

Message #13**Job 11:1-20**

Years ago, wildlife officials in Oregon got a search warrant to go into a bar because they thought one of their spotted owls had been taken captive. The owl was collared and the beeper went off indicating the owl was in the bar. Several agents burst into the bar to retrieve the owl and arrest the owner, only to discover that the beeper signal was coming from an electronic dart board. The director of the wildlife department says we still snicker at how dumb the whole team turned out to be. They misread everything and made a huge mistake. There was a team of men who misread things and were a whole lot dumber than the wildlife department concerning an owl; these were a group who were the friends of Job.

No matter where you go or what you do, sooner or later you will run into a dogmatic fool who rambles on about things he knows nothing about. You will find these people shooting off their mouths on any subject. They are quick to give their opinions, even if their opinions are wrong.

That is the way it was in Job's world. Job's friends showed up and saw the terrible situation Job was in and all they wanted to do was open their mouths in some very dumb ways and the dumbest of all was Zophar.

Zophar was a "friend" of Job. He did not have the religious sophistication of an Eliphaz, nor did he have the educational background and prowess of Bildad. Zophar was just a highly opinionated, dogmatic and ignorant fool who had no idea what he was talking about.

The only basis for his opinions is Job's sufferings. In other words, Zophar has no evidence and no proof of anything, yet he launches into a degrading of Job as confident and as dogmatic as one could ever be. Eliphaz came to Job in a dignified and polite way. Bildad came to Job in a scholarly and crude way. Zophar comes to Job in an exaggerated and dogmatic way that is one of total ignorance. He insults Job and God will hold Zophar highly accountable.

NO MATTER HOW DOGMATIC ONE MAY BE OR HOW RIGHT HE MAY THINK HE IS, IF A PERSON VERBALLY INSULTS A RIGHTEOUS MAN OF GOD, GOD WILL HOLD THAT ONE HIGHLY ACCOUNTABLE.

I believe Satan is behind all three of these men verbally attacking Job (2:7, 11). God will hold each of these men accountable for what they said about and against Job (42:7) and Zophar is one of the specific men God holds accountable (42:9).

What this tells us is that one may be satanically motivated by demons to do or say something against one who is faithful, but God will hold that person highly accountable for what he did and said. The infamous statement "the devil made me do it" won't carry much weight at the judgment of God.

Zophar responds to Job's discussion with God four ways:

RESPONSE #1 – Zophar accuses Job. 11:1-4

Zophar feels compelled to speak. You can tell what kind of insensitive man he is by what he says at the beginning. He thinks he has figured it all out. He makes a series of four accusations against Job:

Accusation #1 - Zophar accuses Job of being too talkative . 11:2

This is beautiful—Zophar and Job have listened to these men verbally assault him, three against one, and Zophar accuses Job of being too talkative. There is a thing in the world of psychology called “projection.” Projection is when someone is guilty of something or struggling with something and they project their issue onto someone else. These were the guys who were too talkative and they are putting the blame on Job.

Zophar assumes that something Job said must make him guilty. According to Zophar, Job could not be innocent and actually respond. Since Job had the audacity to respond to their ramblings, Zophar just assumes Job must be guilty. In other words, these guys had the right to say anything they wanted and Job should just sit there like some bump on a log and say nothing.

Accusation #2 - Zophar accuses Job of being a braggart . 11:3

Job is being accused as being a proud and arrogant man, when in all reality nothing could be further from the truth. Job simply spoke the truth and that truth was labeled boasting.

Zophar believed it was his responsibility to rebuke Job; but Job is telling the truth. This reminds me of the leading Jews that surrounded Jesus Christ. They felt it was their job not only to rebuke Jesus, but to kill Him for telling the truth (John 10:30-33, 37-38).

J. Vernon McGee said one time a man wrote him a letter rebuking him for his theology and accused Dr. McGee of being an ignorant and dogmatic man with no spiritual discernment. He wrote that he was going to set the record straight for the Holy Spirit and he told Dr. McGee that his opinion would tell whether or not he would “listen to the Holy Spirit.” The man claimed to be the voice of the Holy Spirit and if Dr. McGee didn’t listen to him, he wasn’t listening to God.

