

In coming to chapter 22, we come to the third round of discourses, and the final speech of Eliphaz the Temanite. If you recall last week, Job in response to Zophar, sought to correct the basic thinking of his three friends. Fundamentally, they believed the righteous prosper and wicked suffer. Because Job was suffering, he must of necessity be wicked.

In response, Job showed (in chapter 21), that oftentimes wicked people enjoy wealth and health, and so outward prosperity does not argue inward piety. Here in chapter 22, Eliphaz responds to Job's teaching (in chapter 21), by basically ignoring it, and continuing to claim that Job must of necessity be a secret sinner (hypocrite).

I. Eliphaz Accuses Job (vv1-20)

II. Eliphaz Exhorts Job (vv21-30)

I. Eliphaz Accuses Job (vv1-20)

1. Eliphaz accuses Job of three things—self-righteousness (vv2-3), wickedness (vv4-11), and irreverence (vv12-20).
2. (1) Self-righteousness (vv2-3), vv2-3—"Can a man be profitable to God, though he who is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous? Or is it gain to Him that you make your ways blameless?"
3. Eliphaz is obviously being sarcastic—he's accusing Job of being self-righteous and claiming to be blameless.
4. He's accusing Job of thinking that somehow his righteousness benefited God—that it was profitable to God.
5. Thus, remember, Eliphaz doesn't believe that Job is righteous or blameless—he thinks Job is a hypocrite.
6. But not only is Job a hypocrite (or a secret sinner), but he's also self-righteous and thinks he's really important.
7. (2) Wickedness (vv4-11)—in this section, Eliphaz accuses Job of sinning against the poor and needy.
8. V4—"Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you, and enters into judgment with you?"—this is again sarcastic.
9. Would God be correcting you so severely if you truly feared Him—or, Does God deal with righteous as He's dealing with you?
10. V5—"Is not your wickedness great, and your iniquity without end?"—here Eliphaz plainly accuses him of great wickedness.
11. "Job—you claim to be righteous, but the fact that God is chastening you, proves you are a great sinner."
12. And then from v6 to v11, he takes the liberty to actually suggest various examples of this great wickedness.
13. He takes brides (v6); without water and bread from the poor (v7); shown preference to the might and honorable (v8); and ignored widows and the fatherless (v9).
14. V10—"Therefore snares are all around you, and sudden fear troubles you, or darkness so that you cannot see; and an abundance of water covers you."
15. He's actually using imagery that Job earlier used of himself—he was caught in a snare, in darkness, and overtaken by a storm.
16. But, according to Eliphaz, why was Job undergoing these? Because of the way he mistreated his neighbor.

17. Derek Thomas—"Face up to it, Job. The reason you are suffering is because your wickedness is so great. You have robbed the poor, stripped them naked, refused to give them food and water. You must also have been extraordinarily mean to widows and orphans. This is why God has set traps all around you."
18. (3) Irreverence (vv12-20)—in these verses, Eliphaz actually elevates his accusations against Job—if in vv4-11 he accused him sins against his neighbor, in vv12-18 he accuses him of sins against God.
19. V12—"Is not God in the height of heaven? And see the highest stars, how lofty they are! And you say, 'What does God know? Can He judge through the deep darkness?'"
20. What makes this statement all the more unbelievable, is that it runs absolutely contrary to what Job actually said.
21. Job 21:22—"Can anyone teach God knowledge, since He judges those on high?"—God sees and knows all things.
22. And yet, here in verses 12-14, Eliphaz describes Job as saying, that God doesn't see and know all things.
23. V15—"Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have trod, who were cut down before their time, whose foundations were swept away by a flood?"
24. It's possibly he's describing mankind prior to the flood, or else by flood he merely means God's destruction.
25. In v17, Eliphaz quotes Job from 21:14-15—"Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?"
26. In other words, the wicked see nothing in God that deserves their allegiance or their heart's affection.
27. V18—"Yet He filled their houses with good things"—that is, they actually have every reason to serve Him.
28. V18b—"But the counsel of the wicked is far from me"—that is, he (Eliphaz) is claiming to distance himself from the wicked (this too is a quotation from 21:16).
29. Verses 19-20 describe the response of the righteous to the ultimate and final destruction of the wicked.
30. V20—"Surely our adversaries are cut down and the fire consumes their remnant"—they are not gloating but rejoicing in God's justice.
31. Observation 1—Saints are often misjudged by others—they are often misjudged by friends, family, and other saints.
32. Job is being terribly misjudged by a friend—someone who apparently knew Job closely and intimately.
33. Both Job's character and religion were misjudged by Eliphaz (and his other friends)—he thought the worse of him.
34. Eliphaz was judgmental in the worse way—he judged Job sternly—he failed to give him the judgment of charity.
35. Matt.7:1—"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you sue, it will be measured back to you."
36. I know we often here these verses misused and even abused, but brethren, they are the words of our Lord.
37. (a) We must be willing to judge ourselves with the same judgment (or standard) we impose upon others.
38. (b) We must be willing to give the benefit of the doubt with others—we must give them the judgment of charity.
39. 1Cor.13:7—"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things"—it thinks the best of people.

