

**JOB**  
**LESSON 11**  
**CHAPTER 15, CONT'D**

D. VV. 11-16. Eliphaz's ideas are beginning to run out. There is little new in his continuing remonstrations. V. 11 seems to say that Eliphaz has had enough of kid-glove treatment, and what Job really needs is a good tongue lashing.

Job has already asked, "What is man" (7:17; cf. 15:14). While the answers are similar, there are important differences. While agreeing that man is fragile and dirty (14:1-4), Job thinks that people are precious to God (10:12f). Eliphaz dismisses man as detestable and corrupt.

E. VV. 17-35. Eliphaz's first sketch of the good man's happy death (5:26) has been contradicted by Job (7:9f). Bildad's picture of the camp of the wicked (8:22) is the opposite of Job's (12:6). Eliphaz rebuts with the theme that the wicked have a miserable life and a premature death.

1. vv. 17-19. Eliphaz insists that Job listen to him because he has access to wise men who have educated him. Such a claim has no persuasion when the "wise men" are not named. Perhaps the two most quoted wise men in many debates are "Some One" and "They Say."

2. vv. 20-24. The emphasis on the present world as the sphere of all reward and punishment is a constant theme of the "friends" (20-21 and 32). The wicked fear darkness because they have wronged others for which conduct distress and anguish terrify them and which will overcome them like a king ready for attack.

3. vv. 25-26. At its base the wicked person's attitude to God is one of insane hostility.

4. v. 27. Self-indulgence of the wicked.

5. v. 28. Luxury is transient; fine cities and houses become uninhabitable.

6. vv. 29-30. The wicked are a rank growth that is quickly withered.

7. vv. 31-35. He who began by calling Job a windbag closes with a pile of verbiage. With tedious repetition he repeats, "You reap what you sow." Eliphaz is back where he started in 5:3ff. He cannot admit that the frequent fact of the untrammelled prosperity of the wicked and the unrelieved misery of the good, let alone reconcile it the justice of God.

## **2. c. ii – Job 16:1-17:16.**

### **Chapter 16**

The application of Eliphaz's words to Job is obvious – if he had not been wicked he would not have had such troubles. If he does not admit it, he is a hypocrite besides. Job protests with greater indignation. He holds tenaciously to two facts: 1) He is guilty of no grave fault, and 2) God is entitled to do what he pleases. It is painful to Job that God is now acting like an enemy. Eliphaz's trite words do not touch on this fact.

I. VV. 1-5 Job hurls Eliphaz's taunt back at him (see 15:2-6). He and his companions are all sorry comforters who increase trouble. It is easy to talk, but how would they feel if he were in their place and talked like that. If the roles were reversed he could do much better than they have done in the role of comforter. Rather than helping Job, they were more interested in defending themselves as counselors. They showed no mercy (Rom. 12:15).

II. VV. 6-17. It is God who is hostile to Job, and not Job to God.

A. v. 6. Job finds no relief in either speech or silence.

B. vv. 7-8. Job is assailed by both God and man. Job is emaciated and shriveled.

C. vv. 9-14. God is like a ferocious beast (vv. 9-10), a traitor (v. 11), a wrestler (v. 12), an archer (12-13), a swordsman (vv. 13-14).

i. v. 11. Job explicitly names God as an assailant. Note the plural in v. 10 that includes his comforters. There is no indication that Job was physically assaulted. The blows are the words of friends.

ii vv. 12-13. What do we do with Job's sacrilege? Have we felt that way but dared not to put it in words. Job's faith is so mighty it can withstand great storms. Real faith is a fit vessel for containing the entire gamut of human passions. God is capable of passionate jealousy, anger, and the destruction of that which is evil, including man.

D. vv. 15-17. Job wears the token of grief, not penitence. He defiles himself by sitting in the dust with no lower garment but a rough bag (sackcloth). His piteous appearance must surely move God to compassion, but he offers no sacrifice. He insists that he has done no violence (physical or moral). His prayers are pure.

III. VV. 16:18—17:9 Far from having a guilty, tormented conscience (15:17-26), Job is confident of acquittal.

A. 16:18-22. Job supports his vindication by an appeal to earth and sky, watchers of actions, and guardians of covenants as witnesses to his murder.

i. vv. 19-21. Job is confident that he has a heavenly witness. He is hoping for an advocate to help him settle his dispute, to plead with God (19:25). God hears the cry of shed blood; God is said to be on high; Job constantly appeals to God. God is too holy to have anything to do with man. There must be an advocate who is on good terms with both parties.

ii. v. 22. Satisfactory answers may be obtained only when this life is over and he has more direct dealings with God.

## **Chapter 17**

iii. 17:1-4. Job senses that death is eminent. He describes his friends as mockers and turns them over to God. False accusers received the same penalty that they would have imposed on another (Deut. 19:15-21). Job is prepared for that risk and appeals to God for a favorable verdict in their dispute (v. 3). God has already deprived their minds of understanding (4a, 10b). Job does not spare; his blow struck home (18:3).

iv. v. 5. Loss of sight by children is a fitting punishment for false eyewitness testimony to defraud friend's children of their inheritance.

v. vv. 6-7. Job's extreme illness, far from evoking pity, evokes contempt.

vi. vv. 8. Decent people would be appalled at the way his friends were treating him. Others would think they were assisting God by mistreating Job.

v. 9. Job can only cling to his innocence. He holds to the truth like a shipwrecked sailor holds on to a life preserver.

B. vv. 10-16. The meaning of death for Job is thus quite different from Eliphaz's interpretation (15:27-35).

i. vv. 11-12. Job is on the verge of death. He moves from light (life) to darkness (death).

ii. vv. 13-16. If Sheol is his home, where then is his hope? His friends assume that he is engaging in wishful thinking (see, John 14).