Introduction:
This chapter begins the third, and final, round of discourse between Job and his three friends; and it marks Eliphaz’s third, and final, speech. This round of discourse ends with Job’s last words to his friends in chapter 31; but his final response is to the Lord in chapter 42.

In chapter 32 we find that there is a fourth friend who has been “waiting in the wings”. His name is Elihu and he is the youngest of the group (Job 32:4-7) and he is extremely angry with both his friends and Job (Job 32:1-3). Of Job’s friends, Elihu has the “last word” and he has saved up a lot of good things to say and his discourse covers chapters 32 through 37.

However, after Elihu’s six chapters of discourse, the Lord finally breaks His silence and the Creator of the Universe has the “final word”!

In this chapter Eliphaz attempts to put the “final nail in Job’s coffin” based on his presumption that Job must be guilty of some terrible iniquity because of the great calamity that has fallen upon him. This belief is epitomized by Eliphaz when he says,

“Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright destroyed? According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble harvest it. By the breath of God they perish and by the blast of His anger they come to an end.”—Job 4:7-9

In this chapter it becomes obvious that everything Job has said about his friends is true:

• They are “worthless physicians” (Job 13:4)
• They are “miserable comforters” (Job 16:2)

Eliphaz’s response shows that everything Job has been saying has proverbially “gone right over the top” of his friend’s head.

Not only that, Eliphaz reveals his pretense and shows himself to be a fraud by falsely accusing Job of specific [and serious] acts of wickedness that he has supposedly committed against his fellow-man! In this sense Job is shown as a type of Jesus Christ who not only suffered not for Himself but was also likewise falsely charged† (e.g., Matt. 26:59-68). Eliphaz becomes guilty of giving a “false witness” (see Prov. 25:18).

vv. 1-5 ➤ Eliphaz Accuses Job of “Great Wickedness” & “Iniquity without End”

[1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: 2 “Can a man be profitable to God though he who is wise may be profitable to himself? 3 Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous? Or is it gain to Him that you make your ways blameless? 4 Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you and enters into judgment with you? 5 Is not your wickedness great and your iniquity without end?”]

Eliphaz now responds to Job for the third time and it’s obvious Job’s words have “gone over his head”; not even acknowledging what Job has just said. He abruptly begins by asking Job 5 questions in rapid succession—one can imagine that Job is “left breathless” even before he can think about his answers.

† However, Jesus Christ went a giant step further that in being reviled and falsely accused did not respond in kind. See 1 Pet. 2:21-25.
Eliphaz’s questions were phrased in such a way that indicates he is not impressed or swayed by Job’s pleas or arguments. He [and the other “friends” for that matter] remains convinced that Job must be guilty2 of “great wickedness” and “iniquity without end”.

Eliphaz may be responding to what Job said in Job 9:14-24, 29-31 in defending his cause to be just and his complaint to be sincere. [Elihu also speaks to a related issue in Job 35:3 where he condemns an attitude that questions the benefit or profit of trusting in God.]

[(1) Can a man be profitable to God though he who is wise may be profitable to himself?]

The word used for “profitable” here refers to being of service to or ministered to. Perhaps Eliphaz asks this question in response to Job’s previous question {Job 21:4}; “is my complaint against God or man?”

The implication being that it doesn’t matter that your complaint is against God because man’s righteousness is of no profit, no benefit in it for God [even though his own prudence may benefit the man himself]. Indeed, the Bible tells us that man’s [i.e., our own] “righteousness” is as “filthy rags” according to God’s appraisal {Isa. 64:6}.

[(2)&(3) Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous? Or is it gain to Him that you make your ways blameless?] Eliphaz’ position is that God gains nothing if Job were righteous and blameless [which is false, God would get the glory], therefore why do you continue to maintain that you are such in your defense? To him it was academic.

Additionally, since God is personally unaffected whether-or-not a person is prosperous and wealthy, or poor and wretched, He doesn’t gain anything out of seeing a person suffer. You are only fooling yourself if you think your calamity is unjust because you are wise in your own eyes. In other words, all your protesting about your condition is in vain.

