**Deceptive Counsel**

**And Job’s Accusations**

**Against God**

**Bad Counsel vs. Good Counsel**

* **Intro-Job’s Friends**
* **God himself said that these three friends of Job did not declare to him what was “right” but the fourth friend Elihu did*. Job didn’t speak what was right until he repented at the very last and before he was struck with sores on his body.***

***“…****the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy* ***two*** *friends: for* ***ye have not spoken of me* the thing that is *right,*** *as my servant Job* hath*” (Job 42:7).*

* **This means we should not take the three friends’ counsel as coming from God or as “good” because it was truth mixed with lies, but we do need to look at how it was used to confuse Job and by extension how it can confuse us when we hear these same things.** To hear what was rightly declared counsel, we must look at what Elihu said whom God didn’t reprove.

**Eliphaz and Bildad’s False Counsel**

* “**who ever perished being innocent?”** Job 4:7

Plenty of righteous man perish every day and thus were declaring Job to be guilty when he wasn’t

* **“secret” “vision of the night”** accused Job of him

believing he was “more just’ and “more pure’ than God

This statement of “a spirit” accused Job of Job thinking he was “more just” and “more pure” than God, when Job never said this.

* “**delivereth in 7 troubles**” “no evil touch thee” Job 5:19

There is no magic formula or number of times when God will deliver an individual. Evil can “touch” a righteous man often. Just ask Job.

* “**we have searched it**” Job 5;27

Often, men will say they “have searched out” a matter to convince us they are right. They were pretending to be scholars who knew all the right answers

* “**seek God betimes…make thee prosperous**” Job 8:5

Prosperity teaching is connected with how often we seek God according to these teachers.

* “**if thou wert pure and upright…make thee prosperous**” Job 8:6

More prosperity teaching. God doesn’t guarantee any of the righteous **economic** prosperity, though it is his will for us to prosper spiritually (see 3 John 2: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in good health, even as thy soul prospereth”)

* “**God will not cast away a perfect man”** Job 8:20

God does cast away righteous men. Ask John the apostle or any of a number of other castaways:(“But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”(1 Cor. 9:27)

* “…**is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous**” Job 22:3

Taught that God gets no pleasure that his saints are righteous, when in fact ***he does*** have pleasure that they are so: (“I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness.”) 1 Chron. 29:17

* **Eliphaz says that Job’s troubles come partly because he neglects widows**: “Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. Therefore snares *are* round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee” Job 22:9-10

This philosophy makes “grace no longer grace”

**Job’s Sins, Lies, and Self-Justification (continued)**

* Job says God is against him and poisoning him when scripture says “God be for us”

“For the arrows of the Almighty *are* within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array **against me**.” (Job 6:4)

* Job says because of his hopelessness of being left in the grave, he “will complain…” Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; **I will complain in the bitterness of my soul**.” (Job 7:11)
* Job accused God of counting him as his “enemy”-(“counteth me…as one of his enemies” Job 19:11)

Job makes an indictment against God that he counts his children as “enemies.” Job implies that when God causes suffering in our lives, **he is unjust**. **Any accusation against God is accusing God of wrongdoing which is accusing him of sin.**

* Job said God was “not there” and that he couldn’t “behold him”

“I go forward, but he is not there” …”can not behold him” Job 23:9

We know that God “will never leave us nor forsake us” and this too is a lie and an accusation against the Lord that he abandons us during our time of need.

* Job claims God hasn’t preserved him any more:

“Oh that I were as in months past…when God preserved me” Job 29:3

The scriptures say that the Lord does indeed preserve his saints: “ Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.” Ps. 97:10

* Job claims God doesn’t hear him (“thou dost not hear me” Job 30:20)…yet scriptures say that he does…

“The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, Ps. 34:17

* Job claims God is cruel to him (“cruel to me” Job 30:21), but scriptures say he is cruel only to the sinners who reject him for good: “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.” Isa. 13;9

**Intermission**

**Elihu’s (the 4th friend’s) Reproof of Job**

* **Elihu said Job “goeth in company with the workers of inquity, and walketh with wicked men** (Job 34:8)” “My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of his answers for wicked men” (Job 35:36)- in direct reference to Job’s three friends. Job was in rebellion fellowshipping and walking with wicked men.
* **According to Elihu, the righteous friend, Job justified himself**

“So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he *was* righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: **against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself** **rather than God**.” (see Job 29-31 for Job’s continued justification of himself and his actions)

**Some of Job’s self justification:**

* Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him Job 29:12
* Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. ( Job 32:1-2) **(See all of in chapters 29-31)**
* **Elihu said Job was not as clean as he thought**: He quoted Job as follows: “I am clean without transgression, I *am* innocent; neither *is there* iniquity in me. Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy,” Elihu then says: “**Behold, *in* this thou art not just**: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man. (Job 33;9,10,12)
* **Elihu says Job strove with God**: (“Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters. Job 33:13.) Strife is sin: “**Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Is. 45;9**

**God’s Reproof of Job**

* **Who *is* this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge**? **Gird up now thy loins like a man**; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Job 38:1-2

God said Job “darkened counsel without knowledge” which scripturally means Job took God’s counsel and corrupted it, (Rom. 1:21, 11:10) and he did it based on his own finite, miniscule knowledge. God also told Job to be a “man” and that his complaining was obviously not characteristic of a “man”

* Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *him*? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Job 40:2

**It is interesting how God says our complaints to him are like us “instructing” him**. It should make us stop and consider the foolishness of that action.

* **Gird up thy loins now like a man**: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? **wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous**? Job 40:7-8

Complaining and moaning are also akin to condemning the Lord and justifying ourselves which was Job’s main sin

**Job’s repentance and ours**

* ‘**Behold, I am vile**; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Job 40:4.
* Job 42:1-6 “I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee. Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but **now mine eye seeth thee**…**therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not**. Wherefore **I abhor *myself***, and repent in dust and ashes.
* We, like Job, should “abhor ourselves” in light of our complaints against God, which end up being accusations against his character
* We, like Job, should repent and give God the benefit by realizing God’s ways are much more “wonderful” than we understand
* We, like Job, should realize we are “darkening the counsel of God” when we question, complain, and assume God is “punishing” us or “rewarding” us
  + We, like Job, should realize that we are “without knowledge” in comparison’s to God’s knowledge of our suffering or any situation

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Do we understand how entertaining the unscriptural subtleties of bad counsel affects our own perceptions of the Lord like it did for Job?
2. Do we see the **relationship between complaining, suffering, and accusing** the Lord and how damaging this is to our walk?
3. Do we see how the purposes of God are greater than our sufferings and how they are for God’s glory
4. Do we see the love of God for us in our sufferings?

**“That which I see not teach thou me” Job 35:32**