

JOB 22

ELIPHAZ'S THIRD ATTACK UPON JOB

Eliphaz now brought his third attack against Job. He perverted Job's reasoning to a very different meaning from what he had intended when he was uttering his sentiments in the preceding chapter. Eliphaz very severely reproved the man of Uz, although he did give some sweet counsel toward the conclusion. Here he asserted that Job was not a secret hypocrite; but rather, an open, wicked, and dishonest tyrant!

Eliphaz imagined that because Job complained so much of his afflictions, he thought the Lord was unjust in afflicting him; but Job was far from thinking so. Nothing can be more true than Eliphaz's words in the first four verses; although, in respect to Job, they were most falsely applied. "*How can man be profitable to God?*" is a question which can never be sounded too often or too loudly through the chambers of every self-righteous person's heart. Indeed, it is astonishing that anyone's heart should fall under this deception! The glories of God in creation, the goodness of God in redemption, and the salvation of innumerable souls by the wonderful process of grace and love in God's dear Son – all of these reveal His graciousness, goodness, and abundant mercy. But what profit is brought to our God by the salvation of such sinners as we are? In ourselves, we are ruined, lost, and undone; and thus we would remain to all eternity – except that in Jesus' righteousness, we are made righteous; and in His complete salvation, we are now and forever accepted.

In verses 5-14, Eliphaz brought very heavy charges against Job – charges of oppression, cruelty, and tyranny. And he was entirely without support or reason for his accusations, except that Job was dealt with as he imagined that God always dealt with every wicked person. So he concluded that Job must be guilty of violence and oppression; and that by his sins, he had harmed his own wealth and power when he enjoyed his time of prosperity. But not one of Eliphaz's charges against Job could be substantiated. Eliphaz desired Job to observe the old way that wicked men had trodden, and to see what the end of their way was. He seems to have been specifically referencing the particularly wicked people who lived in the world before the global Flood of Noah's day (verse 16). It is good for us to mark the way of sinners, so that we may not walk therein; yet we ought to be thankful to God for such examples, and take them as a warning.

In the character of Eliphaz, we behold a mixture of everything unamiable. From the account which the Lord Himself gave of Job, we know that he was a perfect and upright man (chapter 1:8); and therefore, nothing could be more

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ Eliphaz reproves Job for his complaints of God and His dealings – verses 1-4
- ❖ He charges Job with many high crimes and sins – verses 5-14
- ❖ He compares Job's case to that of the pre-Flood world – verses 15-20
- ❖ He gives Job advice so that God might return to him in mercy – verses 21-30

false, unjust, and cruel than the charges of Eliphaz. It reminds us of Shimei's cursing of David (2 Sam. 16:7-8). But it reminds us even more of One Who – in comparison – reveals that both Job and David were only dim foreshadows; for even with His life of perfect holiness, our Savior did not escape the reproach of being called a blasphemer, a gluttonous man, a winebibber, and even a devil! (Matt. 11:19; John 7:20)

But there was a great deal of sound Gospel-truth in the counsel and advice which Eliphaz gave to Job, for an acquaintance with the Lord is the only foundation for true peace with Him. Some of the blessings which Eliphaz pointed out as the sure result of peace with God are strictly true, and are indeed the blessed outcomes of a state of reconciliation with Him. But when Eliphaz talked of laying up gold as dust, and silver in abundance – here he fell back again into his old idea that prosperity in this world is a mark of God's favor, and that affliction is a sure sign of His anger. There are indeed durable riches and righteousness which belong to the followers of the Lord; for Jesus promises to give them to His people, and to fill all their treasures (Prov. 8:18-21). But these riches differ entirely from what Eliphaz had in view; and therefore, it is plain that this poor man's reasonings were, as yet, unacquainted with God's grace. Despite all his pretended wisdom, he did not truly understand what is meant by being acquainted with the Lord. But thanks be to



God! In Christ, we have a light which cannot fail to conduct us to the acquaintance, fellowship, and enjoyment of God the Father! And we have every encouragement to approach Him. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," said Jesus; "no man cometh unto the Father but by me!" (John 14:6) But He also says, for our comfort, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out!" (John 6:37) The light of the Scriptures conducts us to the threshold of the presence-chamber of the Most High. And all the motions of our conscience concur with all the lessons of experience in this Divine invitation: "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace!" "Great peace have they who love thy law," declared the Psalmist, "and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165). Such persons have reached a haven in which they may rest, amidst all the storms of the exterior world; their boat is resting upon the Anchor of the soul, which is sure and steadfast. May we indeed acquaint ourselves with Jesus, and be at peace! What a blessing it is to be able to share our cares and sorrows with Him, and to receive a measure of His gracious and abundant fullness! (John 1:16)

Lord Jesus, we praise You as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; as our sure and steadfast Anchor of our souls; and as our Prince of peace! Amen.