That is as arrogant as Zophar. Zophar is accusing Job of boasting, when in fact he is the one with the arrogant audacity.

Accusation #3 - Zophar accuses Job concerning his teaching . 11:4a

Zophar claims that Job claimed that his teaching had been pure, which it was. Job was a great teacher of the things of God and he stood by what he taught as being the pure truth. However, so far, I don’t remember Job actually saying this about his teaching. It is clear that Job was a teacher and Satan was out to attack that.

His teaching was being criticized by a dogmatic imbecile who doesn't even know what he is talking about. Again, we cannot help but be reminded of the teaching of Jesus, Himself. He too was criticized—John 18:19-23.

Accusation #4 - Zophar accuses Job of saying he is innocent. **11:4b**

Think about this for a moment. Job is a powerful man of God. God has given him an ability to teach the Word of God in a powerful and pure way. Who would be in a better position to determine whether or not he had done something to deserve this, Job or Zophar? If Job sinned and did something wrong, he was not afraid to admit it to everyone (Job 31:33-34). Job was a man who had walked with God for many years and certainly if he had done something to deserve this suffering, he would know it and admit it.

Now when Job said look, I have not done anything to bring this on, who would be in a position to really know—Job or Zophar?

Where is the proof that Job is an argumentative, arrogant, false, irreverent man? Where is the proof that he is guilty? There is no proof because there is no evidence. Job is innocent. All these guys are wrong and Job is the only one right with God here.

RESPONSE #2 – Zophar appeals to God to judge Job. **11:5-6**

After accusing Job of talking too much, Zophar accuses God of not talking enough. Look at the arrogance of this. Zophar says, “Well Job, if only God would speak to us and open up His mouth against you, all your sin secrets and closets would be clearly seen by you and everyone else.” This is beautiful here. This all sounds so good and so convincing. In other words, Zophar is saying, “Wait until God shows the real truth someday, then you will be seen for what you are, a man who doesn't deal with all sin in his life.”

Indeed, wait until God does speak, for it won't be Job who has anything to worry about, but it will be this loudmouthed Zophar. Had God shown his secrets, all would see Job was under satanic attack.

Every once in a while you will hear someone appeal to God in order to make their point seem to be a little more forceful. You will hear things like “I have really prayed about this”; “God is my witness”; “God really knows for sure what I did and said.” These remarks don't prove anything. In fact, they could be a smokescreen for what is really going on in the mind and heart. To be sure, God is the witness and God does see and know and God does keep the records, but the person speaking had better be very certain that they know what they are talking about for that very reason.

Steven Lawson told a story about John Wesley who was preaching and a woman in the audience who was known to be a critic came up to Wesley and said “the strings on your bow tie are much too long. They are an offense to me!”

Wesley asked if any lady in the audience had scissors, and when they handed him the scissors he handed them to the woman and asked her to cut the tie strings to her liking. When she was done, he asked her if it was to her liking and she said “yes.” Wesley then took the scissors and said “I am certain you wouldn’t mind if we gave you a little bit of correction.” Wesley said “I don’t want to be cruel but your tongue is an offense to me it is way too long so stick out your tongue because I’d like to take some off” (*Job*, p. 101). This was Zophar’s problem; his tongue was way too long.

RESPONSE #3 – Zophar speaks theologically about God. **11:7-12**

There are six theological points Zophar makes about God. This is a heavy portrait:

Theological Point #1 - God is unlimited in depth . **11:7**

Does Zophar really think that Job does not know this theological point? No human can discover the deep limits of “El Shaddai,” God Almighty. Zophar is speaking in such an arrogant way that implies that he was at a deeper level in his grasp of God.

Theological Point #2 - God is unlimited in knowledge . **11:8**

No man can know things at God’s level. His knowledge is as high as the heavens and deeper than Sheol. Again, this is true, but does Zophar think he is telling Job something he does not know? He is just filling the air with words. His real point is to torture and humiliate Job even more.

