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Job 20

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Job 20.

Topics.

- The wicked will perish forever like their-own dung. (excrement in KJV).
- The wicked will fly away like a dream and be chased away like a vision.
- To the wicked evil is sweet, but venom is under their tongue.
- The wicked will not profit from trading, their prosperity will not endure.
- Darkness is laid up against the wicked for their treasures.
- Heaven will reveal the iniquity of the wicked on the day of God's wrath.

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).

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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.

ZOPHAR SPEAKS

JOB 20:1-7

The Wicked will Perish Forever like His own Dung.

- **Job 20:1-7:** Then Zophar the Naamathite answered (Job) and said: ²"Therefore my thoughts answer me, because of my haste within me. ³I hear censure that insults me, and out of my understanding a spirit answers me. ⁴Do you not know this from of old, since man was placed on earth, ⁵that the exulting of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless but for a moment? ⁶Though his height mount up to the heavens, and his head reach to the clouds, ⁷he will perish forever like his own dung; (excrement in KJV) those who have seen him will say, 'Where is he?'"

Zophar says out of his understanding a spirit answers him, today we would say, after hearing such insults I felt a force within me wanting to reply according to my knowledge. Zophar response to Job is common to most humans, whenever a person feels insulted, they often have an impulsive or uncontrollable force within compelling them to respond to the insult. The problem with this is that rather than respond in compassion most will react in anger with the intent to hit back or hurt the person who they perceive has insulted them.

Mortal life and eternal life: it is helpful to understand when the faithful of the Old Testament make comments like, "the joy of the godless is but for a moment," the moment they have in mind is often a human lifetime, they are speaking in terms of mortal life compared to eternal life. It can often seem to those who are devoted to God that it is unfair that those who deny God are prideful and the wicked can be successful, wealthy, glorified and exulted in this world, but it must be remembered that it is the lot God has given them in this life. Ultimately, they perish forever while those who belong to God go on to eternal life and everlasting happiness. Zophar puts the end of the wicked in the following colourful language, "the wicked are like their-own dung (excrement in KJV), which is gone forever." In contrast to the inheritance of the wicked the inheritance of the faithful is:

- The holy city, New Jerusalem the dwelling place of God who will Himself dwell with the faithful as their God and wipe every tear from their eyes and death, mourning, crying and pain will be no more for all the former things will have passed away. (Rev. 21:2-4).
- The holy city will have no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God will give it light, and its lamp will be the Lamb. (Rev. 21:23-25).
- The faithful will see the Lord's face and they will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. (Rev. 22:4-5).

Truly for the wise the choice is a no brainer, the darkness of the grave forever or the eternal Holy City New Jerusalem.

JOB 20:8-10

The Wicked will Fly away Like a Dream, Chased away Like a Vision.

- **Job 20:8-10:** He (the wicked) will fly away like a dream and not be found; he will be chased away like a vision of the night. ⁹The eye that saw him will see him no more, nor will his place any more behold him. ¹⁰His children will seek the favor of the poor, and his hands will give back his wealth.

The statement: "the wicked will fly away like a dream and not be found," can be understood on the following two levels:

1. Those who deny God and spend their life gaining riches and wealth, fame or power and use oppression, deceit and dishonesty to achieve their goals and those who are simply corrupt at heart and by their actions wicked will come to ruin and when laid in the grave no one will remember them.
2. When the Great White Throne and God who is seated on it descends to earth and the dead (great and small) stand before the throne and certain books and the Book of Life are opened and the sea, death and Hades give up the dead and they are judged, according to what they had done according to what is written in the books. Then those whose names are not found written in the book of life are thrown into the lake of fire with death and Hades (Rev. 20:11-15) and eternity begins in all its glorious fullness. Obviously, no matter how much one searches not one iota of wickedness will be found from this moment onward.

For further information concerning the Great White Throne, see the title:

- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The Bible describes the wise as a person who chooses God and the foolish as one who denies God since one is destined to a future eternal world that will be so magnificent and beautiful our mortal finite mind cannot even begin to comprehend in contrast to this the other is destined to the darkness of the grave never to see light again. A man wisely said, "I have never seen a hearse transporting the coffin of a corpse with a trailer attached and full of the deceased person's material possessions." I myself live in a downstairs unit. When the man above me died, a tip truck was backed up to the balcony of his upstairs unit and all the possessions were thrown into the tray of the truck most of the items smashing into little pieces as they hit the steel floor of the tray. These broken and worthless pieces were then taken to the smelly fires of the rubbish dump.

