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

**Answers to Study Questions**

Lesson Eight: Final Speeches of Eliphaz and Bildad/ Job’s Replies

Text: Job 22:1 – 26:14

Lesson Objectives:

1. Be able to describe how Eliphaz characterized his friend Job.

2. Be able to summarize Eliphaz’s counsel to Job.

3. Be able to identify Job’s main point in response to Eliphaz.

1. **With what sins did Eliphaz charge Job? How did these charges differ from Eliphaz’s description of Job in his first speech?**

**Job 22:4–5 (ESV)**

**4** Is it for your fear of him that he reproves you and enters into judgment with you? **5** Is not your evil abundant? There is no end to your iniquities.

In general, Eliphaz charged Job with a lack of compassion and with greed. Specifical­ly, he claims that Job has:

**Job 22:6–9 (ESV)**

**6** For you have exacted pledges of your brothers for nothing and stripped the naked of their clothing. **7** You have given no water to the weary to drink, and you have withheld bread from the hungry. **8** The man with power possessed the land, and the favored man lived in it. **9** You have sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless were crushed.

a) “exacted pledges of your brothers for nothing” (22:6)

b) “stripped the naked of their clothing” (22:6)

c) “given no water to the weary to drink” (22:7)

d) “withheld bread from the hungry” (22:7)

e) “sent widows away empty” (22:9)

f) “the strength of the fatherless was crushed” (took advantage of orphans - 22:9)

This description of Job’s behavior is certainly different from that in Eliphaz’s first speech (4:2-4). Which description is true – the one in Eliphaz’s first speech or in this last speech??

**Job 4:2–4 (ESV)**

**2** “If one ventures a word with you, will you be impatient? Yet who can keep from speaking? **3** Behold, you have instructed many, and you have strengthened the weak hands. **4** Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, and you have made firm the feeble knees.

Topic for discussion: Why did Eliphaz make these charges (They are obviously not true; see God’s description of Job - 1:8, 2:3)?

1. **What general attitude did Eliphaz accuse Job of holding? Why?**

He accused Job of having a disdain for God. He suggested that Job believed that God was so distant that He could not see what man was doing and so didn’t know what was going on (22:12-14)!

**Job 22:12–14 (ESV)**

**12** “Is not God high in the heavens? See the highest stars, how lofty they are! **13** But you say, ‘What does God know? Can he judge through the deep darkness? **14** Thick clouds veil him, so that he does not see, and he walks on the vault of heaven.’

There may even be the accusation that Job believed that God couldn't touch him (22:17).

**Job 22:17 (ESV)**

**17** They said to God, ‘Depart from us,’ and ‘What can the Almighty do to us?’

It is almost as though Eliphaz was suggesting that Job’s protestations of innocence were feigned, as though he could bluff God and his three friends.

1. **How did Eliphaz soften his speech?**

Eliphaz ended his last speech with a recitation of the blessings that would occur with repentance on Job’s part (22:21-30). His comments are reminiscent of Zophar’s description of repentance and its consequences in his first speech (11:13-19; see also 8:5-7 [Bildad]).

In Eliphaz’s first speech, he noted the care God gives the righteous and helpless (5:8-16) and encouraged Job “not to despise the discipline of the Almighty” (5:17). He enumerated the ways in which God would bless Job if he accepted the divine discipline (vv. 18-27).

**Job 22:23 (ESV)** [Eliphaz’s third speech]

**23** If you return to the Almighty you will be built up; if you remove injustice far from your tents,

**Job 11:14 (ESV)** [Zophar’s first speech]

**14** If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, and let not injustice dwell in your tents.

1. **What virtual prophecy did Eliphaz unwittingly make?**

If Job would repent, God’s favor with Job would be such that Job could even intercede on behalf of the guilty (22:29-30).

**Job 22:28–30 (ESV)**

**28** You will decide on a matter, and it will be established for you, and light will shine on your ways. **29** For when they are humbled you say, ‘It is because of pride’; but he saves the lowly. **30** He delivers even the one who is not innocent, who will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands.”

[Spoiler Alert!!] In the end of the book, God instructed the friends to offer sacrifice and for Job to pray on their behalf (42:8).

**Job 42:8 (ESV)**

**8** Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”

1. **What was Job’s confidence in chapter 23?**

He believed that he would be justified if he was able to stand before his Judge (23:3-7).