40. Saints will often be ill-spoken of by his friends—this will happen, and it will happen rather frequently.
41. That saints will often be misjudged by others is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in our beloved Savior.
42. Who, if you recall, was accused of being a liar and deceiver, and at one point, demon-possessed (Jn.7:20; 8:52)!
43. Observation 2—No created thing can bring gain to God—nothing man does or says brings profit, pleasure, or gain to God.
44. Because God is infinitely and eternally perfect within Himself, He needs nothing—no thing or person.
45. Historically, Christians have affirmed the aseity of God—this term is Latin (*a se*) and literally means "from oneself."
46. God is independent of His creation—nothing can add or subtract from God—He is perfect all by Himself.
47. Job 35:7-8—"If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? Your wickedness affects a man such as you, and your righteousness a son of man."
48. Man is affected by the actions of men, but not God—nothing man does gives or takes away from God.
49. Put another way—nothing in creation adds or takes away from God—He's self-existent and independent.
50. John Calvin—"God can neither increase nor decrease. He is so much the source of all good that what men bring to him does not fulfil a need or add to Him in any way."
51. Now, it's true we give glory to God, but we must be clear to understand what this does and does not mean.
52. God didn't create us to meet any need He had—He's no less or more glorious for having created man.
53. That man glorifies Him does bring Him joy, but it doesn't render Him any more or less glorious in Himself.
54. No good or evil that man does can add or take away from who God is—He's in and of Himself glorious.
55. John Calvin—"God is not a creature who needs help or assistance. He lacks nothing and is content with himself."
56. Ps.40:15—"Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales."
57. Observation 3—No man can merit anything from God, v2—"Can a man be profitable to God"—that is, can man earn anything from God?
58. At his very best, all man can do is render to God what is His due—man can never render God a debtor.
59. Even if a man was to serve God perfect for every second of their lives, God would not be indebted to him.
60. Lk.17:10—"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"
61. Let me clarify—when our Savior calls us "unprofitable servants" He doesn't mean we cannot be of service to God.
62. That's the reason we were created—man was created to be of service to God—to love and glorify Him.
63. But what our Savior means is this—no man can expect any profit from God based upon his service to God.

64. At the end of the day, we are only doing that which we are obligated, both to our Creator and Redeemer.

## II. Eliphaz Exhorts Job (vv21-30)

1. Having accused Job of great wickedness toward his neighbor and irreverence toward God, Eliphaz now exhorts Job to repent (what Job should do and why).
2. (1) What Job should do (vv21-22)—Job is fundamentally exhorted to do three things—acquaint yourself with God (v21), receive instruction from His mouth (v22), and return to the Almighty (v23).
3. (a) Acquaint yourself with God, v21—"Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you."
4. The Hebrew word rendered "acquaint" by the Old and New King James means "to agree" or "be familiar with."
5. Thus, the ESV renders it—"Agree with God, and be at peace"—know what God thinks and agree with it.
6. It's for this reason other translations have rendered the term "submit to God" (NIV) and "yield now" (NASB).
7. The point of these translations is, find out what God is saying about you and "submit" or "yield" to it (how this is done is found in v22).
8. (b) Receive instruction from His mouth, v22—"Receive, please, instruction from His mouth, and lay up His words in your heart."
9. That is, believe what God says about Himself and you, and lay it up in your heart, as if it were treasure.
10. Thus, to "lay up His words in your heart," means you love and cherish His word as if it were treasure.
11. Now, there's been some question as to what "word" Eliphaz is referring to—what "word" did Job have?
12. Well, if Job and his friends lived prior to Moses, which is likely, that means they lived prior to the writing of the first five books.
13. But that just means, Job either had some oral or written tradition passed down, and/or he received direct revelation from God.
14. Either way, God has never left His people without special revelation given through one or more of these means.
15. The bottom line is this—here's a man (Eliphaz), exhorting Job to receive and store God's word in his heart.
16. Furthermore, it's very likely that v22 explains v21—that is, how do we become acquainted with God but by receiving and laying up His word in our hearts.
17. (c) Return to the Almighty, v23—"If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; You will remove iniquity far from your tents."
18. To return to God is to leave iniquity your iniquity—no man ever rightly returned to God also leaving his sin.
19. Now again, keep in mind, what Eliphaz is suggesting of Job isn't true—he wasn't a hypocrite or secret sinner.
20. But what he says is true in the broad sense—in order for a person to return to God he must leave his sin.
21. (2) Why Job should do it (vv24-30)—within this final section, Eliphaz provides several motives for Job to repent (to acquaint himself with God, receive His instruction, and return to the Almighty).

