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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Job 15.

(2015)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Job 15.

Topics.

- Should a wise man answer with windy knowledge and a belly of wind?
- What do you understand that is not clear to us? One older than your father.
- Why does your heart carry you away, and turn your spirit against God.
- God puts no trust in his holy ones, how much less an unjust man.
- The wicked man writhes in pain, the destroyer will destroy his prosperity.
- The company of the godless is barren, they give birth to evil.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the book of Job is considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece it is an honest discussion of why God allows good people to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, reveals God's sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's four friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone.

In the depths of agony he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion against the truth that He alone is wise (Job chpts. 38–41). Yet he vindicated Job's trust in him (chpt. 42), proving that genuine faith cannot be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 2000 and 500 B.C.

Helpful facts: before reading Job it is helpful to understand when Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu are speaking they are not speaking, "thus sayeth the LORD", they are simply giving their opinions on how they personally perceive things to be. Amongst their conversations there is truth and wisdom, but it must be kept in mind not everything they are saying is true or even wise, in fact God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and tells them they have spoken foolishness, but Job has spoken what is right (Job 42:7-9). The book of Job is not about doctrinal truth, but human suffering and the questions regarding God that arise during a person's calamity and pain.

Eliphaz speaks

Should a Wise Man answer with Windy Knowledge and a Belly of Wind?

Job 15:1-6 ----- ¹Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered (Job) and said: ²"Should a wise man answer with windy knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind? ³Should he argue in unprofitable talk, or in words with which he can do no good? ⁴But you are doing away with the fear of God and hindering meditation before God. ⁵For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty. ⁶Your own mouth condemns you, and not I; your own lips testify against you.

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight upon how void of mercy and compassion Eliphaz heart was. He basically attacks Job accusing him of being foolish and saying that all he has spoken has simply been wind in the air, yet Job has not said anything worthy of such harsh rebuke.

You are doing away with the fear of God: (v4) Eliphaz is a perfect example of a legalist, he has no interest in comforting Job, but instead is only interested in sprouting off his own reasoning's and opinions and to make it even worse they have no truth in them.

Your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty: (v5) this is also a false statement since God Himself said Job was His servant a blameless and upright man who feared God and turned away from evil and that there was not a man like him on the earth who holds fast his integrity even though Satan had incited Him against Job to destroy him without reason. (Job 1:1) (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3).

Your own mouth condemns you, and testifies against you: (v6) here is another perfect example of the coldness of Eliphaz heart and the harsh spirit of his mind, he is so puffed up in the importance of his own opinion that he looks down upon Job as the lessor and accuses him of speaking lies and deception.

A practical lesson: there is a good lesson to learn from Eliphaz reply to Job which is: though people speak with authority and from a superior position (at least in their own eyes) it does not mean that they are speaking what is right.

What do You Understand that is not Clear to Us? One Older than Your Father.

Job 15:7-10 ----- ⁷"Are you (Job) the first man who was born? Or were you brought forth before the hills? ⁸Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself? ⁹What do you know that we (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar) do not know? What do you understand that is not clear to us? ¹⁰Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, older than your father.

Eliphaz accuses Job of thinking he is the only one who has wisdom and reminds him that among Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar are men who are older than his own father. This statement shines a light upon the truth that though it maybe generally true that an older person has the greater wisdom it is not always so. After God had finished speaking to Job He said to Eliphaz and his two friends (Bildad and Zophar) (Job 42:9) "My anger burns against you for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has (Job 42:7).

Why does Your Heart Carry You Away, and Turn your Spirit Against God.

Job 15:11-13 ----- ¹¹Are the comforts of God too small for you, or the word that deals gently with you? ¹²Why does your heart carry you away, and why do your eyes flash, ¹³that you turn your spirit against God and bring such words out of your mouth?