This was how Eliphaz was rationalizing Job’s calamity and he simply couldn’t accept the idea that God would deviate from his own sense of justice—i.e., only the “wicked” suffer and are miserable, while the “righteous” prosper and are blessed.

Application: The truth is that we all stand guilty of sin before God: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” {Rom. 3:23}. This is why we need our Creator to be our Mediator; only God can save us! “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” {Rom. 6:23}.

[(4) Is it because of your fear of Him that He corrects you and enters into judgment with you?] Eliphaz then mockingly asks Job if God is punishing him because he “feared Him” [i.e., was righteous] as he had been maintaining. In other words; Job, ask yourself: “Why would God judge someone in such a severe way if they were not guilty of great wickedness”. Eliphaz is not only presuming upon Job’s character—but also upon God’s character!

2 Note that there is a subtle difference between “sin” and “iniquity”, although they are related. “Sin” literally refers to “missing the mark” of righteousness established by God’s holy and moral standards. “Iniquity” refers to the reason we miss the mark of righteousness and what happens instead—we hit the mark of wickedness. Sin and iniquity can be thought of as two sides of the same coin. “Sin” is the innate human inability to live righteously and “iniquity” is the natural human propensity to live wickedly—a double whammy!

2 Literally, “menstrual cloths”.
This question was mockingly intended to show Job that he had no justification for complaining against God—he had deserved everything he’s gotten. Therefore…………..

[(5) Is not your wickedness great and your iniquity without end?] Here it is—Job’s indictment, manifested in all of it’s presumptive glory. Eliphaz finally verbalizes what they were thinking all along.

In a court of law, this question would be considered prejudiced and without proper foundation, based on a hearsay and not evidence. The question is based on a misconception and a lie!

Application: This teaches us a valuable lesson: We should reserve judgment until we know all the facts and we do that by asking relevant questions with a spirit of humility and restoration.

vv. 6-11 Eliphaz Enumerates Job’s Supposed Wickedness

[6 “For you have taken pledges from your brother for no reason and stripped the naked of their clothing. 7 You have not given the weary water to drink and you have withheld bread from the hungry. 8 But the mighty man possessed the land and the honorable man dwelt in it. 9 You have sent widows away empty and the strength of the fatherless was crushed. 10 Therefore snares are all around you and sudden fear troubles you, 11 Or darkness so that you cannot see; and an abundance of water covers you.”]

If you were wondering if Job’s friends had specific charges of Job’s wickedness [to support their claim that his extreme suffering is a result of divine retribution] wonder no more.

To support the validity of his indictment, Eliphaz alleges that Job is guilty of specific acts of wickedness [immorality], all of which are especially repugnant to God. Eliphaz presents three allegations supposed examples in which he thinks Job has committed iniquity.

Without a shred of evidence to back it up, Eliphaz testifies that¹:

(I) Job had unlawfully taken pledges [of outer clothing] from his own countrymen/kindred for no legitimate reason and thereby stripped them of their covering; i.e., their outer protection from environmental elements.

According to the Law, if a debtor gave his outer garment [coat/jacket] to a creditor as a pledge of payment or security, but the creditor failed to return the garment by nightfall so that the debtor could be protected from environmental elements, it would be accounted to the creditor as sin. {see Ex. 22:26-27; Deut. 24:10-13}.

Job specifically answers this false charge in Job 31:19-22.

(II) Job had not given the weary water to drink and he has withheld food from the hungry even though he was in a position to do so. He had been prosperous and had a large household and could obviously afford to give water and food to hungry travelers.

A little more than 500 years later, the Israelites were told to show kindness and hospitality to strangers and travelers [i.e., countrymen] out of gratitude to God as they themselves, as strangers and travelers, had been graciously treated by God {Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:33-34; 25:35-36; Deut. 10:18-19}. See what Jesus said; Matt. 10:42.

¹ Note that each of these accusations describe immoral acts, which were condemned as sin and codified as such in the Law given to Moses more than 500 years after the events that take place with Job.
Job also specifically answers this false allegation in Job 31:16, 22.

(III) Job had sent widows away *empty* and he has crushed the *strength* of orphans; i.e., those who are mourning.

