

## ....The Congregation of Hypocrites ~

### **Job 13:3 – 15:35**

\* \* \* \* \*

~ Our Spiritual Safari interrupted Job in the middle of his reply to Zophar in our last report. The last chapter in this report, chapter fifteen, begins round two of this dialogue; where Job's three so-called friends - Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar - continue to try to break Job down completely. Of course, they're trying to prod Job into admitting some secret sin; and attempting to compel him to confess said sin to them. Naturally, these three "friends" assume Job is either dishonest, or immoral, or has some worldly sin of the flesh they don't know about. I mean, after all, why would God allow anyone to suffer this way if those things weren't true? Well, we know Job doesn't have any unconfessed sins in his life; because God has already told us Job was "perfect, upright and hated evil" in chapters one and two.

Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar don't understand any of the spiritual dynamics at play in this section of Scripture; and they are wrong about what's going on in Job's life — because they do not know God, they do not know Job, and they don't know themselves. Job has answered each of their accusations and he is becoming bitter now. He is also growing sarcastic as he suggests he should bi-pass his friends and appeal to God directly. They're misrepresenting him and Job counsels them, in a very matter of fact manner, that they should just shut their violent mouths. Read carefully....

### **XIII**

***<sup>3</sup> Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.***

***<sup>4</sup> But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.***

***<sup>5</sup> O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.***

***<sup>6</sup> 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?***

***15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.***

***16 He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.***

***17 Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.***

***18 Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified.***

***19 Who is he that will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.***

***20 Only do not two things unto me: then will I not hide myself from thee.***

***21 Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid.***

***22 Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.***

***23 How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.***

***24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?***

***25 Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?***

***26 For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.***

***27 Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.***

***28 And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth eaten.***

~ Alright, so, these three “doctors” – Job’s friends – have each summarily misdiagnosed Job’s malady, thereby committing malpractice, and are certainly not helping Job in any way – at all. Job has cancer, but they erroneously concur he only has dermatitis. That’s when Job tells them to just shut up in verse five! Silence is more intelligent than the things these men were saying. See, friends, when we accuse someone of being judged by God, we are dealing deceitfully in our work of the Lord. To represent God properly, we *MUST* dispense sound doctrine correctly from the Word of God; and that means we must actually *KNOW* the Lord Jesus Christ Personally — which only results from *MUCH* Bible study and prayer. If you are not heavily engaged in Bible study and prayer — and then actually implementing those truths in your life as the Lord commands from Scripture — then, my friends, you have absolutely no business even contemplating speaking for God – because you are misrepresenting Him, which, by de facto, harms the cause of Christ.

These three friends purport to be bringing a message from God for Job; but they are incapable of bringing Job to the place where he might see himself as he really is. They have only managed to set Job on the defensive; and,

quite frankly, Job is making a very good case for himself — but at the expense of God’s goodness! The friends are erroneously blaming Job’s nonexistent secret sins, but Job’s defense makes it appear as if God is the One to blame for the troubles he is having. Well, these friends keep hammering Job in their completely unlearned and unlearnable state of pious and self-righteous indignation; and Job keeps hammering back.

Friends, God is going to judge *YOU* and *ME* for misrepresenting Him, too; whether done in ignorance or spiritual pride. And we each fail God every single time we open our mouths; except that He speaks through us by His Holy Spirit. I know that medicine doesn’t go down well. Many question or reject that truth to their peril. Unfortunately, their denial of truth doesn’t make me wrong – it makes them even more wrong. Job’s faith stands inviolate despite the onslaught of his friends; and they have now become strangers to Job. By this point, they are making Job afraid of them. This could easily turn into a stoning by the crowd at this time! That’s where verse fifteen comes in, my beloved.

And that brings us to our next topic: adjudication of guilt. The moment we go into the presence of God and begin defending our misdeeds and shortcomings is the moment we’re going to lose our case; because, in His court, the only path to successfully prevailing is to plead guilty. See, God knows you. There is no attorney who is going to make a clever legal case from loopholes and misrepresentations resulting in your acquittal – that’s just not going to happen – and Jesus isn’t that lawyer, either. No, it’s a tad deeper than that. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God – and that is the standard we begin with. None are righteous, no, not one – not even in the righteousness God makes over to us when we are saved. Think that one through carefully and see what you come up with.

This is where we place our issues into the test tube of our life and pour the acid of experience over them. Nothing will remain for most of us after this experiment. The soul that sinneth, it shall die – that precept has never been changed – and it never will be changed. Before we go into the court of Almighty God, we will do well to learn what we are talking about. God isn’t a soft-hearted, soft-headed judge who takes bribes or does favors for wealthy and prominent defendants. We’re going to appear before the God

of this universe Who is the moral ruler. You are going to cast yourself upon the mercy of the court, or the court will deal treacherously with you. Those who view my teaching as unsound or legalistic may now excuse yourself from this classroom; because you have failed the course. F minus is your grade. Goodbye.

