

Job

The Trial of Job



The Accuser and the Accused

- Satan the adversary and accuser.

“The accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God”. (Rev 12:10)

- Brings accusation against God and Job

“Does Job fear God for nothing?” (Job 1:9)



A Trial Is Arranged

- Job must defend himself against accusations.
- A trial of debate until your opponent falls silent

“Friends” v. Job

Job, and unknowing agent of God.

Friends, unwitting agents of the Accuser.

1. Job is stuck between the accusations of his friends and the silence of God.
2. Job is stuck between refusing to reproach God, and not being willing to accept that he is suffering for sin.



Format of Job's Trial

Cycle 1

- Eliphaz 4-5
- Job 6-7
- Bildad 8
- Job 9-10
- Zophar 11
- Job 12-14

Cycle 2

- Eliphaz 15
- Job 16-17
- Bildad 18
- Job 19
- Zophar 20
- Job 21

Cycle 3

- Eliphaz 22
- Job 23-24
- Bildad 25
- Job 26-31
- Zophar—
(silence)



First Prosecutor: Eliphaz

Job 4:7–8 (NIV)

⁷ “Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? ⁸ As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it.

Job 5:17–18 (NIV)

¹⁷ “Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. ¹⁸ For he wounds, but he also binds up; he injures, but his hands also heal.



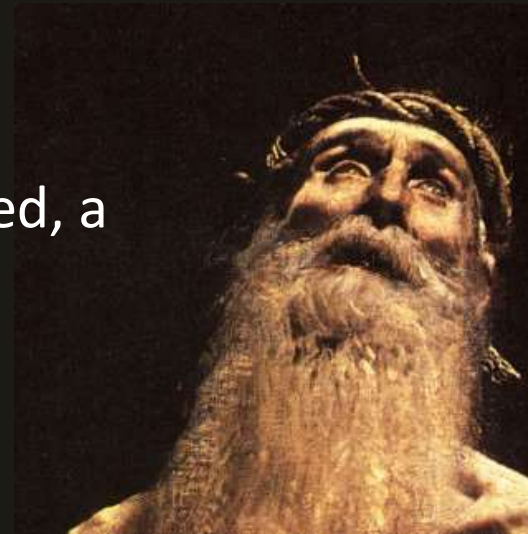
Problems with the case

What originally looks true (Galatians 6:7, Hebrews 12:6)...
Jesus says is not always the case. (Luke 13:4)

Care has to be taken with God's Word, to not misapply it.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.



Further problems

Job 5:8–9 (NIV)

⁸ “But if it were I, I would appeal to God; I would lay my cause before him. ⁹ He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted...

Appealing to God in suffering is good counsel...

But Eliphaz believes God will inevitably bless good works

In fact God operates by sovereign grace, not bound by repaying evil for evil or good for good.



Eliphaz's Big Error

Job 22:2–4 (NIV)

² “Can a man be of benefit to God? Can even a wise man benefit him? ³ What pleasure would it give the Almighty if you were righteous? What would he gain if your ways were blameless? ⁴ “Is it for your piety that he rebukes you and brings charges against you?”

Eliphaz questions the nature of God. That He takes any pleasure in our righteousness. Or gains from our obedience.



What scripture says

Exodus 19:5 (NIV)

⁵ Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,

1 Samuel 15:22 (NIV)

²² But Samuel replied: “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

Proverbs 11:20 (NIV)

²⁰ The Lord detests men of perverse heart but he delights in those whose ways are blameless.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 (NIV)

¹ Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.



Second Prosecutor: Bildad

Job 8:2–4 (NIV)

² “How long will you say such things? Your words are a blustering wind. ³ Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right? ⁴ When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin.

Job 8:20–22 (NIV)

²⁰ “Surely God does not reject a blameless man or strengthen the hands of evildoers. ²¹ He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy. ²² Your enemies will be clothed in shame, and the tents of the wicked will be no more.”



Problems with the case

It is true that God won't reject a blameless man, and we will see that God won't ultimately reject Job... but God's acceptance or rejection doesn't always materialize in this physical world.