In the Law, abuse of widows and orphans [as those in mourning] was condemned as an exceptionally malicious sin {Ex. 22:22; Deut. 27:19; Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Zech. 7:10}.

Again Job later responds to this specific accusation {Job 31:16,21-22}.

[But the mighty man possessed the land and the honorable man dwelt in it.] In other words, Eliphaz is saying that as a mighty [lit. “the arm”; as outstretched] man Job was firmly established [he had earthly possessions]; he not only had the power and resources to get his own “overcoat” but provide for others as well and, as an “honorable” man [lit. “lifted face”], he should have done so.

Certainly Eliphaz’ scheme of confronting Job was deceptive when he lied in order to back up his flawed theology about the reason for Job's predicament.

But now let’s focus our attention on Eliphaz: Although Eliphaz’ did have two or more witnesses [Bildad and Zophar], not only was Eliphaz’ method and motivation dishonest, all three of these of his accusations were *false* and therefore Eliphaz [and his friends] was guilty of “bearing false witness”. This in itself was immoral and a serious crime.

More than 500 years later, when the Law is given to Moses {see also Lev. 19:11}, the LORD makes it clear that:

“One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established”.—Deut. 19:15-16

And in this case there were three friends to so testify.

However, the Law goes on to say:

“If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days. And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother: so you shall put away the evil from among you. And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”—Deut. 19:16-21

And this moral standard is codified in the Ten Commandments:

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”—Deut. 5:20; 20:4

**Application:** It is ironic to note that Eliphaz himself is actually committing a grave iniquity by bearing false witness against his “neighbor”. He is the one acting “wickedly” and it does not go unnoticed because in the end, we see that the Lord rebukes him for it {ref. Job 42:7-8}.

Such is the danger of pride in desperately trying to prove one’s prejudiced viewpoint. We pervert God’s word to suit our bias and we are blind to its application to ourselves. It is something we must all constantly guard against. See for example Matt. 7:3-5.

It is quite obvious from the evidence of scripture that these charges are completely *ludicrous* and *false*—they are *fabricated speculations* and based on the presumed guilt of Job.
But Job already knew this; “Look, I know your thoughts and the schemes with which you would wrong me.” (Job 21:27).

Job addresses the truth later (Job 29:7-17), and it’s surprising that Eliphaz and the others would not have known about Job’s true character. But then, prejudice and malice [and perhaps some envy] causes a person not to see clearly or think rationally.

It is truly amazing that his “friends” would stoop to such tactics rather than truly bringing comfort to Job. But because of their prior commitment to their personal divine retribution “theology”; i.e., that great wickedness is severely and completely punished by God, they were unrelenting in their presumed guilt of Job.

Note that this was also so very true of the Pharisees and religious rulers in their relentless pursuit to have Jesus “cut-off”. See for example Matt. 23:1-31; John 11:47-53; 18:14.

Because of Job’s alleged acts of iniquity, Eliphaz proclaims, “Therefore snares are all around you and sudden fear troubles you or darkness so that you cannot see; and an abundance of water covers you”. The “snare” here refers to a spring loaded metal trap intended to catch wild animals, usually birds. And note that he says it is not just one, but many snares.

Eliphaz is saying that Job has been caught like a bird in traps of his own doing. In the “blink of the eye” you have been sent into terrifying alarm and panic so that your whole body trembles from the inside out (e.g., Job 4:5; 18:11; 20:25; 21:6; 23:15-16).  

[Or darkness so that you cannot see…..] And so great is your suffering Job that you are confused and frustrated, you’re in the dark so you cannot understand the devastating catastrophes which have come upon you (Job 15:30; 18:18; 20:26).

[…..and an abundance of water covers you] He goes on to say that so great and overwhelming is your anguish that it has overtaken you like a flood, a tsunami of anxiety, distress and panic making it difficult to breathe. The irony is that Job acknowledges this does happens to the wicked (ref. Job 27:20).

Job was indeed experiencing all of these things, but not, as Eliphaz and the other friends had presumed, as consequences of great iniquity.