It helps understand Eliphaz reasoning if it is kept in mind that we only know Job is blameless before God because the writer of the book tells us, but Eliphaz does not know that God considers Job a righteous and blameless man. Based upon the conversations of Eliphaz and his following statements: -

- Who was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off? ⁸As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same. ⁹By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed. (Job 4:7-9).
- God sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety. ¹²He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success. ¹³He catches the wise in their own craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end. ¹⁴They meet with darkness in the daytime and grope at noonday as in the night. ¹⁵But he saves the needy from the sword of their mouth and from the hand of the mighty. (Job 5:11-15).

Eliphaz rightly believed that the ruin of all sinners is directly linked to their sin they kill themselves by some form of sinful craving, vice or lust, but it seems from this foundation he goes onto to reason that the good are blessed and only the wicked suffer. His underlying mindset appears to be that Job has done some foolish and sinful thing, by which he has brought all his suffering and grief upon himself; even though there was no evidence that Job had committed any type of wickedness.

Eliphaz belief that the good are blessed and only the wicked suffer will certainly be true, at the judgment seat of Christ, but it is not true of the corrupted and fallen world we live in today. One only has to read the book of Job and many of the Psalms and look with open eyes at the condition of the world today to see that things upon earth are not as black and white as Eliphaz would like to think they are. Many who deny God live at ease and prosper while many faithful men and women suffer hardships, troubles, grief, financial oppression and sicknesses.

Why do you turn your spirit against God with words? (v13) this accusation against Job shows that Eliphaz had utterly misunderstood Job's conversation, since he had not turned away from the LORD. There is a big difference between expressing to God with words how you honestly feel in your heart, mind and emotions to turning the heart away from God. We know Job has not turned his spirit from God because he said, "Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face". (Job 13:15).

To be anything other than honest before God is foolishness, because He already knows the exact condition of our heart and what we are thinking. For Job to go before God in prayer and pretend he did not feel the way he did and speak something quite different would not only be hypocrisy and deception, but also involve speaking lies which would certainly not be blessed by God.

God puts No Trust in His Holy Ones, How much Less an Unjust Man.

Job 15:14-19 ----- ¹⁴What is man, that he can be pure? Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous?
¹⁵Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in his sight;
¹⁶how much less one who is abominable and corrupt, a man who drinks injustice like water! ¹⁷"I (Eliphaz) will show you (Job); hear me, and what I have seen I will declare
¹⁸(what wise men have told, without hiding it from their fathers, ¹⁹to whom alone the land was given, and no stranger passed among them).

Eliphaz rightly states that no human can be righteous before God and that God does not even trust in His holy ones, meaning God puts no trust in His human kings, prophets, priests and scribes etc., and those who belong to Him.

Then Eliphaz asks Job, how much less trust, will God put in those who are corrupt he seems to be implying that Job fits into the group that is corrupt and not the righteous group, because after saying this to Job he then tells him that he will tell Job what he has learnt from wise men. This he does in the following verses and though he is directing his speech to the wicked man, it is almost certain he has Job in mind.

The Wicked Man Writhes in Pain, the Destroyer will Destroy His Prosperity.

Job 15:20-30 ----- ²⁰The wicked man writhes in pain all his days, through all the years that are laid up for the ruthless. ²¹Dreadful sounds are in his ears; in prosperity the destroyer will come upon him.
²²He does not believe that he will return out of darkness, and he is marked for the sword.
²³He wanders abroad for bread, saying, 'Where is it?' He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his hand; ²⁴distress and anguish terrify him; they prevail against him, like a king ready for battle. ²⁵Because he has stretched out his hand against God and defies the Almighty, ²⁶running stubbornly against him with a thickly bossed shield; ²⁷because he has covered his face with his fat and gathered fat upon his waist ²⁸and has lived in desolate cities, in houses that none should inhabit, which were ready to become heaps of ruins; ²⁹he will not be rich, and his wealth will not endure, nor will his possessions spread over the earth; ³⁰he will not depart from darkness; the flame will dry up his shoots, and by the breath of his mouth he will depart.