Psalm 73:2–5 (NIV)

² But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. ³ For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴ They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. ⁵ They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills...



Problems with the case

It is true that God won't reject a blameless man... but God's acceptance or rejection doesn't always materialize in this physical world.

The wicked can prosper in this world. Psalm 73:2–5 (NIV)
Justice may not come until their final destiny...

Psalm 73:16–18 (NIV8)

¹⁶ When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me ¹⁷
till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final
destiny. ¹⁸ Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast
them down to ruin.



Bildad's Big Error

Job 25:5–6 (NIV84)

⁵ If even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in his eyes, ⁶ how much less man, who is but a maggot— a son of man, who is only a worm!”

Bildad has lost sight of even the most basic truths of God.



What scripture says

Genesis 1:27–28 (NIV)

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them.

Psalms 149:4 (NIV)

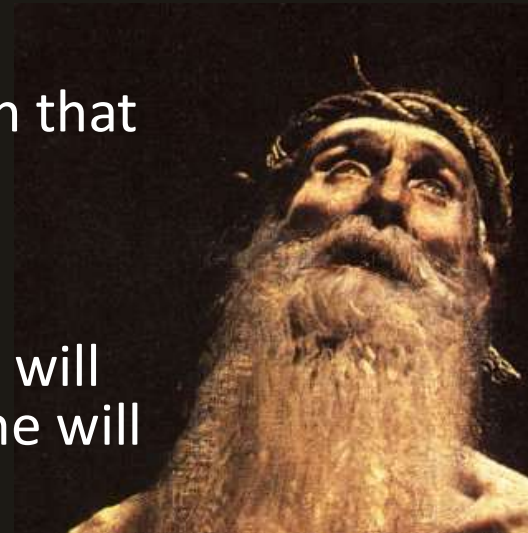
⁴ For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation.

Psalms 8:4–5 (NIV)

⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁵ You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

Zephaniah 3:17 (NIV)

¹⁷ The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.”



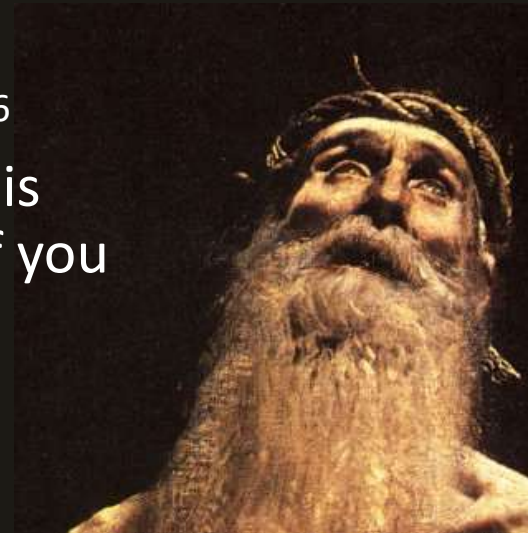
Third Prosecutor: Zophar

Job 11:2–3 (ESV)

² “Should a multitude of words go unanswered, and a man full of talk be judged right? ³ Should your babble silence men, and when you mock, shall no one shame you?

Job 11:5–6 (ESV)

⁵ But oh, that God would speak and open his lips to you, ⁶ and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom! For he is manifold in understanding. Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.



Problems with the case

It is true that we suffer less than we are due. But again Zophar has misunderstood Job's suffering. It is not because of sin.

Zophar wishes God would "open his lips" and speak to Job. Ironically, God is going to speak:



God's opinion of the accusers.

Job 42:7b (ESV)

⁷ ... the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. ⁸ Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly.



Zophar's third cycle of discourse...

There isn't one. Job has argued his opponents to silence. He has made his case.

Job 27:2–6 (NIV)

² “As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice, the Almighty, who has made me taste bitterness of soul, ³ as long as I have life within me, the breath of God in my nostrils, ⁴ my lips will not speak wickedness, and my tongue will utter no deceit. ⁵ I will never admit you are in the right; till I die, I will not deny my integrity. ⁶ I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.



Questions?



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