22. (a) Delight in God, vv24-26—"Then you will lay your gold in the dust, and the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks. Yes, the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver; for then you will have your delight in the Almighty, and lift up your face to God."
23. Simply put—if you repent from your sin and return to God—physical gold and silver will mean little to you.
24. Instead, God Himself will become your gold and silver—that is, "you will have your delight in the Almighty, and lift up your face to God."
25. The last phrase, "lift up your face to God" is a figurative way to describe joy, delight, and encouragement.
26. Albert Barnes—"We hang our face down when we are conscious of guilt; we bow the head in adversity. When conscious of uprightness; when blessed with prosperity, and when we have evidence that we are the children of God, we look up toward heaven."
27. (b) Intimacy with God, v27—"You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you, and you will pay your vows."
28. This refers to intimacy and closeness with God as evidenced and experienced in effectual or effective prayer.
29. He will draw near to you as you draw near to Him—He will hear your prayers, which means He will answer them.
30. He will give you grace and strength to fulfill your vows (promises)—that is, vows (promises) made in prayer.
31. (c) Guidance from God, v28—"You will also declare a thing, and it will be established for you; so light will shine on your ways (paths)."
32. The phrase "you will also declare a thing" refer to the plans or counsel of our hearts—"if you decide on a matter" (ESV).
33. "It will be established"—your plans will come to pass—"so light will shine on your ways (or your paths)."
34. Prov.3:5-6—"Trust in the LORD will all your heat, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths (ways)."
35. Tremper Longman—"The 'ways' or 'paths' are the direction of one's life. Right now Job's path is dark and murky; he does not know where to turn. But once restored, God will light up his way, so he can move through life with ease."
36. (d) Deliverance from God, vv29-30—"When they cast you down, and you say, 'Exaltation will come!' Then He will save the humble person. He will even deliver one who is not innocent; yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands."
37. V29 speaks about a personal deliverance—He will deliver or save you from those who "cast you down."
38. This could refer to physical or spiritual enemies—anyone or thing that casts us down or depresses us.
39. V30 speaks about the deliverance of others through our efforts—even those who are sinful and not innocent.
40. Ps.51:12-13—"Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You."
41. Jas.5:19-20—"Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."
42. Now, the great irony of this last verse is this—Eliphaz is actually the one who is not innocent and will be delivered through the prayers of Job.
43. Job 42:7-8—"And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, 'My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not

- spoken of Me *what is* right, as My servant Job *has*. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me *what is* right, as My servant Job *has*."
44. Observation 1—Saints need repentance—now, keep in mind that Job didn't need repentance in the way Eliphaz suggested.
  45. Eliphaz suggested that Job was a wicked man and hypocrite, which of course was in every way untrue.
  46. But this doesn't mean that Job didn't need to repent—in fact, the book actually ends with Job's repentance.
  47. Thus, even though Eliphaz miserably applies his words to Job, it's also true that Job needed to repent.
  48. In fact, every Christian constantly needs repentance—no Christian will ever outgrow their need for it.
  49. And so, based on what Eliphaz says in vv24-30, I want to suggest three signs of a Christian who needs repentance.
  50. Sign 1—When you treasure gold over God—if one evidence of repentance is that you treasure God over gold, then one sign you need repentance is that you treasure gold over God.
  51. But you may object—I don't own any gold—well, by "gold" and "silver" is merely meant possessions.
  52. Whenever a person becomes preoccupied with the physical treasures of this world, they need to repent.
  53. Sign 2—When your prayer life is deceased—by "deceased" I mean your prayer life is dying or dead.
  54. Sign 3—When your enemies are victorious—that is, whenever we are so cast down, we fell defeated.
  55. Now, there are a number of reasons we might feel casts down, but almost always repentance is necessary.
  56. Observation 2—Sinners need repentance—while verses 21ff have application to saints, it's especially relevant for sinners.
  57. If it's true that the Christian life continues as a life of repentance, it's also true, it has its beginning with repentance.
  58. Acts 3:19—"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."
  59. O my friends, I do not know of any passage in the whole of Scripture, that provides as many motives for repentance than Job 22:21-30.
  60. Help 1—You must acquaint yourself with God through His word—that is, you must agree with what He says in His word.
  61. You must agree with what He says about you—you are a rebel who has sinned against both tables of the law, and God, who is exalted in the height of heaven, is able to judge through the deep darkness.
  62. And yet, look how gracious He's been to you for all these years—He's filled your house with good things (and for most of you He's filled your ears with the good news of a Savior).
  63. Help 2—You must return to God through Jesus Christ—you must leave your folly and sin and return home.
  64. And think of this—if you return to God through Christ, all of the promises of vv24-30 will be yours forever.
  65. In short, God will become your treasure, He will love you and hear your cries, guide you, and deliver you.