Eliphaz says to Job a wicked person is one that: -

- Denies God, is lazy, eats far more than they need so that they are obese and has dreadful thoughts in their head (perhaps thoughts of self-loathing and depression).

- Do not believe they will rise out of the grave or that death could take them at any moment.
- Do not forsake wrongdoing and searches to find fulfillment, but it never comes.
- Live with the fear that a day of trouble is ready at hand, and are terrified when distress and anguish come upon them.

Though such people may prosper their years are laid up for sorrow and pain and their riches will not endure and even worse than this they by their denial of God and their own wicked actions and deeds will be destroyed forever.

The Company of the Godless is Barren, they Give Birth to Evil.

Job 15:31-35 ----- ³¹Let him (the wicked person) not trust in emptiness, deceiving himself, for emptiness will be his payment. ³²It will be paid in full before his time, and his branch will not be green. ³³He will shake off his unripe grape like the vine, and cast off his blossom like the olive tree. ³⁴For the company of the godless is barren, and fire consumes the tents of bribery. ³⁵They conceive trouble and give birth to evil, and their womb prepares deceit."

It is almost certain that Eliphaz has Job in mind when he warns those that are wicked not to trust in emptiness, meaning do not trust in money, wealth, material possessions or their own power and fame. Some in Christian circles use this verse and others like them to say that it is sinful for a Christian to be rich and wealthy, but this is reading far more into the verse than it is actually saying. It is not wrong for Christians to be rich and wealthy, there are many men and women who have been very successful in their particular line of work, they do all their business deals honestly and with integrity and treat their staff justly and because of their success they have resources that are able to support others extend the Kingdom of God and help the poor.

The focus of this verse is on those who trust in their riches to be saved, they give no place in their heart, mind and thoughts to God and instead build their life upon what they achieve, own and possess and put all their trust in their riches and wealth and use it for their own selfish indulgences. Money is not sinful or evil it can be used for good or for bad, to help the poor or to corrupt a king. It is the purpose it is used for that determines whether the money is good or bad, not the money itself.

NOTE: by Job's response in the next chapter it appears that Eliphaz is implying that Job is a wicked man. It seems when Eliphaz was teaching the character of a wicked man he was directing it at Job. It is important to keep in mind that we only know Job is blameless before God because the writer of the book tells us, but Eliphaz does not know God considers Job a righteous man.

Eliphaz in previous chapters said to Job: no innocent and righteous man ever perished God only destroys those who sow iniquity, trouble and wickedness and only frustrates the ways of the corrupt and deceitful so that their success comes to ruin and leaves them in confusion during the day and suffering worry and stress on their beds at night. He goes on to say that in contrast to this God only sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn and only saves the needy from hunger and only lifts to safety the righteous from the hand of their enemy. (Job 4:7-9) (Job 5:11-15).

These statements of Eliphaz (there are many others) show that his underlying thinking was that the good are blessed and the wicked suffer, It is upon this foundational belief that he is judging and accusing Job of being a wicked man. Though it will be true at the judgment seat of Christ that the wicked will suffer and the innocent will be blessed it is certainly not true of life on earth today since the world we live in is rampant with sin and injustices, because we are not yet living in God's kingdom, but the kingdom of man and because of this the innocent do suffer.

It could be said that we are living in the long day of death and the long day of grace until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

Because of Eliphaz mistaken belief and Jobs enormous suffering Eliphaz automatically assumes Job must be a wicked man, but God Himself said Job was His servant a blameless and upright man who feared God and turned away from evil and that there was not a man like him on the earth who holds fast his integrity even though Satan had incited Him against Job to destroy him without reason. (Job 1:1) (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3).

FOOTNOTE: always keep in mind that Eliphaz is not speaking, "Thus saith the LORD," but giving his own personal opinion concerning Job and his suffering and because it is his own viewpoint it should be remembered that even though much of what he says maybe true it does not always mean that his reasoning and suppositions are always according to the word of the LORD or right for Job's particular situation. (Job 32:6) (Job 32:10) (Job 32:17).

End.