These two simple examples clearly show the vanity of labouring and building our entire life solely on the temporary riches and things of this world and giving no thought or time to God.

NOTE: this does not mean it is 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 help others extend the Kingdom of God and help the poor. 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.

JOB 20:11-16

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To the Wicked Evil is Sweet, but Venom is under their Tongue.

- **Job 20:11-16:** His (the wicked) bones are full of his youthful vigor, but it will lie down with him in the dust. ¹²"Though evil is sweet in his mouth, though he hides it under his tongue, ¹³though he is loath to let it go and holds it in his mouth, ¹⁴yet his food is turned in his stomach; it is the venom of cobras within him. ¹⁵He swallows down riches and vomits them up again; God casts them out of his belly. ¹⁶He will suck the poison of cobras; the tongue of a viper will kill him.

The bones of the wicked are full of youthful vigour: (v11) since the young are full of vitality and think they are invincible they rarely consider the ruin their wrong-doing will bring upon them or that a day will come when they will return to dust since all think of death as being something that happens in old age, but human life is fickle and can be taken at any moment. This is one of the reasons a focus on God's love and grace in Christ often has more appeal than the message of eternal life when preaching to the young, especially since knowing the love and grace of Christ in the heart will bring great joy to a person's inner most being and not only has the power to save to eternal life, but also has the power to save those who are suffering extreme loneliness, deep depression and have not grown up in a loving home from taking their own life.

Evil is sweet in the mouth the wicked, though they hide it under their tongue: (v12) evil here refers to words of deception, lies, flattery and charm it embraces every man and woman who uses words to deceive others for their own gain and those who are highly skilled at oratory and speech making and use their words and messages to manipulate their audience to their way of thinking and to fulfil their own purposes.

The venom of cobras is within the wicked: (v14) these are most apt words to describe those who use lies, charm flattery, deception and half-truths to achieve their own plans and purposes, because they take our

minds back to the seducing serpent who deceived the first couple in the Garden of Eden by distorting, twisting and speaking half-truths to bring about his evil purposes.

God casts the wicked out of his belly: (v15) since the Bible tells us that God is omnipotent, all-powerful, omniscient, all-knowing and all-seeing and by His Spirit is in all places at all times the picture of His belly being filled with the wicked is a very fitting one as is the vivid image of Him casting the wicked out of His belly.

The wicked: it should be highlighted here that the wicked can be fitted into three different groups of people, often when the words, "the wicked," are used it is mostly murders, robbers, rapist and those who love violence that come to mind, but this is only one group of those who God considers wicked upon earth. Following are the other two groups:

1. Those who outwardly appear to be good people, but use oppression, deceit, flattery, lies and charm to achieve their dreams, success goals and their riches and wealth.
2. Those who are in God's Kingdom for their own ambition and the worldly riches, fame and importance it gives them and who twist and distort the Scriptures in such a way that they appeal to self, ego and pride for the sole purpose of gathering greater numbers into their ministry to increase their riches, importance and fame.

Though Zophar is speaking of the wicked in general it is very likely he also has Job in mind since he believe that the righteous are blessed and only the wicked suffer and based upon this principal he reasons that because Job has suffered such great calamities and is still suffering such great afflictions and grief he must have committed some great sin or have some horrific hidden secret sin dwelling within.

JOB 20:17-22

The Wicked will Not Profit from Trading, Prosperity will not Endure.

- **Job 20:17-22:** He (the wicked) will not look upon the rivers, the streams flowing with honey and curds. ¹⁸He 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. ¹⁹For he has crushed and abandoned the poor; he has seized a house that he did not build. ²⁰"Because he knew no contentment in his belly, he will not let anything in which he delights escape him. ²¹There was nothing left after he had eaten; therefore his prosperity will not endure. ²²In the fullness of his sufficiency he will be in distress; the hand of everyone in misery will come against him.