God has a mercy seat with the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ sprinkled upon it available for us if we will only trust and obey Him. Job needs Someone to stop him from defending himself and instruct him properly regarding his best interest in this appearance before the high court of Almighty God. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only glimmer of light in this bleak and harsh truth. That's the teaching of both the New Testament and the Old Testament: God is our salvation. King David held to this truth. We know David committed an egregious and awful sin, but David didn't live a sinful lifestyle. David was able to say God was his High Tower, his Shield and his Buckler – He was David's salvation. Can you say that about the Lord Jesus Christ?

We don't carry salvation around like a billfold that we might misplace or lose altogether. Salvation is God – our Holy High Priest – Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, and the Son of God; we either have Him – or we have *never* had Him. We either trust Him to hold us and handle the works of our life by living through us – or we don't. There's no alternative – no middle ground. You're either for Him or against Him. There is none other Name under Heaven by which we must be saved, according to the apostle Peter. There's no other way out of this life alive except in the Lord Jesus Christ. The soul that sinneth shall surely die.

Job is admonishing us to listen carefully to him now – and we can only achieve that by asking for wisdom in prayer, friends. At this point in Job's life, he honestly believes he has a good case to present before God. Job still feels that he can act as his own lawyer. Most so-called Christians think exactly this way. They have a speech rehearsed for that time when they are called to stand before God. What they don't know is that they have *ALREADY* been found guilty and condemned. Most are utterly prepared for the wrong event. Many will be ashamed at His appearing. I am attempting to present this precept as plainly as I possibly can. You and I are lost sinners

in need of a Savior. The world we live in and participate in is an unholy mess; and that which we contribute to it is equally filthy. Your righteousness is filthy rags – period. Man is in abject rebellion against God Almighty. Man robs God every chance he gets. Your heart is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things; so much so that no one knows it – not even you – and nobody can know the depths of our potential depravity.

Most people in Christian circles honestly believe in their own minds that God could not possibly continue to operate His universe without them. They firmly, albeit ignorantly, assert that all wisdom and understanding will be removed from the earth when they leave. They won't admit any fault because they have no idea it is even a problem – just as Job has no idea at this time in which we are studying — that he is the problem. Well, let me tell you something: if you have not yet discovered that you are of no use to God *NOR* to man – then you will. If you don't recognize that tenet in the Word of God, then you'll end up hopeless in this life – and you're going to realize it, sooner or later — I promise you that — signed, Almighty God. Don't like that talk from me? Then don't read my reports.

So, thank God He loves us enough to tell us these truths – as horrible as they are. He has made a way for us to come to Him, but you're going to come His way — or you aren't coming *ANY* way. Remember, in the beginning of his discourse, Job said he wished he had never been born, and he wanted to die. Now, in verse nineteen, he says if he stops defending himself by speaking, he will give up the ghost. I think Job sensed his friends and the crowd might stone him to death for some unconfessed sin. What do you think? Well, either way, Job isn't finished – he's going to talk. That's how puny little man does things today; we all have a whole lot to say, and we all want to have the last word, of course.

There are many people instructing God what to do and how to do it today; and, if they were honest, they would admit that they have a whole lot of unanswered prayer in their lives. Well, God *always* answers the prayer of the righteous in Christ — but many times He says “*no*” — and He does so because of the way we ask — and because of the motives we ask for! James says, “.... *you ask but receive not because you ask amiss that you might consume it in your own lust.*” God doesn't take orders from us. God doesn't

come running at our beck and call. Prayer isn't that, my beloved. Prayer doesn't change God or His plans; the primary purpose of prayer is to change us. When we say '*prayer changes things*' — that's true — but — those "*things*" are going to have to be *us*. That's *VERY* important to understand.

I see people "*claim*" healing "*by His stripes*" for themselves and other people; but they are almost always issuing a death sentence for that person with their demand. Quite honestly, because I always am honest with you readers, I would rather most people *NOT* pray for me; because they are praying for all the wrong things. I understand they believe they are trying to help, but acting as the top sergeant talking to God like a buck private in the rear ranks is seriously dangerous business for everyone involved in said prayer. I don't want to be any part of that. Drink that one down real slow, friends. God has His Own plan that He is going to work out in our lives, and we follow that plan — or we go our own way. Now, let's not wag our condescending finger at Job, because we've all done these things....

## **XIV**

***<sup>1</sup> Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.***

~ By doing all the things we just considered in chapter thirteen, Job is effectively demanding a showdown with God. Job is demanding to see the evidence and for God to reveal what sins he has committed to warrant these tragedies that are happening. Well, Job is rotting away, spiritually and physically. This is a tragic episode in a chapter that presents a spectacular elegy on death. There is nothing darker or more dire — but absolutely true — than verse one of chapter fourteen. Trouble and sorrow is the common denominator of mankind; because it is one common experience we have all shared — or will. We examined this principle extensively in chapter six of this book. Job knows death is inevitable — and likely coming very soon — and that his departure from this world is imminent. Fortunately, Job has a hope beyond the grave that he is finally going to begin to understand....