**Application:** Besides proving to be “false witnesses”, Job’s friends were also seriously guilty of misjudgment, of which Jesus also had this to say:

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.—Matt. 7:1-5
vv. 12-14  **Eliphaz Mocks Job with Bit ing Sarcasm**

[12 “Is not God in the height of heaven? And see the highest stars, how lofty they are! 13 And you say, ‘What does God know? Can He judge through the deep darkness? 14 Thick clouds cover Him, so that He cannot see and He walks above the circle of heaven’.”]

Eliphaz now attacks what he considers [falsely] to be Job’s delusional belief regarding the limitations of God. He reminds Job of the character of God, specifically God’s knowledge and awareness of all things [theologically known as, God’s Omniscience].

However, his approach adds insult to injury—his intent is to mock Job’s claim of innocence with biting sarcasm about his apparent ignorance of God’s sovereignty.

[Is not God in the height of heaven?] Questioning Job, Eliphaz asks him if he knows that God is at the height of heaven; that is, beyond the highest stars; that is, beyond the Universe. What a patronizing question to ask Job, as if he isn’t aware of this.

[And you say, ‘What does God know?’…..] Because Job continues to deny he is guilty of great iniquity [correctly so] Eliphaz states that Job must believe that God doesn’t know everything—certainly not about his great iniquity.

The next question, combined with the follow-on sarcastic statements, insinuates that Job doesn’t think that God can discern through “deep darkness”. Therefore, Job must believe that God walks so high above the arch of the celestial sky [horizon-to-horizon] He cannot see the full measure of his wickedness through thick, dark storm clouds that get in the way.

In his epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, John Milton [1608—1674] puts a similar sentiment into the mouth of Eve as she verbalizes her thoughts after she had eaten of the forbidden fruit:

> And I, perhaps, am secret: Heaven is high,  
> High and remote from thence to see distinct,  
> Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps,  
> May have diverted from continual watch,  
> Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies about him."5

This is actually the position held by most pagan religions, which typically teach that gods are aloof from the affairs man and do not normally condescend to directly deal with mortals, but have other beings, intermediaries, to help them govern and keep watch over things.6

Eliphaz’ position is; Job we know you must be guilty of some terrible wickedness because of the utter devastation you have suffered. But you keep denying it and therefore you’re acting as if God can’t see you—even though He can see you!

He portrays Job as someone who thinks of God as having limited knowledge about what is going on. His point is that although you thought you were getting away with your iniquity, God did see you and now you are being judged according to your wickedness and suffering the consequences of your wickedness.

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5 *Paradise Lost*, Book IX, vv.811-815.
6 This belief forms the foundation of Gnostic philosophy, which became a major issue in the perversion of the Gospel during the early days of Christianity and remains so to modern times.
7 Loss of his 7 sons and 3 daughters; loss of his household servants and wealth, his livestock at a current value of $33.5 million in today’s dollars; loss of his health, afflicted with painful skin disease and open sores; and last, but not least, loss of his status and reputation
But the Psalmist, King David, about 1000 years later, would write about the true character of God’s knowledge:

“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall fall on me’, even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.”—Psalms 139:7-12

vv. 15-20 ➢ **Eliphaz Associates the Wickedness of Job with Pre-Flood Society**

[15 “Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have trod, 16 who were cut down before their time, whose foundations were swept away by a flood? 17 They said to God, 'Depart from us! What can the Almighty do to them?' 18 Yet He filled their houses with good things; but the counsel of the wicked is far from me. The righteous see it and are glad and the innocent laugh at them: 20 ‘Surely our adversaries are cut down and the fire consumes their remnant’.”]

Eliphaz now mentions something very interesting and, in doing so, he lends credence to and testifies of the GREAT FLOOD during Noah’s time. Note that Job and his friends probably lived only about 400 years after the Flood! That’s like discussing something that historically happened as recently as in the 17th century.

Eliphaz identifies an “old way” to which men adhered to, a lifestyle according to which they lived. The Hebrew used here refers to an ancient path, in fact, the word rendered “old” here [lit. “vanishing point”] is most often translated “forever” or “eternal” [e.g., Gen. 21:33, Ps. 29:10; Mic. 5:2 referring to God]. In other words, these men not only lived a long time ago, they lived is a world that is now forever gone and is foreign to us.

