

Zopher's Second
Speech
Chapter Twenty

Job 20:1-5

“Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:
“Therefore my thoughts answer me, because of my
haste within me. I hear censure that insults me, and
out of my understanding a spirit answers me. Do
you not know this from of old, since man was placed
on earth, that the exulting of the wicked is short,
and the joy of the godless but for a moment?”

Zophar's Mind Is Blown

- Zophar's mind is blown away by the disrespect that he feels his friend is taking towards God.
- Zophar informs Job that his thoughts are moving around in his head excitedly.
- The original word for “haste” literally means “quick”.
- In other words Zophar’s mind is racing with excitement to answer Job.
- The reason Zophar’s mind is racing is because he hears “disapproving” words from Job that “insults” him.

Spirit Guide

- Zophar as he did in Chapter 11, appeals to a deep innate understanding that he alone seems to possess.
- This understanding is guided by a spirit which “answers”.
- It is not clear whether it is supernatural spirit he is referring to or if he is referencing his own spirit of understanding.
- "This phrase means both that Zophar's spirit is compelling him to respond to Job and that his words come from reasoned insight." -Hartley, John

Brief Life Of The Wicked

- Zophar continues the same line of reasoning that Eliphaz and Bildad had already claimed that the wicked die young and their joy is fleeting.
- He supports his argument from the old days from the time when, “man was placed on earth”.
- Like all bad theology Zophar is picking and choosing things from human history recorded in Scripture that support his argument.
- He was deliberately blocking out information in order to support his weak argument.

The Truth of Scripture

- If Zophar is gathering his information from Scripture then it does not support his argument that the wicked die young and the righteous die old.
- In **Genesis 6:3** God said to man: “Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.”

- “...Strive with (*ha-adam*) man”, literally: “The man Adam”
- Since Adam lived to be 930, this prophecy to him must have occurred when he was 810 years old.
- The flood did not occur until 726 years later, but was preached about by Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and finally Noah.
- That is long time for the wicked to live for God said about this time: “ The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”-**Genesis 6:5**

- This wickedness could possibly have been going on for at least 846 years.
- The truth is that people struggled in Scripture when looking at the problem of the wicked. They struggled with the premise that the wicked seemed to prosper and are free from trouble while the righteous are afflicted and die young.
- “For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.”-**Psalm 73:3-5**

- “Righteous are you, O LORD, when I complain to you; yet I would plead my case before you. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all who are treacherous thrive? You plant them, and they take root; they grow and produce fruit...”- **Jeremiah 12:1-2**
- Zophar is correct in pointing out that the wicked have only a brief moment of pleasure in this world.
- However, Zophar is lumping Job incorrectly into the category of the wicked.

Job 20:6-11

“Though his height mount up to the heavens, and his head reach to the clouds, he will perish forever like his own dung; those who have seen him will say, ‘Where is he?’ He will fly away like a dream and not be found; he will be chased away like a vision of the night. The eye that saw him will see him no more, nor will his place any more behold him. His children will seek the favor of the poor, and his hands will give back his wealth. His bones are full of his youthful vigor, but it will lie down with him in the dust.”

The Frustration Of The Wicked

- The frustration for people who do not know God is that their success in this world has no eternal value for the world to come.
- They live their lives dedicated to themselves and against God.
- “The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this: that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evildoers flourish, they are doomed to destruction **forever**; but you, O LORD, are on high forever.”-**Psalm 92:6-7**

Job 20:12-19

“Though evil is sweet in his mouth, though he hides it under his tongue, though he is loath to let it go and holds it in his mouth, yet his food is turned in his stomach; it is the venom of cobras within him. He swallows down riches and vomits them up again; God casts them out of his belly. He will suck the poison of cobras; the tongue of a viper will kill him. He will not look upon the rivers, the streams flowing with honey and curds. He will give back the fruit of his toil and will not swallow it down; from the profit of his trading he will get no enjoyment. For he has crushed and abandoned the poor; he has seized a house that he did not build.”

Sweet Today Sour Tomorrow

- Zophar says that the wicked may enjoy the sweetness of his sin today but his sin will be sour in his mouth tomorrow.
- "Sin tastes good in the mouth but creates terrible cramps and nausea in the stomach." -Merrill, Gene
- "The evil man's wicked deeds, especially his robbing the poor, are tasty food that pleases his palate but turns sour in his stomach." -Smick, Elmer
- Zophar persisted in his point that Job was this wicked man and Job's former blessings and prosperity in life were only the sweetness that has now turned sour by Job's sin.

The Poor And Needy

- Zophar explained what he thought was the sinful conduct of a wicked man, “For he has crushed and abandoned the poor” (Vs.19).
- Zophar was clearly aiming this accusation towards Job as being that wicked man.
- Job said of himself: “I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to help him... “I was a father to the needy, and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know.”-Job 29:12,16

- Zophar, who was a friend of Job, must have known this about him but was more concerned to argue his point and carelessly lumps Job in with all the wicked.
- "Never was any doctrine better explained, or worse applied, than this by Zophar, who intended by all this to prove Job a hypocrite." - Henry, Matthew

Job 20:20-29

“Because he knew no contentment in his belly, he will not let anything in which he delights escape him. There was nothing left after he had eaten; therefore his prosperity will not endure. In the fullness of his sufficiency he will be in distress; the hand of everyone in misery will come against him. To fill his belly to the full, God will send his burning anger against him and rain it upon him into his body. He will flee from an iron weapon; a bronze arrow will strike him through. It is drawn forth and comes out of his body;

the glittering point comes out of his gallbladder; terrors come upon him. Utter darkness is laid up for his treasures; a fire not fanned will devour him; what is left in his tent will be consumed. The heavens will reveal his iniquity, and the earth will rise up against him. The possessions of his house will be carried away, dragged off in the day of God's wrath. This is the wicked man's portion, the heritage decreed for him by God"

The Destiny Of The Wicked

- Zophar believed that Job was living, “in the fullness of his sufficiency” (Vs.22) which was causing the misery in which he was enduring.
- It is true that self-sufficiency is a form of pride that causes misery but again it does not apply to Job.
- All self-sufficient people are destined for judgment in the end to stand before a holy and righteous God, proclaiming themselves sufficient, only to be turned away to face the fury and anger of God.
- “This is the wicked man’s portion, the heritage decreed for him by God”.-**Job 20:29**
- This is Zophar’s solid conclusion at the end of his second and final speech.

Zophar And Possessions

- Zopher seemed to be focused upon the material possessions of Job and not any other aspect of his afflictions.
- He notes that the wicked will lose their possessions.
- Job, however, is not concerned about his possessions but his loss of fellowship with God.
- “He sees the carrying off of ‘possessions’ as a judgment. The loss of fellowship with God, in this life or after it, does not strike him as a far worse fate. Yet it is precisely this loss that fills Job’s mind with horror, and this need that arouses his most desperate longings.”-Andersen, Francis

- “Was Zophar correct in his assessment of the wicked person's fate? He was correct in saying that God judges sin, but he was wrong in claiming that God's judgment always takes place during our earthly lifetime. He was also inaccurate in saying that Job was the type of person he described.”-Constable, Thomas
- "Zophar has painted anew the end of the evil-doer in the most hideous colours, in order that Job might behold himself in this mirror, and be astonished at himself." - Delitzsch, Franz