

Job 05 - Eliphaz: God Blesses Those Who Seek Him

II. Dialogue (Job 3:1—42:6)

(2) First dialogue cycle (Job 4:1—14:22)

(A) Job's exchange with Eliphaz (Job 4:1—7:21)

(a) Eliphaz' first speech (Job 4:1—5:27)

(iv) Man invariably suffers (5:1-7)

(v) Job should seek mercy from God (5:8-16)

(vi) Job should not despise God's discipline (5:17-27)

Job 5

(iv) Man invariably suffers (5:1-7)

1 "Call now, is there anyone who will answer you? And to which of the holy ones will you turn?

1 "Call now, is there anyone who will answer you? And to which of the holy ones will you turn?

1 "Cry out, won't you! Is there anyone who will answer you? To whom will you turn among the holy ones?

1 Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?

2 "For irritation kills the fool, And jealousy brings death to the simple.

2 "For anger slays the foolish man, And jealousy kills the simple.

2 For wrath will slay a fool; zealous anger will kill the naive.

2 For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.

3 "I have seen the fool taking root, And I cursed his home immediately.

3 "I have seen the foolish taking root, And I cursed his abode immediately.

3 "I myself saw a fool becoming established, but I suddenly cursed where he lived.

3 I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

4 "His sons are far from safety, They are also oppressed at the gate, And there is no one to save *them*.

4 "His sons are far from safety, They are even oppressed in the gate, And there is no deliverer.

4 His children are far from deliverance; they'll be maltreated before they leave home, with no one to rescue them.

4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.

- What a low blow! This is a hidden reference to the calamity that befell all Job's children in a single day (Cf. 1:19)

— Eliphaz is suggesting that such things happen only because there is something wrong in Job's life

5 "The hungry devour his harvest And take it to a *place of* thorns, And the schemer is eager for their wealth.

5 "His harvest the hungry devour And take it to a *place of* thorns, And the schemer is eager for their wealth.

5 Then the hungry will devour his harvest, snatching it even from the midst of thorns, while the thirsty covet their wealth.

5 Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.

6 "For disaster does not come from the dust, Nor does trouble sprout from the ground,

6 "For affliction does not come from the dust, Nor does trouble sprout from the ground,

6 For wickedness doesn't crop up from dust, nor does trouble sprout out of the ground;

6 Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

7 For man is born for **trouble**, As sparks fly upward.

7 For man is born for trouble, As sparks fly upward.

7 But mankind is born headed for trouble, just as sparks soar skyward."

7 Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

- "...trouble" - labor

— "Trouble comes from sin; therefore, if you've got trouble, sin has to be the reason." Do you see the logical fallacy here?

- In this next section, Eliphaz suggests that there is no playing games with God because He knows too much

(v) Job should seek mercy from God (5:8-16)

8 "But as for me, I would seek God, And I would make my plea before God,

8 "But as for me, I would seek God, And I would place my cause before God;

8 "Now as for me, I would seek God if I were you; I would commit my case to God.

8 I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

9 Who does great and unsearchable things, Wonders without number.

9 Who does great and unsearchable things, Wonders without number.

9 He is always doing great things that cannot be explained, countless awesome deeds.

9 Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

10 "He gives rain on the earth, And sends water on the fields,

10 "He gives rain on the earth And sends water on the fields,

10 He sends rain on the surface of the earth, and waters the surface of the open country.

10 Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:

11 So that He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety.

11 So that He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety.

11 He sets the lowly on high, and lifts those who mourn to safety.

11 To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

12 "He frustrates the schemes of the shrewd, So that their hands cannot attain success.

12 "He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd, So that their hands cannot attain success.

12 He frustrates the plans of the crafty; so that what they work for never succeeds.

12 He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.

13 "He captures the wise by their own cleverness, And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.

13 "He captures the wise by their own shrewdness, And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.

13 He captures the wise in their own craftiness, bringing a quick end to their cunning advice.

13 He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

14 "By day they meet with darkness, And grope at noon as in the night.

14 "By day they meet with darkness, And grope at noon as in the night.