He cynically asks Job if he’s stubbornly going to keep [lit. “hedge about”], that is “hunker down”, “hem himself in”, with his wickedness in the same manner that the people who habitually committed iniquity did. The wickedness of these people is briefly, but graphically, described for us:

“All they knew how to do was to eat, think, sleep and live immorally. Despite God’s patience and mercy, these people were so evil they had to be destroyed before their time [i.e., they died young] and their very foundations [i.e., the things they trusted in] were swept away by a flood [i.e., an ocean of water] — a direct reference to the GREAT FLOOD of Noah’s time.

In the last chapter {v.3} Job indicated that after he was through speaking that he expected his friends would go right on mocking him.

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9 2000—1900 B.C.
10 But we are also told that; “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord…..This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God…..So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood” {Gen. 6:8-10; 7:7}. 
Well, Eliphaz is now going to oblige him—big time! In biting sarcasm, phrased for maximum effect, Eliphaz now mocks Job by using own words against him.

Eliphaz asks Job if he’s going to steadfastly continue going down the old [i.e., “ancient”] “road” of iniquity those men who died in the Flood went! He’s putting Job in the same category as the exceedingly wicked people that God was compelled to destroy. Wow—talk about hitting someone between the eyes with a 2x4 or dropping a ton of bricks on them.

Note that Eliphaz quotes Job’s description of an immoral person’s attitude11 {Job 21:14-15} and applies it to those who were destroyed in the Great Flood; “Depart from us! What can the Almighty do to them?” [Some translations render the Hebrew as “do to us” or “do for them.”] That is, (a) they refused to acknowledge their dependence on God and (b) they refused to admit the that God had the authority and power to punish them—even to slay them.

But at the same time Eliphaz is also implying that these words, spoken by Job himself, describes him as well!!

**Application:** The pre-Flood civilization [if you can call it that] wanted God to leave them alone and taunted Him by rhetorically asking; what can Almighty God actually do to them [or for them]? That question implies that they believed He was powerless to do anything about their wickedness and could care less about their welfare. How deadly wrong they were!

Sadly, there are millions of people living today who have the same attitude. Such a rebellious attitude will still exist to the end of the age, during the 3½ year GREAT TRIBULATION period12, even after the Lord pours out His wrath in judgment upon mankind for their great wickedness.

After the 6th "TRUMPET JUDGMENT":

“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”—Rev 9:20-21

After the 4th & 5th “BOWL OF WRATH”:

“Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.”—Rev 16:8-11

This is perhaps one of the most amazing things about the GREAT TRIBULATION—the stubborn refusal of people to repent from their sin and iniquity even after the Lord displays His wrath in power and glory—even in the face of certain doom!

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11 Job 21:14-15: “Yet they say to God, ‘Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?’”

12 See Isa. 13:9-13; Jer. 30:4-7; Dan. 9:27; Zeph. 1:14-18; Matt. 24:21; Rev. 6-19.
Furthermore, Job had just described the wicked as being blessed with many “good things”, including long life and prosperity \{Job 21:7-13\} and went on to protest that “the counsel of the wicked is far from me” \{Job 21:16\}. Job declared that he was not an advocate for the wicked nor did he consider himself wicked.

But again using Job’s words against him, Eliphaz is saying to Job; “You say that God has filled their houses with good things [just as He had done for you] but at the same time you say that the counsel of the wicked is far from me.” How can that be when we all know the calamity that has fallen on you proves your guilt: you have not renounced wickedness—you are wicked!

[The righteous see it and are glad.....] Since Eliphaz [as well as his other two friends] believed that Job is suffering because God is judging him for some great iniquity he has committed, he reminds him that the righteous \textit{rejoice} at their punishment.

[.....and the innocent laugh at them] The Hebrew word rendered “laugh” here is translated “	extit{mock on}” in Job 21:3. It is also sometimes translated “laughed to scorn” or “deride” and describes making fun of someone by mocking them.