***<sup>2</sup> He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.***

***3 And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?***

***4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.***

***5 Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;***

***6 Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.***

***7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.***

***8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;***

***9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.***

***10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?***

***11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:***

***12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.***

***13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!***

***14 If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.***



***15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.***

***16 For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?***

***17 My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.***

***18 And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.***

***19 The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.***

***20 Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.***

***21 His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.***

***22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.***

~ Flowers grow — and we cut them down, place them in a vase, and they are completely dead and dried up in a few short days. They were so lovely, so pretty, and they smelled so good when they were alive; but now, the flower is withered, wilted over, and has turned black. It's gone. We notice our own shadow, but a few moments later, there is no more shadow. That's the profundity Job uses to describe what he is feeling and experiencing at this moment in time that we are studying.

Verse four is another awe-striking statement of truth. We were all born sinners, and even King David said, ".... *in sin did my mother conceive me.*" A clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean thing – because that is impossible. You and I could never be sinless creatures when we had sinful mothers and fathers. That is an axiomatic and immutable wisdom in the

precepts of God Almighty. As a human being, Job is feeling pretty much hemmed in at this time; just as we all are.

*“... I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...”* said, King David. That does *NOT* speak of our condition when trouble comes along, or when we are on our deathbed. The moment that gives us life begins to take life away! We begin life being born in a narrow canyon in the shadow of death and, as we walk along, it becomes narrower and narrower until – that’s it – the end. Every step we ever take is in the valley of the shadow of death.

See, this account presents the life in this world of a man who made a tremendous success of himself. Think of all the extremely self-important celebrities who have come and gone – what good were they? Even if they have streets, roads, buildings and monuments named after them – what does it amount to? Verse fourteen is the big question now. Job has great faith to make that statement. Job knows that even in death, God is going to call him, and he is going to answer. When we die, God is going to call us with a shout; and we are either going to be able to answer Him – or not. Chapter fourteen was an awe-inspiring and remarkable death elegy....

## **XV**

***<sup>1</sup> Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,***

***<sup>2</sup> Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?***

***<sup>3</sup> Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?***

***<sup>4</sup> Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.***

***<sup>5</sup> For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty.***

***<sup>6</sup> Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee.***

***7 Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?***

***8 Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?***

***9 What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us?***

***10 With us are both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father.***

***11 Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?***

***12 Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at,***

***13 That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?***

***14 What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?***

***15 Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.***

***16 How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?***

***17 I will shew thee, hear me; and that which I have seen I will declare;***

***18 Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it:***

***19 Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.***

***20 The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.***

***21 A dreadful sound is in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.***

***22 He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.***

***23 He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.***

***24 Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.***

***25 For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.***

***26 He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:***

***27 Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.***

***28 And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.***

***29 He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.***

***30 He shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.***

***31 Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompence.***

***32 It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green.***

***33 He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.***

***34 For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.***

***35 They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.***

~ So, our Spiritual Safari begins round two of the discourse between Eliphaz and Job. Remember, Eliphaz originally spoke first, and he is the spiritualist dreamer who had all those spooky visions in the night. I doubt Eliphaz really got much sleep; I mean, those frightening revelations he had in chapter four must have kept him up all night. Unfortunately, his dream stuff was just common knowledge to Job, as we saw in that report. Well, Eliphaz truly believes he is experienced and superior.

Personally, the testimonies I hear all day long are just like Eliphaz's; of no value whatsoever. See, truth must rest on experience, but truth has to come first. Truth is the Word of God, friends; and the Word of God only. People always seem interested in "testimony" — but they never seem to want to hear the Word of God taught properly, correctly and completely. Experience may or may not rest upon Holy Writ. I see so-called 'Christian testimony' in religious circles that is more in line with Greek mythology or a television sit-com in Hollywood than it is with Scripture. Well, it happens to be the Word of God that is important.

It's difficult to avoid the Eliphaz's of the world. They're everywhere; and they proudly proclaim their extensively experienced education. Well, Job and Eliphaz are really going to slug this out now. The intellectual forays are going to become intense as we move forward. Now, the attacks become severe and blatant as Job's three so-called friends attempt to break him all the way down to nothing. The problem is: they aren't even close to showing Job that he has a great need. They're even further from helping

him with it. Eliphaz says he has wisdom Job doesn't have. That's not helpful. The premise for this entire conversation is meaningless, useless, and harmful to any relationship.

The Lord Jesus died to redeem us. In His redemption stands a new Heaven and a new earth. Even the Heavens are unclean in God's sight. We can only imagine how much more the man is who "drinketh iniquity like water." Just because Eliphaz is unhelpful to Job, the things he is saying are still all true – just misdirected and misused. Mankind today has an utterly wrong and misguided philosophy coupled with a flawed psychology that proclaims man superior on the face of the earth. Saying we are a product of advancing evolution just couldn't be any farther from the truth. Mankind is *NOT* in our predicament today just because we made a few mistakes. Our problem isn't ignorance or selfishness by any means; although those things compound the problems. Well, our next report will expound on Job's answer to all of this; I hope you can travel along with us ~

\* \* \* \* \*