

September 12  
Job 15-17

Once again Eliphaz speaks in Chapter 15. We find him saying many truthful and helpful things. I particularly like what he has to say about the folly of materialism. Of the wicked man who prospers in the world by acquiring things Eliphaz says: "Let him not deceive himself by trusting what is worthless. For he will get nothing in return. Before his time, he will be paid in full...the company of the godless will be barren and fire will consume the tents of those who love bribes." That is great advice - it would have been very useful to say that to Lot, for example, but it wasn't relevant to Job's situation at all, and it wasn't helpful.

Job can only shake his head when Eliphaz has finished and say, 'If you were in my place I could make the same kind of speeches you are. I could accuse you of being a terrible sinner, a hypocrite, a secret rebel against God. But I wouldn't do that. If I were in your position, instead, "my mouth would encourage you and comfort from my lips would bring you relief.'"

As you read these words today, did you think about hurting people you may have seen through the years? Have you been more like Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar than a comforter like Job really needed? I hope we all make a great effort to have a mouth to encourage and words to bring relief to the hurting.

These men were fantastic when they were silent, but blaming a person for natural disasters - individually or corporately - is not appropriate.

Did you notice on 9/11 or after hurricane Katrina, Christians were quick to point out that these natural disasters must be a judgment for sin. Then they pointed out the exact sins - and they just happened to be in line with the same issues as these leaders' political agenda. Hmmm..... They make the same mistake as Job's friends.

Well, Job's friends have let him down "big time". They are 'miserable comforters', so he can only hope for help in some other quarter. Chapter 17 ends with this expression of hope: "Even now my witness is in heaven. My advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God. On behalf of a man, He pleads for his friend". Did Job really know that? Or was he just hoping? In I John it says - "We have an advocate - one who speaks to the Father in our

defense - Jesus Christ the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the sins of the whole world.”

“What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear;  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.  
Oh what peace we often forfeit. Oh what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.”

I am thankful for the godly example of Job. But today I am so glad that in the progress of revelation what he only saw “through a mirror darkly”, I can see by the clear light of the Gospel.