***Job: A Study in Suffering…And Faith***

**Answers to Study Questions**

Lesson Six: Eliphaz’s Second Speech and Job’s Reply

Text: Job 15:1 – 17:6

***Lesson Objectives:***

1. Be able to supply adjectives to describe the obvious emotions of Eliphaz and Job as they made their speeches.

1. **What charges did Eliphaz make against Job?**

Eliphaz charged Job with:

a) sinning with his mouth in his speeches, which Eliphaz described as “unprofitable talk” (vv. 5-6). It was as if Eliphaz was saying that Job’s speeches simply confirmed what the friends had thought from the beginning – Job was a sinner.

**Job 15:5–6 (ESV)**

**5** For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty. **6** Your own mouth condemns you, and not I; your own lips testify against you.

b) arrogance; he chided Job, asking if Job thought he was the only man who knew anything (vv. 7-10).

**Job 15:7–10 (ESV)**

**7** “Are you the first man who was born? Or were you brought forth before the hills? **8** Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself? **9** What do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that is not clear to us? **10** Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, older than your father.

c) lack of restraint (vv. 12-13)

**Job 15:12–13 (ESV)**

**12** Why does your heart carry you away, and why do your eyes flash, **13** that you turn your spirit against God and bring such words out of your mouth?

Note the difference in quality between Eliphaz's first and second speech. In this speech, he is much more harsh and impatient with Job.

1. **How did Eliphaz describe the wicked man (15:17-28) and what did he say was the future of the wicked man?**

He described the wicked man as being in a constant condition of pain and mental anxiety (vv. 20-24). The wicked man was rebellious against God and portrayed as a warrior charging God with his shield (vv. 25-26). He was “fat” (an indication of prosperity) and dwelt in cities under the curse of God (vv. 27-28).

**Job 15:25–28 (ESV)**

**25** Because he has stretched out his hand against God and defies the Almighty, **26** running stubbornly against him with a thickly bossed shield; **27** because he has covered his face with his fat and gathered fat upon his waist **28** and has lived in desolate cities, in houses that none should inhabit, which were ready to become heaps of ruins;

His prosperity will not continue (v. 29); a “day of darkness” is near at hand (v. 23).

**Job 15:23 (ESV)**

**23** He wanders abroad for bread, saying, ‘Where is it?’ He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his hand;

**Job 15:29 (ESV)**

**29** he will not be rich, and his wealth will not endure, nor will his possessions spread over the earth;

1. **Compare 15:14-16 with 4:17-19?**

**Job 15:14–16 (ESV)**

**14** What is man, that he can be pure? Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous? **15** Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in his sight; **16** how much less one who is abominable and corrupt, a man who drinks injustice like water!

**Job 4:17–19 (ESV)** (Eliphaz’s first speech)

**17** ‘Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? **18** Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error; **19** how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.

In 15:14-16, Eliphaz was commenting upon the propensity of man to sin. He used a “greater-to-the-lesser” argument, noting that if the “holy ones” (“saints” – NKJV; angels are meant) don’t measure up perfectly, how much less man.

I believe that Eliphaz was saying basically the same thing as in 4:17-19. The ESV supports this interpretation more with its translation than does the NKJV.

**Job 4:17–19 (NKJV)**

**17** ‘Can a mortal be more righteous than God? Can a man be more pure than his Maker? **18** If He puts no trust in His servants, *If* He charges His angels with error, **19** How much more those who dwell in houses of clay, Whose foundation is in the dust, *Who* are crushed before a moth?

1. **How did Job refer to his friends (16:1-5)?**

He called them “miserable comforters” (16:2)! He indicated that if the tables were turned, he would not behave as they had done.

**Job 16:2 (ESV)**

**2** “I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all.

Topic for discussion: understanding the situations of others. Too often folks are prone to make snap judgments about how others should feel, act, etc.

1. **How did Job describe God’s treatment of him?**

Beginning in 16:7, Job described God's treatment of him as being especially fierce and violent.

**Job 16:9–14 (ESV)**

**9** He has torn me in his wrath and hated me; he has gnashed his teeth at me; my adversary sharpens his eyes against me. **10** Men have gaped at me with their mouth; they have struck me insolently on the cheek; they mass themselves together against me. **11** God gives me up to the ungodly and casts me into the hands of the wicked. **12** I was at ease, and he broke me apart; he seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces; he set me up as his target; **13** his archers surround me. He slashes open my kidneys and does not spare; he pours out my gall on the ground. **14** He breaks me with breach upon breach; he runs upon me like a warrior.

From the lesson outline: “Only literal translation can do justice to the savagery of Job's description of God's vicious attack. He is like a ferocious beast (9f.), a traitor (11), a wrestler (12a, b), an archer (12c, 13a), a swordsman (13b, 14).”

1. **For what did Job plead in 16:18? 16:21?**

**Job 16:18 (ESV)**

**18** “O earth, cover not my blood, and let my cry find no resting place.

In 16:18, he appealed to the earth to act as his witness. By not covering his blood, the injustice of his calamity (bloodshed) would remain evident (note the similarity between this and the comment of God about the blood of Abel - Gen. 4:10-12). “The idea is that blood, unjustly shed, cries to God for vengeance so long as it remains upon the face of the ground.”

**Genesis 4:10–12 (ESV)**

**10** And the Lord said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. **11** And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. **12** When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”

**Leviticus 17:13–14 (ESV)**

**13** “Any one also of the people of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among them, who takes in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. **14** For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life. Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.

**Job 16:20–21 (ESV)**

**20** My friends scorn me; my eye pours out tears to God, **21** that he would argue the case of a man with God, as a son of man does with his neighbor.

In 16:21, after noting that his friends were of no assistance, Job expresses his desire for a mediator, one who could plead before God on his behalf. Note that this is exactly what Jesus does for the Christian (Hebrews 8:6; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

**Hebrews 8:6 (ESV)**

**6** But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

**Hebrews 9:24 (ESV)**

**24** For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

**1 John 2:1 (ESV)**

**1** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1. **What unusual request did Job make of God in 17:3? Why does he make this request of God instead of his friends?**

**Job 17:3 (ESV)**

**3** “Lay down a pledge for me with you; who is there who will put up security for me?

He asked God to “put down a pledge for him” with Himself (see Proverbs 17:18).

**Proverbs 17:18 (ESV)**

**18** One who lacks sense gives a pledge and puts up security in the presence of his neighbor.

The request is unusual because Job had identified God as the source of all his calamity. The request is an expression of faith.

The friends have evidently been blinded to his true situation by their stubborn belief in their doctrine concerning suffering.