**Job 23:3–7 (ESV)**

**3** Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat! **4** I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. **5** I would know what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me. **6** Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; he would pay attention to me. **7** There an upright man could argue with him, and I would be acquitted forever by my judge.

1. **How did Job describe his past conduct (chapter 23)?**

He also believed that when God had “tested” him, he would come forth as gold, i.e., he would be recognized as righteous (23:10-12, esp. v. 10).

**Job 23:10–12 (ESV)**

**10** But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold. **11** My foot has held fast to his steps; I have kept his way and have not turned aside. **12** I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.

1. **What seems to be Job’s point in 24:1-17? How did this affect the argument of the friends?**

The wicked seem to be able to commit their unrighteousness with impunity (24:2-12). His comments shaded into the eventual punishment of the wicked (vv. 18-24).

To better understand Job’s point in the first of the chapter, consider these translations of 24:1 –

**Job 24:1 (NLT)**

**1** “Why doesn’t the Almighty bring the wicked to judgment? Why must the godly wait for him in vain?

**Job 24:1 (God’s Word translation)**

**1** “Why doesn’t the Almighty set aside times ⌊for punishment⌋? Why don’t those who are close to him see his days ⌊of judgment⌋?

**Job 24:1 (New Century Version)**

**1** “I wish the Almighty would set a time for judging. Those who know God do not see such a day.

**Job 24:1 (The Good News Translation)**

**1** Why doesn’t God set a time for judging, a day of justice for those who serve him?

**Job 24:1 (New International Reader’s Version)**

**1** “Why doesn’t the Mighty One set a time for judging sinful people? Why do those who know him have to keep waiting for that day?

**Job 24:2–12 (ESV)**

**2** Some move landmarks; they seize flocks and pasture them. **3** They drive away the donkey of the fatherless; they take the widow’s ox for a pledge. **4** They thrust the poor off the road; the poor of the earth all hide themselves. **5** Behold, like wild donkeys in the desert the poor go out to their toil, seeking game; the wasteland yields food for their children. **6** They gather their fodder in the field, and they glean the vineyard of the wicked man. **7** They lie all night naked, without clothing, and have no covering in the cold. **8** They are wet with the rain of the mountains and cling to the rock for lack of shelter. **9** (There are those who snatch the fatherless child from the breast, and they take a pledge against the poor.) **10** They go about naked, without clothing; hungry, they carry the sheaves; **11** among the olive rows of the wicked they make oil; they tread the winepresses, but suffer thirst. **12** From out of the city the dying groan, and the soul of the wounded cries for help; yet God charges no one with wrong.

Naturally, Job’s point decimated the argument of the friends. Their whole argument was based on a relationship between sin and suffering that allows no exceptions. Job was pointing out exceptions.

1. **Some have suggested that 25:4-5 teaches the doctrine of inherited depravity. How would you respond to this charge?**

Bildad made an argument (a greater to the lesser) in his last speech which was similar to that made by Eliphaz (cf. 4:17-19).

**Job 25:4–6 (ESV)**

**4** How then can man be in the right before God? How can he who is born of woman be pure? **5** Behold, even the moon is not bright, and the stars are not pure in his eyes; **6** how much less man, who is a maggot, and the son of man, who is a worm!”

Three observations:

a) All scripture must be harmonized (e.g. Ezek. 18:20)

**Ezekiel 18:20 (NKJV)**

**20** The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

b) These verses are pointing out the frailty of the entire human race, i.e., all “who are born of woman.” The passage does not assert that man is born sinful.

c) Even if this passage was indeed teaching inherited depravity, Bildad was speaking and he was not inspired. In fact, God will rebuke all of the three friends in the end of the book. We must distinguish between inspired doctrine and an inspired record of a conversation.

1. **What seems to be Bildad’s point in his short speech?**

His speech seems to be a rebuke to Job for thinking that he could appear righteous before God. To Bildad, Job was challenging God’s ability to know.

1. **How did ancient mythology suggest that the earth was supported? How did Job explain this? Implica­tion??**

According to mythology, the strongman Atlas held up the world while himself standing on a turtle. Job 26:7 seems to imply that the earth is suspended in the heavens. This is an interestingly accurate statement in view of the idea held by some that the Bible is a book of religious superstitions/anti-science.

**Job 26:7 (ESV)**

**7** He stretches out the north over the void and hangs the earth on nothing.