

Lesson 6

Job 20-25



Zophar's Second Speech

- Setting the stage: Remember Job's last speech, especially the last part, when he warned his friends of God's wrath upon them (19:28–29).
- Job, I have heard your rebuke, and therefore “agitation” (NAS) is driving me to speak, and my answer comes from the spirit of my understanding (20:1–3).



Zophar's Second Speech

- Do you not know what others have always known? The wicked man's triumph and joy is short. Even if exalted for a short time, he perishes forever like his own dung. People forget about him, as if he were nothing but a dream. His children will be indebted to the poor, because they will have to give back what he took. Youthful vigor will not sustain him, for it will lie down with him in the dust (20:4–11).



Zophar's Second Speech

- Evil is sweet in his mouth, but turns to poison in his stomach. He swallows riches and vomits them up. What he works for, or takes from others, he can't enjoy. Consumed by his own desires, he knows no quietness—he's never content. God's wrath will rain upon him just as he gets ready to eat. He will flee from one weapon, but be struck by another. Everything he has will depart, flow away, be consumed. This is God's portion for the wicked man (20:12–29).



Job's Sixth Response

- Why should I not be impatient? (recall previous charges against Job in 15:12–13; 18:14). Put your hand over your mouth and listen carefully to my speech. This will be your consolation (recall 15:11). When I'm done, you can keep mocking (21:1–5).



Job's Sixth Response

- What you said about the wicked man is not always true. I'm disturbed by what I see. Why does he live long and become powerful? His descendants grow and prosper around him; his house is safe from fear. His bull never fails; his cow never miscarries. His children play and sing in the streets. He wants nothing to do with God; he sees no profit in prayer; and yet, he spends his days in wealth and then goes to the grave (21:6–16).




Job's Sixth Response

- How often do you see the wicked in darkness—how often do you see them get what's coming to them? You say his children will be punished for **his** iniquity, but what does he care what happens to his offspring? Shouldn't **he** be the one to face God's wrath? (21:17–21).



Job's Sixth Response

- [We can't make one rule that applies to everyone.] One person lives in comfort and dies in full strength; another experiences little or no pleasure and dies in bitterness. Both go down to the dust, both eaten by worms. Ask anyone, even the man passing through, and he will tell you that the wicked man's day of wrath is coming. His punishment, though, is not always in this life. Your lies offer no comfort to me (21:22–34).



That ends the second cycle of speeches.

Chapter 22 begins the third cycle (starting over with Eliphaz).



Eliphaz's Third Speech

- Can a man be useful to God? Have you brought pleasure to God with your righteousness? What gain is it to him that you make your ways blameless? Do you think He corrects you and judges you, because of your righteousness? (22:1–4).



Eliphaz's Third Speech

- Your wickedness is great—you've taken pledges from the poor; you've stripped men naked; you've given no food to the hungry, no drink to the thirsty; you've sent widows away empty; you've crushed orphans. That's why you have snares all around you; that's why your way is so dark (22:5–11).



Eliphaz's Third Speech

- Isn't God in the highest part of heaven? Do you not think He can see through the clouds, to see your deeds? Are you going to keep walking the way of the wicked, the way of men who think they're immune to punishment? When cut down and consumed by fire, the righteous will rejoice (22:12–20).



Eliphaz's Third Speech

- Yield to God, and good will come to you. Listen to **Him**; lay up **His** words in your heart; and you will be restored. Put **your** gold and silver in the dust, and **He** will become your gold and silver. You can then lift your face to God; you can pray to Him and He will hear. Humble yourself and He will save you, and then you in turn can be the means of saving others (22:21–30).



Job's Seventh Response

- My complaint today is rebellious (defiant, bitter), because God's hand is still heavy upon me. If I could just find God and present my case to Him. If I could just hear what He says. Would He oppose me with His great power? No! Surely He would pay attention to me and deliver me (23:1–7).



Job's Seventh Response

- But I can't find Him—whichever way I turn, I can't see Him. Yes, I know He sees my ways, but I also know that when He has tested me, I shall be like refined gold. I have treasured His words more than food, and I have kept His ways. But He is unique, and who can oppose Him? What He desires to do, He does, including what He's done to me. I am terrified at His presence, “but I am not silenced by the deep darkness, nor deep gloom which covers me” (NAS) (23:8–17).



Job's Seventh Response

- Why does God not set times of judgment? Look at what the wicked do, and yet God does not charge them with wrong. They remove landmarks; they seize animals from the poor; they push the needy away. They neglect the very people who work for them, who harvest their fields and tread their winepresses. And yet, when the wounded cry out, God does not hear them (24:1–12).



Job's Seventh Response

- Those who rebel against the light—murderers, thieves, adulterers, those who oppress the helpless—these people should be cursed, consumed, broken like a tree. And yet, God sustains them and they die like all others. If this is not so, who will prove me a liar? (24:13–25).



Bildad's Third Speech

- Dominion and fear belong to God; He gives order to everything. If the moon and stars are dim in comparison to Him, how can man have any glory before Him? Man is nothing but a maggot, a worm (25:1–6).