14 They meet with darkness in broad daylight; at noonday they grope around as if it were night.

14 They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

15 "But He saves from the sword of their mouth, And the poor from the hand of the strong.
15 "But He saves from the sword of their mouth, And the poor from the hand of the mighty.
15 So he delivers from the sword of their mouth— the poor from the power of the mighty.
15 But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16 "So the helpless has hope, And injustice has shut its mouth.
16 "So the helpless has hope, And unrighteousness must shut its mouth.
16 Therefore there is hope for those who are poor, and iniquity shuts its mouth.
16 So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

(vi) Job should not despise God's discipline (5:17-27)

17 "Behold, happy is the person whom God disciplines, So do not reject the discipline of the Almighty.
17 "Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproves, So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.
17 "Indeed, how blessed is the person whom God reproves! So never disrespect the discipline of the Almighty,
17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

18 "For He inflicts pain, and gives relief; He wounds, but His hands *a/so* heal.
18 "For He inflicts pain, and gives relief; He wounds, and His hands *a/so* heal.
18 because though he wounds, but then applies bandages; though he strikes, his hands still heal.
18 For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 "In six troubles He will save you; Even in seven, evil will not touch you.
19 "From six troubles He will deliver you, Even in seven evil will not touch you.
19 "He will deliver you through six calamities; and calamity won't touch you throughout the seventh.
19 He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

20 "In famine He will redeem you from death, And in war, from the power of the sword.
20 "In famine He will redeem you from death, And in war from the power of the sword.
20 He will deliver you from death by famine; in war from the power of the sword.
20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.

21 "You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, And you will not be afraid of violence when it comes.

21 "You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, And you will not be afraid of violence when it comes.

21 You'll be protected from the accusing tongue; you need not fear destruction when it heads your way.

21 Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

22 "You will laugh at violence and hunger, And you will not be afraid of wild animals.

22 "You will laugh at violence and famine, And you will not be afraid of wild beasts.

22 You'll laugh at destruction and famine; and you need not fear the beasts of the earth.

22 At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

23 "For you will be in league with the stones of the field, And the animals of the field will be at peace with you.

23 "For you will be in league with the stones of the field, And the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.

23 For you'll have a pact with the stones in the field; and the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.

23 For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

24 "You will know that your tent is secure, For you will visit your home and have nothing missing.

24 "You will know that your tent is secure, For you will visit your abode and fear no loss.

24 You'll know that your home is secure; when you search your possessions, and nothing will be missing.

24 And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.

- In view of Job's loss of property and family, Eliphaz's bumbling rant understandably infuriates Job

25 "You will also know that your descendants will be many, And your offspring as the grass of the earth.

25 "You will know also that your descendants will be many, And your offspring as the grass of the earth.

25 You'll know that you'll have many children; and that your offspring will be like the grass of the earth.

25 Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.

- The promise of numerous descendants can hardly comfort a person who just been rendered childless!

26 "You will come to the grave at a ripe age, Like the stacking of grain in its season.

26 "You will come to the grave in full vigor, Like the stacking of grain in its season.

26 You'll go to your grave at a ripe old age; like a stack of grain that's harvested at just the right time.

26 Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

27 "Behold this; we have investigated it, *and* so it is. Hear it, and know for yourself."

27 "Behold this; we have investigated it, *and* so it is. Hear it, and know for yourself."

27 "Look! We have thought all this through, and what we've said is true; So please listen and learn for your own good!"

27 Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.

Anyone who has lived a few years at all knows it is possible to find godly people who are not protected, who still go through times of trial and peril and suffering. Job has no quarrel with statements highlighting the power and justice of God. This issue doesn't fit Job's case. He had long learnt to view his good life as a gift, not a reward, so he has no complaint when it is removed.

Job's highest wisdom is to love God for Himself alone. Eliphaz's words, far from being a comfort, are a trap. Job is being tested (as Abraham was in Gen 22). Abraham's, like Job's, was neither punitive (for the sinner) nor corrective (for the saint). This story is given to us so that we might learn to correct our theology and to understand that there are deeper reasons for suffering than sin.

Job's speeches will face these realities more courageously than those of his friends. The vindication of goodness, God's or man's, lies beyond its ultimate testing in death, when the victory of resurrection proves the indestructibility of the good life. At the cross, the darkest mystery of our human agony will be embraced by God Himself, and be transformed from moral outrage to glory. When the Victim is the willing sinbearer, His suffering becomes the conquest of evil and the display and proof that God is love...

Eliphaz's "comfort" raises Job's torment to an even higher pitch. Job's loss of certainty about God's goodness is a poverty and a pain more desolating than all his other troubles!

Everything else may go without loss if God remains. It is the threat to his faith, not his running sores, that becomes the upper hurt in his mind. The "friendship of God" (29:4) is all that matters now!

Job's reply comes to us in Job 6-7. In Job 6, Job rebukes his friends—all three of them. In Job 7, Job addresses his complaint to God.