Theological Point #3 - God is unlimited in measure . **11:9**

In **verse 8**, Zophar refers to the height and depth of God’s work (Heaven/Sheol) and in **verse 9** he refers to the length and width of God’s work (Earth/Sea). His point is that no one can measure all of the work and knowledge of God. God’s work surpasses any possible human measurement.

This is true theology about God, but Zophar is presenting this to run Job down. Frankly, this discussion means nothing to Job. He knew this, believed this and taught this.

Theological Point #4 - God cannot be stopped . **11:10**

God does what He wants, when He wants and no one can stop Him or have any say concerning Him or His work. Job already had said this multiple times. God’s decisions cannot be stopped.

Theological Point #5 - God knows and sees all false and sinful men. **11:11**

God has a case against every man and knows about all sin without conducting an investigation.

God sees all and knows all. One would think Zophar would say, perhaps knowing this, maybe I should quiet down here.

Theological Point #6 - God will never make an idiot to be intelligent . **11:12**

Zophar's point is that Job has about as much chance to become intelligent as a donkey has in becoming an intelligent man. In other words, he is saying Job doesn't have a chance to thinking or talking in an intelligent way because he is such an idiot, literally in Hebrew "witless" (nabub). Zophar sees Job as an empty-headed idiot and Job is the most godly man on the earth.

Dr. Elmer Smick writes of this, "The sharpness of his sarcasm is demonstrated in **verse 12**. Zophar labeled Job a witless, empty-handed man with as much chance to become wise as a wild donkey has to become a man" (*Job*, p. 917).

People who are out of the will of God often speak so piously about God. Zophar is presenting a lofty view of God. It is a high and holy perspective. But it is all devilish.

RESPONSE #4 – Zophar speaks judgmentally against Job. **11:13-20**

What Zophar does in this section is to give his judgmental advice in the form of a series of conditions and results. If Job will do this, then the result will be this. In **verse 13**, the Hebrew pronoun "you" is very emphatic. Zophar is aiming this straight at Job.

What Zophar does here is often what some evangelists do: "If you just listen to us and do what we say, your life will be blessed." "If you will sow the seed of your money, God will give you financial wealth." Their statements are nothing but cause and effect axioms that mean nothing. That is what Zophar does here to Job—all of this appeal means nothing.

Zophar sends forth one major message to Job—"If you would just face your sin and deal with your sin then everything would be so much better for you.

Wrong Assumption #1 - Job needs to repent in his heart before God. **11:13**

If Job would worship God with his heart and hands, everything would be okay.

Wrong Assumption #2 - Job needs to get sin out of his life. **11:14**

Zophar says Job has been involved in sin and wickedness in his life and tents.

Wrong Assumption #3 - Job would be right with God if he did repent. **11:15**

If Job repented he could once again look to God and be clean and steadfast with God.

Wrong Assumption #4 - Job's troubles would disappear if he would repent. **11:16**

If Job would just repent, troubles would quickly go away as fast as water soaks into ground.

Wrong Assumption #5 - Job's life would be bright if he would repent. **11:17**

All darkness of his life would be gone if he would just face his sin.

Wrong Assumption #6 - Job would be secure in his faith if he would repent. **11:18**

Job would be safe and secure if he would just deal with his sin.

Wrong Assumption #7 - Job would have a life of peace if he would repent. **11:19a**

If you would just repent no one would bother you.

Wrong Assumption #8 - Job would have popularity with people if he would repent. **11:19b**

If Job would repent, people would come to him and want his favor.

Wrong Assumption #9 - Job will not succeed if he does not repent. **11:20**

If Job does not repent, he is destined to be destroyed with the wicked.

It all sounds so good and so spiritual, but it is so satanic. Job has not done one thing wrong to deserve any of this.

Lessons for us to learn:

1. We must be very careful in passing judgment on someone who is suffering severely.
2. Spiritual jargon and deep talk about God may mean absolutely nothing.
3. People can unite together in their opinions against one faithful and appear to have biblical answers and be headed to an angry judgment of God.
4. If you have done nothing wrong, don't say you have just to appease idiots.