

# “What Is Man?”

## Job 15:1-35

This is the second discourse by Eliphaz (he was the first one to respond to Job’s situation). He is responding to Job’s replies to his three friends, and he stays with the general theme – that Job was a sinner, and it was his sin that caused his problem. Eliphaz goes a bit further this time, determining that Job was not only a sinner before this event started but his response to his friends, and his conversation with God showed him to be a wicked man – even more so now than at the beginning.

Of course, what Eliphaz says about Job wasn’t any more right this time than it was the first time, but what he states about man is, for the most part, true. And, what he says about God is absolutely true.

Eliphaz is making some comparisons here between a wise man, God, and a wicked man.

### **I. IS HE WISE? – vs. 1-13**

As before, these statements are true, they just weren’t true of Job.

#### **A. A wise man wouldn’t “utter vain knowledge” – vs. 2**

1. Eliphaz was saying that what Job had said in answer to their comments was “vain” – empty or useless.
2. To “fill his belly with the east wind” is described by one author as:
  - a) “And fill his belly” – Fill his mind with unsubstantial arguments or sentiments - as

little fitted for utility as the east wind is for food. The image is, "he fills himself with mere wind, and then blows it out under pretence of delivering the maxims of wisdom."

- b) "With the east wind" – The east wind was not only tempestuous and vehement, but sultry, and destructive to vegetation. It passed over vast deserts, and was characterized by great dryness and heat. It is used here to denote a manner of discourse that had in it nothing profitable. (Albert Barnes)

***B. A wise man wouldn't "reason with unprofitable talk" – vs. 3***

***1 Timothy 6:3-5***

<sup>3</sup> If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

<sup>4</sup> He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

<sup>5</sup> Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

***C. A wise man wouldn't let his speech condemn him – vs. 4-6***

1. In verse 4 Eliphaz is saying that Job, in his reply to them, and his discourse with God, had, in essence, reduced prayer to a useless endeavor ("restrainest").

2. In verses 5-6 he says that the very words Job was speaking showed his sin, and a wise, good man wouldn't let that happen.

Mark 7:21-22

<sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

<sup>22</sup> Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

James 1:26

<sup>26</sup> If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

***D. A wise man wouldn't act like he knew more about God than anyone else – vs. 7-10***

1. Eliphaz asks Job (vs. 7) if he thought that he was the first man to be born – in other words, he was chiding Job for acting like he was the one to whom God had imparted all the original knowledge (like Adam).
2. In verse 8 he accuses him of thinking that he was the only one that had wisdom – that he was “restraining” wisdom for himself – reducing it to just one person.
3. In verses 9-10 he points out to Job that he didn't know anything that they didn't know, for after all, the old, wise men were on their side (doesn't actually mean that these three were so much older than Job –

just that those that they knew and counseled with were).

***E. A wise man would know when to keep quiet – vs. 11-13***

**II. IS HE GOD? – vs. 14-19**

***A. Compared to God, man is unclean – vs. 14***

Ecclesiastes 7:20

<sup>20</sup> For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Ecclesiastes 7:29

<sup>29</sup> Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

Romans 7:18

<sup>18</sup> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Galatians 3:22

<sup>22</sup> But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

***B. Compared to God, all of creation that man has touched is unclean – vs. 15***

1. In the first part of this verse, Eliphaz is stating the point that God doesn't put any "trust in his saints" – that is, because man is sinful, there is no hope of him being able to come to a place where he can stand righteously before God – that's why He

sent His Son to pay the price for our sin so that we can stand righteously before God.

2. In the second part of the verse, he is stating that even if God searched all of creation, there is nothing that could satisfactorily pay that price for it has all been made unclean by man's sin.

***C. Compared to the rest of creation, man is "filthy" – vs. 16***

***D. These truths about God have been known since Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden – vs. 17-19***

### **III. IS HE WICKED? – vs. 20-35**

Some of these things are true and some of them are not. Eliphaz, like his two friends, assumed that wicked men were miserable, poor wretches, and that good men were "healthy, wealthy and wise." That, of course, is not true.

***A. He said that, in his view, wicked, sinful men lived in "pain all his days" – vs. 21-22.***

***B. He said that, in his view, wicked men were poor beggars – vs. 23, 28-29.***

***C. He said that, in his view, wicked men lived in fear because of how they treat God – vs. 24-25, 30.***

***D. He said that, in his view, wicked men are so proud and insolent that they would even wage a war against God if they***

***thought it would gain them anything – vs. 26-27.***

1. Verse 26

- a) "He" – wicked man
- b) "Runneth – with unbridled aggression and hatred
- c) "Even on his neck" – it's not saying that the wicked man ran upon the neck of God, but rather ran at God with his neck erect, in arrogance and pride, confident that he could destroy God.

2. Verse 27 – this verse is speaking of the fact that because the wicked man here spoken of was wealthy and a man of position (being fat in Bible times was a show to the world of the wealth and position someone had attained) he thought that he could defeat God, or at least didn't have to be concerned about Him.

**Deuteronomy 32:15**

<sup>15</sup> But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

**Psalms 17:8-10**

<sup>8</sup> Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

<sup>9</sup> From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about.

<sup>10</sup> They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.

Matthew 19:24

<sup>24</sup> And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

***E. He said that, in his view, wicked men were vain, and all they lived for was vanity, and it would someday be consumed – vs. 31-35.***

Conclusion: As the title asks, "What is man?" If he is wise, he will put his trust in Christ, for God will require payment for his sin. Only those viewed as wicked in the Bible reject Christ.