

# **Zophar Speaks**

## **Chapter Eleven**

# Zophar

- Zophar based his argument upon the false premise that righteous people do something to deserve God's favor.
- He is the most brash of all of Job's friends. He doesn't appeal to experience (Eliphaz), nor to the past traditions (Bildad), but upon what man must do to be righteous. Human merit deserves God's favor!
- "For you say, 'My doctrine is pure...' Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves... If you prepare your heart, you will stretch out your hands toward him. If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, and let not injustice dwell in your tents. Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish; you will be secure and will not fear."-**Job 11:4,6,13-15**
- Zophar reasons that Job is not righteous because righteous people do not suffer. It is God's will that only the wicked suffer. Zophar reasons that God is giving Job what he deserves.

# A Religion Of Our Own Making

- “What value does the engraved image have, that its maker has engraved it; the molten image, even the teacher of lies, that he who fashions its form trusts in it, to make mute idols?”-  
**Habakkuk 2:18**
- It is too easy to fashion a belief system after our own making and feel safe but be lost to God!.
- God in a box is not God but our own self interest god. A god who is concerned with what I want not what He wants.
- Zophar has God in a box and he has established his own righteousness based on performance.

- “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”-**Romans. 10:3**
- Ignorance to righteousness in Christ invariably produces a form of legalism which tries to earn "brownie points" with God to gain His acceptance.
- Ignorance to righteousness will take away our joy and we will attempt to take away the joy of others by imposing a distorted view of righteousness upon them.
- **Romans 10:3 describes Zophar.**

## **Job 11:1-6**

“Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said: ‘Should a multitude of words go unanswered, and a man full of talk be judged right? Should your babble silence men, and when you mock, shall no one shame you? For you say, ‘My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in God’s eyes.’ But oh, that God would speak and open his lips to you, and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom! For he is manifold in understanding. Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.”

# Zophar Is Critical

- Zophar seems to have been offend by Job's words spoken to Eliphaz and Bildad.
- Zophar responded critically and cruelly to Job without compassion but with a hostility that outdid both Eliphaz and Bildad.
- "What Job needed was a helping hand, not a slap in the face...How sad it is when people who should share ministry end up creating misery."-Wiersbe
- Adam Clarke says Zophar exudes a "sour godliness".

- Zophar criticizes five things about Job:
  1. He criticizes Job for talking too much (vs.2).
  2. He criticizes Job for what he perceives to be mocking words (vs. 3).
  3. He criticizes Job for self-righteousness (vs.4).
  4. He criticizes job for being ignorant to Who God Is (vs. 5).
  5. He criticizes Job for not knowing that He is getting exactly from God what he deserves (6).

- Zophar ... perceives no such context for Job's pain. The fact is, he would say, that Job is suffering, and suffering is inevitably the product of sin...Zophar is for principle rather than proportion; the bottom line is that Job is a [secret, vv. 4-6] sinner suffering hard at this moment for his sin.”-Clines
- “Job’s bewilderment and his outbursts are natural; in them we find his humanity, and our own. Zophar detaches the words from the man, and hears them only as *babble* and mockery.” (Andersen)



## Pure and Clean

- Zophar did not accurately represent the words of Job.
- Job did not claim to be pure and clean as if he were sinless and perfect.
- Job knew that he was a sinner and could not be considered righteous compared to God.

- What Job actually says about his sin and righteousness:
- “...my **words** have been **rash**.”-Job 6:3
- “Why do you not pardon my **transgression** and take away my **iniquity**?”-Job 7:21
- “Though I am in the right, my own **mouth** would **condemn** me; though I am blameless, he would prove me **perverse**.”-Job 9:20

- “...I **know** you [God] will not hold me **innocent**.”-Job 9:28
- Zophar either did not hear what Job was saying, or his theological world view was blinding him so he could not understand Job’s questions of God.
- Zophar was frustrated that Job was not accepting the full measure of his theological conclusion: God demands suffering because of sinful action.
- Job knew that he was not sinless but he was trying to understand why God had seemingly rejected him.

- Zophar did not know that God had claimed Job for Himself and that God had declared Job to be blameless (Job 1:1;1:8;2:3).
- Zophar is blinded by pride caused by his own theological box.
- Pride can make us think that we are some kind of spiritual giant and that we have it all together while others are “lost”.

- Pride is a troubling problem for the believer in that of all the sins that capitalize on my weaknesses pride glorifies in my victories.
- "Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion."-Romans 12:16
- Zophar's pride prevented him from exercising compassion towards Job.

