

....The Deceived and the Deceiver ~

Job 11:1 – 13:14

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~ As the author of the Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, I regularly caution readers *not* to read my reports. I do not recommend my Bible study program to anyone. Those who seek out this teaching do so only because they love and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. No other reason. I have never suggested that anyone should read any of my reports and, further, I receive negligible support for this ministry. God provides for this safari as He did for Elijah in the wilderness. Miraculously. In all candor, this is a private ministry between me and my Father in Heaven. But, if you've read this far, you are certainly welcome on safari.

I suppose I am very much like Jeremiah the prophet, who wanted to resign from his office as prophet of Israel, and speak of God no more; but had the Word of God burning in heart. The difference is: Jeremiah was thrown into the dungeon – and his “bones were broken.” Well, I've been homeless and hungry — but I haven't been violently thrown in the mire with no water as Jeremiah was; so, I guess I don't have it that bad after all. Even so, teaching the Bible can cause one to easily develop an Elijah complex; where they begin to feel as if they are the only ones remaining who believe God.

With the multitude of profoundly striking statements revealed in the Book of Job, there is simply no possible way I can bring you a complete study of this section of Scripture. All I can do is properly carry you from mountaintop to mountaintop. I trust you are reading the complete Bible text covered by the corresponding report. Reading the Bible text in prayer first before reading these reports will bring tremendous value to your study. If we do not regularly read the Word of God, we will never discover our real problem – which is us, ourself, my beloved. If we do not understand God properly, correctly and completely, we can never be of any help to our family, friends, strangers, or the community, either; and we can certainly never edify our church. I don't care if you copy and paste the entire Bible,

Job 11:1 – 13:14

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verse by verse. It is possible to never glorify Christ with our lives, friends. Is that as convicting to you as it is to me?

Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar — have come to visit Job during his time of deep need, profound grief, and inconsolable sorrow; and our last several reports have considered two of their discourses. We also examined Job's responses to both. What we have discovered is that these first two men did not understand God, they did not understand their so-called friend Job, and they did not understand themselves. In this report, we're going to meet the last of Job's three friends, Zophar. Zophar seems to be the senior man in the group. He is a legalist and a religious dogmatist who speaks with finality and self-appointed authority; and Zophar thinks he knows everything about God. Well, God isn't speaking to Job through Zophar, but Zophar is happy to misinform everyone concerning what God would say about Job, you know — if God were there! Naturally, Zophar won't provide any help for Job in any way; just as the two other friends have failed. Tragically, Zophar is the *least* helpful and the *most* candid and crude in insisting on his ignorance. Zophar is a tragedy.

See, Zophar pretends to know everything regarding the laws of God and the principles of the universe; but he mixes and matches conflicting theories to suit his argument at any particular moment. He also purports to know what God would do in any situation or circumstance; and asserts God never moves outside of the circumference of His Own laws. Ultimately, Zophar will reveal himself to be an atheist. Zophar's final conclusion is that we reside in a purely physical universe that merely follows the laws of nature; but he never gets around to teaching us what those laws are based on. Zophar is the type who says, "*.... ask me another question.*" Remember, Bildad was a traditionalist with a scientific mind. Bildad placed some rocks and bones under a high-powered microscope and concocted an elaborate theory about ages gone by. Bildad knew many things, to be sure; but he thought he knew everything — because he knew some things. Zophar reinforces Bildad's subtle doubt with rank unbelief. These two friends together make a formidable foe for Job to challenge intellectually....

XI

Job 11:1 – 13:14

¹ Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

² Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?

³ Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

⁴ For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

⁵ But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

⁶ And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.

⁷ Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

⁸ It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

⁹ The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

¹⁰ If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

¹¹ For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it?

¹² For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.

¹³ If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

¹⁴ If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

15 For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away:

17 And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.

20 But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

~ These three friends of Job's come up with some striking statements. I wish I had thought of some of them myself! They have a way of saying things that are true in a way that isn't true! Zophar is accusing Job of covering up his sins with a bunch of words. Well, friends, God has already told us that sin is not Job's problem. And a man in the position Job is in at the time in which we are studying isn't apt to put up a front.

Today, of course, there are men who put up a deeply deceptive front by using a multitude of cleverly manipulated words. Some people can talk their way out of almost any situation. That's how lawyers win their cases; and they are paid obscenely well to do so, you know. Naturally, justice isn't part of our legal system's equation. But Zophar goes even one step farther than that! He wrongfully and piously accuses Job of being a hypocrite and liar; while asserting he has personal inside information about God that Job could never know or understand. We know from previous chapters that it is, in fact, Zophar who was wrong.

Zophar has just informed Job that Job wasn't getting half of the punishment Job deserved! That's not very comforting, friends. That's condemnation. A true friend would never have made the statement found in verse six. The insinuation is that, because Job is suffering so greatly, there must be more sinfulness in Job than they are aware of. This is about as bad as it can get; and we have to remember, Job is a very sick man with the boils on his skin; sitting around the garbage dump on the edge of an oriental city, scraping open wounds with broken pottery!

Well, Zophar makes some profound statements; particularly verse seven. No man can discover God. You aren't going to find God under a microscope or through a telescope. God reveals Himself to us as He pleases or – guess what? – We would *NEVER* know *ANYTHING* about God. Frankly, my estimation is that God has revealed very little about Himself to us today. In fact, the little that He has revealed has some of us so awestruck – and the rest hopelessly confused – that I can totally understand why He hasn't revealed more about Himself than He has.

