as the shadow of death; If someone recognizes them, They are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

Job 24:18 "They should be swift on the face of the waters, Their portion should be cursed in the earth, So that no one would turn into the way of their vineyards.

Job 24:19 As drought and heat consume the snow waters, So the grave consumes those who have sinned.

Job 24:20 The womb should forget him, The worm should feed sweetly on him; He should be remembered no more, And wickedness should be broken like a tree.

Job 24:21 For he preys on the barren who do not bear, And does no good for the widow.

Job 24:22 "But God draws the mighty away with His power; He rises up, but no man is sure of life.

Job 24:23 He gives them security, and they rely on it; Yet His eyes are on their ways.

Job 24:24 They are exalted for a little while, Then they are gone. They are brought low; They are taken out of the way like all others; They dry out like the heads of grain.

Job 24:25 "Now if it is not so, who will prove me a liar, And make my speech worth nothing?"

vs. 9-12 The wicked oppress the weak. *Some snatch the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge from the poor:* Job vividly described the heartless oppression inflicted upon the poor by the godless. It would seem that Job would not condemn this so strongly if he were guilty of the same as Eliphaz had accused him in chapter 22. *Yet God does not charge them with wrong:* This was the most difficult for Job to understand and accept. He knew how wicked the wicked were. What he couldn’t understand was why God did not judge them as they deserved. It seems like Job felt God should demonstrate his justice by openly punishing the wicked. Later, in His divine speeches God would teach him a tremendous lesson about this, which he did not now understand.

vs. 13-17 The deeds done in darkness. *There are those who rebel against the light:* Job powerfully describes the kind of sin that happens under the cover of darkness. Darkness is used as a cloak for the murderer, the thief, and the adulterer. *For the morning is the same to them as the shadow of death:* One should regard the morning as something good; the coming of light after the dark night. Yet for these wicked people, morning is the same to them as the shadow of death, which is a bad thing, not a good thing to them.

vs. 18-21 What should happen to the wicked. *Their portion should be cursed in the earth:* Job wondered why God did not judge the wicked as Job thought He should. It’s as if Job gave God advice on how He should judge the wicked during their lifetime and not wait until the life beyond (*cursed in the earth*). *The worm should feed sweetly on him; he should be remembered no more:*

vs. 22-25 The seeming security of the wicked. *But God draws the mighty away with His power:* Job, sounding like Asaph in Psalm 73, considered that perhaps the fate of the wicked in the world beyond was retribution enough for the scales of divine justice. Yes, the wicked seem to prosper in this life (*he rises up*); yet at the same time no man is sure of life. *He gives them security, and they rely on it; yet His eyes are on their ways:* Job reminded himself that God was not blind to the sins of the wicked, and even if they did seem to get by in this life, soon enough then they are gone and they are brought low.

vs. 9-12 It was difficult for Job to understand and accept God not charging the wicked with wrong. He knew how wicked the wicked were. What he couldn’t understand was why God did not judge the wicked as they deserved, when they abused power.

vs. 13-17 In describing the wicked and their sin, it was almost as if Job anticipated the later instruction from the Apostle Paul: *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. (Rom 13:12-14)*

vs. 18-21 Job wasn’t against the idea of the wicked being punished after death; he simply didn’t want the punishment to begin there. He thought it should begin in this life and be continued afterwards.

vs. 22-25 Job does not claim that God is hostile to the upright and an accomplice of the crooked. Job’s position is more balanced, but more baffled. He simply cannot see how God’s justice works out in his own case. Job does feel that for a time the righteous may be greater sufferers, and for a while the wicked may prosper, but that in the end God will overthrow the ungodly, and establish the righteous.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Bildad: How Can Man Be Righteous?

Job 25:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

Job 25:2 "Dominion and fear belong to Him; He makes peace in His high places.

Job 25:3 Is there any number to His armies? Upon whom does His light not rise?

Job 25:4 How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?

Job 25:5 If even the moon does not shine, And the stars are not pure in His sight,

Job 25:6 How much less man, who is a maggot, And a son of man, who is a worm?"

vs. 1 Bildad’s final speech. *Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:* This is the final word from Job’s three friends. *Answered and said:* Bildad’s final speech is very short, possibly reflecting the debate is running out of steamfuel and starts a transition to a different stage of the book.

vs. 2-3 The greatness of God; *Dominion and fear belong to Him:* In apparent exasperation, Bildad can only repeat what has already been agreed to by Job and all three of his friends. They have already expressed agreement on the greatness of God. *Is there any number to His armies:* Bildad indicates to Job that God was an impossible foe, and that he should surrender to this great God, who is so mighty in *armies*.

vs. 4 *How then can man be righteous before God?* Bildad is again stating matters that are not in controversy. Job previously said the same thing in chapter 9 in response to Bildad’s first speech. *Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?* The purpose of these questions seems to be to cause Job to understand that he is a sinner just like all, making it easier for him to confess and repent.

vs. 5-6 *If even the moon does not shine, and the stars are not pure in His sight:* Bildad considered that even some of the glorious aspects of creation still fall short of the glory of the Creator. *How much less man, who is a maggot:* If the moon and the stars cannot reflect the glory of God as they should, then man cannot either. Bildad’s final argument was based upon a misunderstanding of Job’s previous words. On this disgusting and hopeless note the words of Job’s “friends” end.

DAY BY DAY - Carolina Sandell Burg

Day by day and with each passing moment, strength I find to meet my trials here; trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment, I’ve no cause for worry or for fear. He whose heart is kind beyond all measure gives unto each day what he deems best; Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure, mingling toil with peace and rest.

Help me then in every tribulation so to trust your promises, O Lord, that I lose not faith’s sweet consolation offered me within your holy Word. Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting, e’er to take, as from a father’s hand, one by one, the days, the moments fleeting, till I reach the promised land

vs. 1-4 Bildad in his final summary is answering questions that no one is asking. He is not in touch with what is going on. He is courageously heartless, never thinking when he talks, but simply pours it out. This ‘Bildad’ type is too often met when men speak phrases and talk the most ponderous things with nothing in them. Are we guilty of that?

vs. 5-6 Bildad is so totally unlike the apostle Paul, who developed the doctrine of total depravity in *Romans 1-3* to prepare the way for grace. There is nothing in Bildad’s remarks where he let any room for mercy or forgiveness. We need to assess our own being merciful and forgiving, even as our Lord and Savior has been so merciful and forgiving to us!

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