# God Is Full Of Compassion

- Compassion is literally to be tender hearted towards the sufferings of someone in particular or a people group in general
- “But You, O Lord, *are* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.”-**Psalm 86:15**
- “The LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy.”-**Psalm 145:8**
- “He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.”-**Micah 7:19**

- “But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and did not destroy *them*. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath...”-**Psalm 78:38**
- “ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.”-**Matt. 9:36**
- Zophar will be held accountable for his lack of compassion and his misrepresentation of God’s character.
- God said: “...for you have not spoken of me what is right...”-**Job 42:7**

## **Job 11:7-12**

“Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven what can you do? Deeper than Sheol what can you know? Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. If he passes through and imprisons and summons the court, who can turn him back? For he knows worthless men; when he sees iniquity, will he not consider it? But a stupid man will get understanding when a wild donkey’s colt is born a man!”



## **Job's Is Foolish**

- Zophar's estimation of Job is that he is a foolish man to believe he could gain an audience with God and plead his case before Him.
- After instructing Job that righteousness is obtained by good behaviors Zophar went on to teach Job that God's wisdom is beyond man's understanding.
- In Zophar's understanding Job was wrong to question God.

- “Zophar believed that the best thing Job could do was to accept his punishment from God instead of protesting the injustice of it. In Zophar’s mind, Job’s punishment *was* just, and God was actually giving Job less than he deserved.”-Guzik
- If God is wanting to punish Job “what can Job do” for God is sovereign and does what He wants and know one can stop Him.

# **Job Is Worthless**

- Zophar says that God, “knows worthless men” and Job is a worthless man in his opinion.
- The Hebrew word used for “worthless” here carries the idea of being “worthless in conduct”.
- Bradley understands the mind set of Zophar: “Wherever there is suffering, there is sin, real and tangible sin, proportioned to that suffering. God governs the world by rewards and punishments, and those rewards and punishments are distributed here below with an unerring justice. It follows therefore that this Job, this seeming Saint, is really a man full of heinous sin.”

# Sarcasm

- Zophar says, “...a stupid man will get understanding when a wild donkey’s colt is born a man!”-**Job 11:12**
- Zophar simply called Job stupid.
- He associated Job with being a “stupid man” who will be wise as soon as wild donkeys start giving birth to human beings.
- “The sharpness of his sarcasm is demonstrated in Job 11:12 . Zophar labeled Job a witless, empty-headed man with as much chance to become wise as a wild donkey has to be born tame.”-Smick

## **Job 11:13-20**

“If you prepare your heart, you will stretch out your hands toward him. If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, and let not injustice dwell in your tents. Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish; you will be secure and will not fear. You will forget your misery; you will remember it as waters that have passed away. And your life will be brighter than the noonday; its darkness will be like the morning. And you will feel secure, because there is hope; you will look around and take your rest in security. You will lie down, and none will make you afraid; many will court your favor. But the eyes of the wicked will fail; all way of escape will be lost to them, and their hope is to breathe their last.”

# **Job Needs To Repent**

- In Zophar's mind all Job needs to do is put his sin "far away" and all will be "brighter than the noonday".
- He implores Job to "stretch out your hands toward him."-Vs.13
- " [In} Hebrew [the phrase], And spread thy palms to him: so in prayer for pardon of sin and power against sin; for this prayer-gesture, wherein God's people come for mercy, as beggars do for alms; or as they beg quarter for their lives with hands held up; or, lastly, as he that is fallen into a ditch, or deep pit, and cannot get out, lifteth up his hands and crieth out for help."-Trapp

## **Job Will Forget His Misery**

- If you just do the right things suffering will end, act the right way, make proper choices there will be no more misery and all will be good in life.
- Although Zophar was telling Job that no man can understand God and His ways, he seems to be the authority on how a man “ought to live”.
- Zophar wants Job, thus tempting him, to bargain with God for his suffering to go away.

- This is exactly what Satan accused Job of doing: Only trusting God for the protection and for the provision He was giving to Job.-(Job1:9)
- If Job would have followed the advice of Zophar he would have played into Satan's hand.
- "Job did not have a 'commercial faith' that made bargains with God. He had a confident faith that said, 'though He slay me, yet I will trust in Him' (Job 13:15). That doesn't sound like a man looking for an easy way out of difficulties."-Wiersbe



## **Job Is Warned**

- Zophar finishes his first speech by warning Job that if he refuses to repent, “all way of escape will be lost”.
- Zophar’s remedy for sin is sound in that sin requires repentance but it is off base in the case of Job.
- Every human problem cannot simply be put into neatly defined categories of guilt and pardon, reward and punishment.
- In Job’s situation, his suffering was not caused by any sin that he had committed.

- The reasons for Job's affliction were completely out of the comprehension of Job's friends however they were one-hundred percent confident that they understood his condition.
- Job's friends, "...misapplied the most precious truths and the most edifying of doctrines; turned wholesome food to poison; pressed upon their friend those half-truths, which are sometimes the worst of untruths."-Bradley