Moreover, there are other people who are like the Russians who, after they launched their first spacecraft, 'Sputnik,' published in their newspapers that they "... *didn't see God out there.*" Apparently, man can be utterly absurd and ridiculous at the same time. The problem with all of Zophar's alleged insight is that, while it is all true, most of it isn't anything that most people do not already know — and none of it — zero — is applicable to Job.

Another disturbing aspect of Zophar's ignorance is that he only directs it at Job. None of his advice would ever apply to himself, of course. All three of these friends use the premise that Job is covering up sin; and we know from chapters one and two that simply isn't true. Job isn't hiding any sins; in fact, according to God Himself, Job was perfect, upright and hated evil. Their total and complete ignorance of Job's problems places them in a rather awkward place. They are inept, even while disguising their incompetence as wisdom, and, thus, they are unable to offer Job any comfort or help on any level....

XII

¹ And Job answered and said,

² No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

³ But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?

⁴ I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn.

⁵ He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

⁶ The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

⁷ But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:

⁸ Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

⁹ Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

¹⁰ In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

¹¹ Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?

¹² With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

¹³ With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

16 With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his.

17 He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

19 He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

20 He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

21 He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

23 He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.

24 He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.

25 They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

XIII

1 Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

- ² What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you.***
- ³ Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.***
- ⁴ But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.***
- ⁵ O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.***
- ⁶ Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.***
- ⁷ Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?***
- ⁸ Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?***
- ⁹ Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?***
- ¹⁰ He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.***
- ¹¹ Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?***
- ¹² Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.***
- ¹³ Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.***
- ¹⁴ Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?***

~ Alright, our Spiritual Safari breaks off this leg of the expedition in the middle of the lengthiest discourse on record from Job. In our next report, we'll begin round two of this intellectual athletic event. These three men are going to pit their minds against Job and entrench themselves completely in their own dogmatic hate, unsound philosophy, and blind incorrectness of doctrine. It's going to get *MUCH* worse before it gets better.

I pray the Spirit of God has managed to form spectacular conclusions in your mind from this report; and that these truths will become of great benefit to your life. That is the purpose of this section of Scripture, the purpose of the Book of Job, the purpose of these incredible highly intellectual discourses – and the purpose of this so-called safari, too. The Word of God has some astonishing messages for us if we will only take the time to read it, study it with an honest and sincere heart, and pray about what we have learned as we meditate upon it all.

Job's sarcasm in verse one is hilarious, if you ask me. Many people in modern religious circles surely think wisdom will die with them, too. Most people act as if no one else could possibly know what they know about stuff. "Stuff" is a nice word, too, by the way. Frankly, everything many people know is 'stuff' – coming from the place where the sun don't shine – and you can just write that down. Most believe they are far superior and don't need to study the Bible anymore. They have it all figured out, according to them. Well, God laughs at them in derision; and we may want to consider the possibility of hearing the words, "*.... depart from Me I never knew you*" – mean anything to any of you? No?

See, instead of leading Job to the place of healthy self-judgment, these three friends only promote a depraved self-vindication. Their false incriminations against Job only cause Job to dig in and defend himself even more vehemently. No one in this book was actually listening to the other by this chapter. When we justify ourselves, we cannot justify God. I cannot urge you dear readers enough to try to figure that truth out, process it in your minds, and implement it in your day-to-day lives. The attacks made today in religious circles by Christians on other Christians – and railing against false teachers and false prophets – not to mention the end-times garbage – is like listening to the wind blow through the trees. It's just noise. What's missing from this Book of Job is the God of redemption, mercy, peace and grace. These three friends have brought in tradition, legality and experience – but no truth.

Unfortunately, Job reveals he is still very far from being truly broken in spirit, having humility of mind — and from genuine repentance — by his self-vindicating retorts to his friends. Those fruits can only ever grow, ripen and mature when they are grown in and by the divine presence of God Almighty. These men are very from saying, as Paul said, “... *I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.*” None of them are willing to admit they are what they are by the grace of God. We have too many Christians today who boast of who they are, how they are, what they are, and the things they have done for the Lord and how abundantly they give to God. It’s all lip-service. Most so-called Christians make it appear as if God is on the receiving side of their goodness. They act as if God could never live or operate the universe without them. Some must honestly believe the Lord is *lucky* they accepted Him into their life. Others feel their giving elevates them to a superior spiritual level; and I think most of them honestly have themselves convinced they are right-thinking people. How tragic.

Job is slipping into despair and falling fast as we close out this report; but his friends can’t catch him. All of their sentient sayings are utterly irrelevant to Job and, actually, the misapplication renders them forged lies. Job already knows everything these men are saying. Job hasn’t learned anything new at this time. Job wanted to reason with God, but there was no one who could show him God’s grace, peace and mercy. I’m just going to have to leave it at this; but, may I say this kindly in closing? I don’t care how many people you pigeon-hole for Jesus, you are not witnessing correctly until you assume the position where *YOU* are condemned. Until God is vindicated, and praised, and honored — then our life is a waste of God’s time. This is tremendous truth. Job is standing up to the withering insults rather well so far, isn’t he? ~

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