

Eliphaz's Second Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 15

Eliphaz Attacks—Your Own Words Prove Your Guilt

- 1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
- 2 “Should *the* wise answer *with* windy knowledge,
and should he fill his stomach *with the* east wind?
- 3 Should he argue in talk *that* is not profitable
or *in* words with which he cannot do good?
- 4 “What is worse, you yourself are doing away with fear,
and you are lessening meditation before God.
- 5 For your iniquity teaches your mouth,
and you choose *the* tongue of *the* crafty.
- 6 Your mouth condemns you, and not I;
and your lips testify against you.

Eliphaz Attacks—Who Do You Think You Are?

- 7 “Were you born the firstborn of the human race?
And were you brought forth before *the* hills?
- 8 Have you listened in God's confidential discussion?
And do you limit wisdom to yourself?
- 9 What do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that *is* not clear to us?
- 10 Both *the* gray-haired and *the* old *are* among us—
those older than your father.
- 11 “Are the consolations of God too small for you,
a word *spoken* gently with you?
- 12 Why does your heart carry you away?
And why do your eyes flash,
- 13 that you turn your spirit against God,
and you let *such* words go out of your mouth?

Eliphaz Lectures—The Sinfulness of Man

- 14 “What *is* a human being, that he can be clean,
or that *one* born of a woman can be righteous?
- 15 Look, he does not trust his holy ones,
and *the* heavens are not clean in his eyes.
- 16 How much less he who is abominable and corrupt,
a man drinking wickedness like water.

Eliphaz Lectures—The Fate of the Wicked

- 17 “I will show you, listen to me;
and what I have seen, I will tell—
- 18 what wise men have told,
and they have not hidden *that which is* from their ancestors,
- 19 to whom alone the land was given,
and no stranger passed through their midst.
- 20 “All of the wicked *one's* days he is writhing,
even *through* the number of years that are laid up for the tyrant.
- 21 Sounds of terror *are* in his ears;
in prosperity *the* destroyer will come *against* him.
- 22 He cannot trust that he will return from darkness,
and he himself is destined for *the* sword.
- 23 “He is wandering for bread, *saying*, ‘Where *is it?*’
He knows that a day of darkness *is* ready at hand.
- 24 Anguish and distress terrify him;
they overpower him like a king ready for the battle.
- 25 Because he stretched out his hand against God,

- and he was arrogant to Shaddai;
 26 he stubbornly runs against him
 with his thick-bossed shield.
 27 “Because he has covered his face with his fat
 and has gathered fat upon *his* loins,
 28 he will dwell *in* desolate cities,
 in houses that they should not inhabit,
 which are destined for rubble.
 29 He will not become rich, and his wealth will not endure,
 and their possessions will not stretch across the earth.
 30 “He will not escape from darkness;
 a flame will dry up his new shoot,
 and by the wind of his mouth he shall be removed.
 31 Let him not trust in emptiness—he will be deceiving himself—
 for worthlessness will be his recompense.
 32 It will be paid in full before his time,
 and his branch will not flourish.
 33 “He will shake off his unripe fruit like the vine,
 and he will cast off his blossom like the olive tree;
 34 for *the* company of *the* godless *is* barren,
 and fire consumes the tents of those who accept bribes.
 35 *They* conceive trouble and bring forth mischief,
 and their womb prepares deceit.”

Job’s Response to Eliphaz (c. 2200 BC)

Job 16–17

Job Wishes He Could Be His Own Friend

16:1 Then Job answered and said,

- 2 “I have heard many *things* like these;
 all of you *are* miserable comforters.
 3 *Is there* a limit to windy words?
 What provokes you that you answer?
 4 I myself also could talk as you,
 if you were in my place;
 I could join against you with words,
 and I could shake at you with my head.
 5 I could encourage you with my mouth,
 and the solace of my lips would ease the pain.

Job Graphically Describes How God Has Treated Him

- 6 If I speak, my pain is not relieved;
 and *if* I cease, how much will leave me?
 7 “Surely now he has worn me out;
 you have devastated all my company.
 8 Thus you shriveled me up;
 it became a witness.
 And my leanness has risen up against me;
 it testifies to my face.
 9 His wrath has torn, and he has been hostile toward me;
 he gnashed at me with his teeth.
 My foe sharpens his eyes against me.
 10 They gaped at me with their mouth;
 they struck my cheeks with disgrace;
 they have massed themselves together against me.
 11 God delivers me to an evil one,
 and he casts me into the hands of *the* wicked.

- 12 “I was at ease, then he broke me in two,
and he seized *me* by my neck;
then he shattered me
and set me up as a target for him.
- 13 His archers surround me;
he slashes open my kidneys, and he does not have compassion;
he pours out my gall on the ground.
- 14 He breached me breach upon breach;
he rushes at me like a warrior.

Job’s Response to God’s Destruction is Humility

- 15 “I have sewed sackcloth on my skin,
and I have inserted my pride in the dust.
- 16 My face is red because of weeping,
and deep shadows *are* on my eyelids,
17 although violence *is* not on my hands,
and my prayer *is* pure.

Job Longs for an Intercessor Between Him and God

- 18 “O earth, you should not cover my blood,
and let there be no place for my cry for help.
- 19 So now look, my witness *is* in the heavens,
and he *who* vouches for me *is* in the heights.
- 20 My friends scorn me; [or My intercessor is my friend (NIV, NET)]
my eye pours out tears to God,
21 and it argues for a mortal with God,
and *as* a human for his friend.

Job’s Thoughts Return to Death...

- 22 Indeed, *after* a few years have come,
then I will go *the way from which* I will not return.
- 17:1 “My spirit is pulled down; my days are extinguished;
the graveyard is for me.

...And He Looks Once More at His Friends

- 2 Surely mockery *is* with me,
and my eye rests on their provocation.
- 3 Please lay down a pledge for me with yourself;
who *is* he *who* will give security for my hand?
- 4 Indeed, you have closed their mind from understanding;
therefore, you will not let *them* triumph.
- 5 He denounces friends for reward,
so his children’s eyes will fail.
- 6 “And he has made me a proverb for *the* peoples,
and I am one before whom people spit.
- 7 And my eye has grown dim from grief,
and the limbs of my body *are* all like a shadow.
- 8 *The* upright are appalled at this,
and *the* innocent excites himself over *the* godless.
- 9 But *the* righteous holds on to his way,
and he who has clean hands increases in strength.

Job Sarcastically Asks His Friends to Share Their Wisdom

- 10 But all of you must return—please come!
But I shall not find a wise *person* among you.
- 11 “My days are past; my plans are broken down—
even the desires of my heart.
- 12 They make night into day,

saying, 'Light is near to darkness.'

- 13 If I hope *for* Sheol *as* my house,
if I spread my couch in the darkness,
14 *if* I call to the pit, 'You *are* my father,'
to the maggot, 'You *are* my mother or my sister,'
15 where then *is* my hope?
And who will see my hope?
16 Will they go down *to* the bars of Sheol?
Or shall we descend together into the dust?"

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