

**Job 11:1 ¶ Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,**

**Job 11:2 Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?**

**Job 11:3 Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?**

Now, the third friend Zophar the Naamathite speaks to Job in judgment, not with comfort, pity or mercy. He declares that he can't let Job's words go unanswered. Does Job actually think they will believe he is innocent just because he says so? Does Job think that *bragging* (from the Hebrew for "lies") about his innocence should prevent them from rebuking him?

**Job 11:4 For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.**

**Job 11:5 But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;**

**Job 11:6 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that *they are* double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee *less than* thine iniquity *deserveth*.**

Zophar notes that Job had declared that the principles he lived by were pure (clean unmixed, not polluted) and that he was innocent. Zophar wishes that God would speak out against Job and show him how wrong he is—that he would show him what was blinding him from seeing the truth. He tells Job that God isn't judging him as harshly as his sin deserves—a truth that applies to us all.

Again, this "friend" assumes Job's guilt in light of circumstances. We learned in the first chapter that circumstances are not a valid indicator of a person's standing before God. He is basically declaring Job a hypocrite. I am reminded of the old saying, "With friends like this, who needs enemies?"

I liked Stedman's summary: "You can almost see Zophar shaking his fist in righteous indignation in Job's face. He accuses Job of wordiness, of foolishness, of mockery, of self-righteous smugness. He says that Job's punishment is richly deserved; that he is only getting what is coming to him, and not even all of that. What a sweetheart this man is!"

Spurgeon makes a thoughtful application from verse 6: "Oh, that God would enable you, dear friends, to see your sin, and make you perceive that there is a double meaning in his law, — a deep, underlying, spiritual meaning, as well as that which is apparent on the surface, so that a man may be guilty of transgression even when he thinks it is not so! Oh, that God would unveil the secrets of his wisdom so as to make you see that he is wiser than all his works, that his hidden wisdom is double that which you have been able to perceive in nature, or in providence, and infinitely greater than he has ever made to appear before men's eyes."

**Job 11:7 ¶ Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?**

**Job 11:8 It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?**

**Job 11:9** The measure thereof *is* longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

**Job 11:10** If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

**Job 11:11** For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider *it*?

**Job 11:12** For vain man would be wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass's colt.

Zophar rightly points out that God is far beyond our understanding. He also rightly states that no one can prevent Him from doing anything; He is omnipotent. God knows who is wicked and knows everything wicked thing they do; He can't just ignore it.

I like the NRSV wording for verse 12: "*But a stupid person will get understanding, when a wild ass is born human.*"

I think Zophar is telling Job not to act like a foolish, stupid man.

**Job 11:13** ¶ If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

**Job 11:14** If iniquity *be* in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

**Job 11:15** For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:

**Job 11:16** Because thou shalt forget *thy* misery, *and* remember *it* as waters that pass away:

**Job 11:17** And *thine* age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

**Job 11:18** And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig *about thee*, *and* thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

**Job 11:19** Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make *thee* afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.

After rebuking Job so harshly and reminding him of God's greatness, Zophar urges Job to humble himself and direct his heart in prayer to God. If he has sinned, admit it and get rid of it. Once he does that, he will be happier and no longer live in fear and able to lift his face with no shame. He can forget his misery like water that has flowed away. His life will no longer be filled with darkness. Job could once again live confident in his faith in God and look to the future with hope; he could sleep in safety and security. Once again, many would come to seek his favor.

Zophar's advice in this section is good advice for the man who is guilty of sin deserving judgment. However, it does not apply to Job.

**Job 11:20** But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope *shall be as* the giving up of the ghost.

Still, Zophar closes with a warning. The wicked will be destroyed without fail; they have no hope.

Again, I liked Stedman's observation: "This is the difference between theology and the experience of a man taught by the Spirit. Theology can be very clear and right, but it is all in the head. When you are dealing with the hurting problems of life, you must add a deeper dimension -- that compassion that Jesus manifested, that sympathy of touch that identified with the hurt and opened the door of the spirit to receiving what light might be given through the words."