Zophar says, the wicked cannot find enjoyment in the simple delights of life, because of this they have no contentment so they deceive and take advantage of the poor (i.e., cheap labour) to make their trading and businesses profitable beyond what is considered acceptable, proper and necessary. They repossess homes and land from the less fortunate and oppress their workers to make themselves excessively rich, but all the wealth they have gained by using others will not bring them lasting enjoyment or contentment and will certainly not open the doors to eternal life for them.

JOB 20:23-26

Darkness is laid up Against the Wicked for their Treasures.

- **Job 20:23-26:** To fill his (the wicked) belly to the full God will send his burning anger against him and rain it upon him into his body. ²⁴He will flee from an iron weapon; a

bronze arrow will strike him through. ²⁵It is drawn forth and comes out of his body; the glittering point comes out of his gallbladder; terrors come upon him. ²⁶Utter darkness is laid up for his treasures; a fire not fanned will devour him; what is left in his tent will be consumed.

Zophar pictures the wicked man like a defeated victim on a battle field with his enemy thrusting his polished sword through the bloody and bleeding body of his terrified victim. What horrific graphic and negative language to use when talking to a man that needs human comfort. Zophar is certainly not trying to give Job any compassion or comfort; in fact it is more likely he is implying that Job is the wicked man that he is speaking of.

JOB 20:27-29

On the Day of God's Wrath Heaven will Reveal Iniquity of Wicked.

- **Job 20:27-29:** The heavens will reveal his (the wicked) iniquity, and the earth will rise up against him. ²⁸The possessions of his house will be carried away, dragged off in the day of God's wrath. ²⁹This is the wicked man's portion from God, the heritage decreed for him by God."

Zophar tells Job that the heritage decreed by the LORD for the godless man is that his possessions will not last. This conversation is absolutely amazing, Zophar is talking to a man who is in extreme suffering, has lost all his family and friends and is in despair and depression and instead of Zophar comforting him, he explains in horrible and graphic detail the suffering, pain and loss that will come to a wicked person. It appears that Zophar is directing his condemning speech at Job.

NOTE: Zophar mistakenly believed that only good things happen to the righteous and only bad things happen to the unrighteous, based on this principal he reasoned that Job must be a wicked and unrighteous man because no godly person (according to his reasoning) would be inflicted with such sorrow and grief. We know that this is a grossly mistaken view of Job's character because at the beginning of the story 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).

Zophar belief that only good things happen to the righteous and only bad things only happen to the unrighteous, will certainly be true at the judgment seat of God, but anyone with a little common sense only has to read the book of Job and many of the Psalms and look with open eyes at the world to know that this theory cannot be taught as an absolute while we are living in the sinful, immoral kingdom of man. In the fallen corrupted world of sin, we live in today many who deny God live at ease and prosper while there are many innocent men and women who suffer. Remember Jobs three so called friends (Zophar, Eliphaz and Bildad) don't know that God considered Job a righteous man; we only know it because the author of the book of Job has told us at the very beginning (Job 1:1) (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3). Perhaps God inspired the writers of the Bible to put the book of Job in the Cannon of the Bible so that those whose life is charmed and are at ease (like Zophar, Eliphaz and Bildad) and are full of self-righteousness cannot make those who are suffering calamities and afflictions feel that it is because they are greater sinners or condemn them because of such afflictions.

Job in the next chapter: contrasts what Zophar has said concerning the wicked. Job says that:

- They do grow mighty in power and reach old age (v7).

- Their offspring and descendants are established in their presence (v8).
- Their houses are safe from fear and no wrath of God comes upon them (v9).
- Their bulls, cows and calves do breed without fail and do not miscarry (v10).
- Their wives do give birth to sons and their children are happy (v11).
- They do sing to musical instruments and rejoice (v12).
- They do spend their days in prosperity and in peace before they go down to Sheol (v13).
- They do say to God, "Depart from us! We do not desire the knowledge of your ways" (v14).
- They say to God, "Depart from us! We do not desire the knowledge of your ways, what is the Almighty, that we should serve him and what profit do we get if we pray to him?" (Job 21:14-15).

These statements of Job's contradict what Zophar has said concerning the wicked and those who deny God saying that the wicked do grow mighty and live to an old age and when they do die, they die in peace and their children are happy, prosper and live in ease. (For more see the next chapter).

FOOTNOTE

Always keep in mind that Job is not speaking, "thus saith the LORD," but giving his own personal opinion concerning 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.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