Much earlier \{Job 4:7\} Eliphaz had declared, “\textit{Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright ever cut off?}”

From Eliphaz’ perspective, Job is \textit{perishing} and therefore he cannot be \textit{innocent}. Consequently he can expect those who are innocent to laugh at them—just as his three friends were doing! In veiled terms, Eliphaz is justifying his friend’s attitude and response towards him.

The word rendered “adversaries” here literally means “one rising up” against someone. Eliphaz may be putting words in the mouths of those rejoicing over the judgment of the wicked. They would then be saying that those who oppressed us [literally those who rose up against us] are destroyed and fire has consumed [literally, eaten] what was left of them.

Although this sentiment seems harsh in our politically correct world, it is Biblical and ultimately all of Heaven will rejoice in such a manner when the world system, controlled by Satan, is destroyed by Christ Jesus at His \textit{SECOND COMING}:

\textit{“Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”—Rev. 18:20}

\textit{“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.’ Again they said, ‘Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Alleluia!’ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’”—Rev. 19:1-5}

Instead of blasting away at Job and quoting him with mocking sarcasm, Eliphaz should have been thinking; “Wait a minute, Job knows these things and agrees with them—that doesn’t sound like the mindset of a wicked person”. Eliphaz is speaking right past Job; he is of no help, he is of no comfort.

\textsuperscript{13} Symbolically referred to in the feminine as “Babylon, the Great” \{ref. Rev. 17:5; 18:2\}. “She” will ultimately be judged by the Lord and burned up by fire \{see Rev. 18:8\}. 

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Job Chapter 22

Klaus G. Schiessel

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vv. 21-26 ➢ Eliphaz’ “Gospel Invitation” & Its Benefits

[21 “Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you. 22 Receive, please, instruction from His mouth and lay up His words in your heart. 23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; you will remove iniquity far from your tents. 24 Then you will lay your gold in the dust and the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks. 25 Yes, the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver; 26 for then you will have your delight in the Almighty and lift up your face to God.”]

J. Vernon McGee calls vv.21-26 a “gospel invitation” because it contains the good news of peace and reconciliation with God through faith and a personal relationship with Him.

Eliphaz tells Job to acquaint himself with God; that is, repent and turn back to God. And good will come to you, i.e., God will forgive and restore you to wealth and health. Note what Isaiah so eloquently says some 1200 years after Job:

“Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord and He will have mercy on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”—Isa. 55:6-7

For those who acquaint or familiarize themselves with God, there is peace. This is something the unsaved world is looking for in all the wrong places; amusement, entertainment, friends, status, power, wealth, drugs, alcohol, sex, etc., etc.

Peace implies “rest”. Once a person has come to terms with their sin, repented and confessed before God, acknowledging Him as the only Savior, they are reconciled with the Creator and He becomes their LORD. The great benefit is peace and rest in the only One that matters!

Job is not at peace because he has lost contact with God—he is second-guessing the intent of the Almighty and he is not making any progress. Although he is struggling to understand his circumstances with his limited understanding and knowledge, he has no iniquity to repent of.

**Application:** True peace can only come when one “acquaints” themselves with God and makes “peace” with Him through the Savior, Messiah Jesus:

“...And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”—John 17:3-4

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”—Eph. 2:14-17

This was the message of the angels the night that Jesus Christ was born:

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”—Luke 2:13-14

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14 For example, see Rom. 5:8-11; 2 Cor. 5:17-21.
15 The word rendered “acquaint” is elsewhere translated “can be profitable” or “may be profitable” {Job 22:2; 34:9; 35:3} and means to become so familiarized with something that it becomes an advantage. It is even rendered “treasurer” in Isa. 22:15 where the emphasis is on familiarization of material profit. Other examples of the familiar/advantage connection include Ps. 83:18; Matt. 6:31-33; Jn. 17:3; 1 Jn. 5:13.
Application: Peace is one of the results of salvation:

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”—Rom. 5:1-3

“For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”—Col. 1:19-20

See also Isa. 9:6-7; Ezek. 34:24-25; Micah 5:5; Zech. 6:13; Luke 1:79; John 16:33.

Eliphaz appears to be genuinely concerned for Job’s reconciliation with God. He graciously pleads for Job to “please receive instruction from God’s mouth and lay up His words in your heart”.

The word rendered “instruction” is “torah”; that is, God’s precepts and statutes. In other words take heed to the revealed will of God, which for Job would have included all the instructions from God’s mouth starting with Adam to Abraham [the time period in which Job lived].

“Lay up His words in your heart” means to believe with all your heart and act accordingly.

Still convinced that Job needs to repent from some grievous sin, Eliphaz now pleads with Job to “return to the Almighty” [God], basically repent, so that he can reconcile with God and restored [including being healed from his skin disease]. J. Vernon McGee refers to this as “a Gospel plea”.

If you were to do that you will be built up [i.e., restored, repaired, edified] and your iniquity [moral evil] will be removed far away from you dwelling places. This sounds amazingly close to the David’s praise:

“As far as the east [lit. “sunrise’] is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”—Psalms 103:12

As far as the eastern horizon is from the west, so he removes the guilt of our rebellious actions from us. That is what only God can do and He did it through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Earlier, Bildad [the 2nd oldest of Job’s friends] said basically the same thing to Job:

“If you would earnestly seek God and make your supplication to the Almighty, if you were pure and upright, surely now He would awake for you and prosper your rightful dwelling place. Though your beginning was small, yet your latter end would increase abundantly.”—Job 8:5-7

And Zophar [the 3rd oldest of Job’s friends] as well:

“If you would prepare your heart and stretch out your hands toward Him; if iniquity were in your hand, and you put it far away and would not let wickedness dwell in your tents; then surely you could lift up your face without spot; yes, you could be steadfast, and not fear; because you would forget your misery and remember it as waters that have passed away and your life would be brighter than noonday. Though you were dark, you would be like the morning. And you would be secure, because there is hope; yes, you would dig around you, and take your rest in safety. You would also lie down, and no one would make you afraid; yes, many would court your favor.”—Job 11:13-19
Because you treasure your relationship with God above all else, you will no longer treasure
gold, including the gold produced at Ophir\textsuperscript{16}, which was especially fine and pure. Instead,
you will actually lay your ordinary gold in the dust and the fine gold among the river rocks.

Having a relationship with the \textit{Almighty}\textsuperscript{17}, the Creator and Savior of the world, will be your
gold and precious silver. You will worship and praise Him alone.

The Psalmist put it this way:

\begin{quote}
“Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself
also in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”—\textbf{Ps. 37:3-4}
\end{quote}

Jesus phrased it this way:

\begin{quote}
“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves
break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust
destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your
heart will be also.”—\textbf{Matt. 6:19-21}
\end{quote}

Ultimately, this means having a personal relationship, by faith, with the One who forgives us
and redeems us—Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord \cite{Jn. 3:16 and Rom. 10:9-13}.

Eliphaz enumerates the benefits of having made “peace” with God through faith and
repentance, by Him your “treasure”:

Eliphaz says if you acquaint yourself with God, i.e., repent and confess your sin, then the
following benefits will be yours:

\begin{itemize}
  \item You will have peace
  \item Good will come to you
  \item You will be edified \textit{[built up]}
  \item You will be forgiven
  \item \textit{[God]} Almighty will be your “treasure”
  \item Your delight will be in \textit{[God]} Almighty
  \item You will have fellowship with God, Creator of Heaven and Earth
\end{itemize}

But as wonderful and beautifully verbalized as all these pleas are, Job didn’t need any such a
pleas since he has already proclaimed, “\textit{For I know that my Redeemer lives}” \cite{Job 19:23}.

Thus, although Eliphaz gives a wonderful “\textit{gospel invitation}”, it doesn’t apply to Job and
becomes just another empty expression of piety that is of no use to Job.

\textsuperscript{16} Famous gold-producing region prominent in the OT believed to have been located in SW Arabia in
what is now known as Yemen. These gold mines are known to have still existed in the ninth century
B.C.

\textsuperscript{17} Note that all reasons to worship the Almighty God fall into one of two categories; He is \textit{Creator} \cite{Rev. 4:11} and He is \textit{Savior} \cite{Rev. 5:9-10}. These two stand as witnesses to the glory of God.
vv. 27-30 ➢ **Eliphaz Enumerates the Benefits of Repentance**

[27 “You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you and you will pay your vows. 28 You will also declare a thing and it will be established for you; so light will shine on your ways. 29 When they cast you down and you say, ‘Exaltation will come!’ Then He will save the humble person. 30 He will even deliver one who is not innocent; yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands.”]

Eliphaz continues his enumeration with additional benefits of *reconciliation* with God.

**FIRST**, when you pray to God He will hear you as you are faithful to fulfill your *promises to Him*. Note:

“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”—2 Chron. 7:14

**SECOND**, you will declare a thing and they will be "erected"; that is, God will establish your words. Note:

“Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”—Matt. 18:18

**THIRD**, light will shine on all aspects of your life; that is, you will have *discernment* and *wisdom* in making decisions. Note:

“For You will light my lamp; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.”—Ps. 18:25

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”—Ps. 119:103

“The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”—Ps. 119:130

[When they cast you down and you say, ‘Exaltation will come!’] An attitude of *humility* can faithfully proclaim “*Exaltation will come!*” even after everything seems lost. The order is: humility first; exaltation second. This was the pattern that Jesus Christ shows us and one we should have as well {see Phil. 2:1-7}.

[Then He will save the humble person] Literally, the one who has “lowness of eyes”.

God does save/rescue/ransom/sets free the *humble* person. Who is the humble person? The one who puts their pride aside and agrees with God about one’s sin and by faith humbly repents and turns to God. Note:

“Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble.”—Prov. 3:34

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”—James 4:10

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”—1 Pet. 5:6-7

[He will even deliver one who is not innocent………] This is a powerful statement and another aspect of the “*gospel invitation*”! This is perhaps the most profound thing that Eliphaz says to Job and it demonstrates a rare, but genuine, concern for Job. How does God do this? The New Testament elaborates:

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18 See also 2 Chron. 6:27, 30, 39; 30:9; Joel 2:12-13.
“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”
—Rom. 3:23-26

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”—Rom. 5:8-9

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
—Rom. 6:23

[……yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands] “Delivered” [Lit.; a “smooth escape”]. In other words, “Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” [see Joel 2:32; Rom. 10:13].

The “purity of your hands” refers to the “purity” that is reckoned by God, that which comes by being cleansed of sin. That happens through personal acceptance and belief in the substitutionary blood sacrifice of Jesus on the cross; when He took upon Himself the sins of the world by shedding His blood.19

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”—1 Pet. 1:18-21

God will deliver one who is not innocent [as we think you are Job] because if you acquaint yourself with God, that is; humble yourself, repent, make your prayer to Him, He will accept the repentance of your heart broken over sin and forgive you. Note that the Bible teaches the spiritual truth behind Eliphaz’ statement:

“The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”
—Ps. 34:18

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.”—Ps. 51:17

For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”—Isa. 57:15

“Come now, and let us reason together”, says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”—Isa. 1:18

“For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist”, says the Lord. “But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at My word.”
—Isa. 66:1

“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame’. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For, "Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved’.”—Rom. 10:9-13

19 This was necessary because as sin is represented by death [the soul that sins shall die; Ezek. 18:20]; so is life represented by blood [the life of the flesh is in the blood; Lev. 17:11]. Thus, the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ atones for our sin and [eternal] life is substituted for [spiritual] death.
To be honest, Eliphaz closes on a “good note”. However, Job did not need to be reconciled to God for he believed and was faithful to the Lord. Indeed, this book begins by telling us that:

“There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil.”—Job 1:1

Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause”.

—Job 2:3

So, again, Job’s friend’s words fall flat and are of no practical, applicable use to Job!

What will Job’s response be to Eliphaz’ scathing mocking and biting sarcasm…….

Table 22-1. The Major Themes Repeated in Job’s Responses

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<td>Disappointment in his friends</td>
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Bibliography

(4) Barnes Notes,