

Job 22
July 19, 2026

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: I'm going to open with the question Eliphaz is going to ask Job because it's actually an intriguing question: "Can we be of benefit to God? What does God gain if our ways are blameless? It's a classic "What's in it for God?!"

Q: So if God gains nothing from our obedience, and we can't earn his favor through our conduct, what actually motivates us to live for him?"

Transition: "If God doesn't benefit from our obedience, perhaps the real question isn't 'What's in it for God?' but 'What has God already done for me?'" This reframes the entire conversation from *transaction to transformation—from earning divine favor to responding to divine love*. It positions [Job 22](#)'s challenge not as a threat but as an invitation to examine whether your obedience flows from gratitude for grace already received rather than from fear of punishment or hope for reward. Let's listen to Eliphaz as he gives Job an earful. Let's begin.

BOOK:

Eliphaz

22 Then Eliphaz the Temanite replied:

² "Can a man be of benefit to God?

Can even a wise man benefit him?

³ What pleasure would it give the Almighty if you were righteous?

What would he gain if your ways were blameless?

⁴ "Is it for your piety that he rebukes you
and brings charges against you?

⁵ Is not your wickedness great?

Are not your sins endless?

⁶ You demanded security from your brothers for no reason;
you stripped men of their clothing, leaving them naked.

⁷ You gave no water to the weary
and you withheld food from the hungry,

⁸ though you were a powerful man, owning land—
an honored man, living on it.

⁹ And you sent widows away empty-handed
and broke the strength of the fatherless.

¹⁰ That is why snares are all around you,
why sudden peril terrifies you,

¹¹ why it is so dark you cannot see,
and why a flood of water covers you.

¹² "Is not God in the heights of heaven?
And see how lofty are the highest stars!

¹³ Yet you say, 'What does God know?
Does he judge through such darkness?

¹⁴ Thick clouds veil him, so he does not see us
as he goes about in the vaulted heavens.’
¹⁵ Will you keep to the old path
that evil men have trod?
¹⁶ They were carried off before their time,
their foundations washed away by a flood.
¹⁷ They said to God, ‘Leave us alone!
What can the Almighty do to us?’
¹⁸ Yet it was he who filled their houses with good things,
so I stand aloof from the counsel of the wicked.
¹⁹ “The righteous see their ruin and rejoice;
the innocent mock them, saying,
²⁰ ‘Surely our foes are destroyed,
and fire devours their wealth.’
²¹ “Submit to God and be at peace with him;
in this way prosperity will come to you.
²² Accept instruction from his mouth
and lay up his words in your heart.
²³ If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored:
If you remove wickedness far from your tent
²⁴ and assign your nuggets to the dust,
your gold of Ophir to the rocks in the ravines,
²⁵ then the Almighty will be your gold,
the choicest silver for you.
²⁶ Surely then you will find delight in the Almighty
and will lift up your face to God.
²⁷ You will pray to him, and he will hear you,
and you will fulfill your vows.
²⁸ What you decide on will be done,
and light will shine on your ways.
²⁹ When men are brought low and you say, ‘Lift them up!’
then he will save the downcast.
³⁰ He will deliver even one who is not innocent,
who will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands.”

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What stood out to you? What questions do you have? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about man? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit? [Let people engage]

Q: What is your takeaway? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Recognize False Accusation as Spiritual Abuse

Eliphaz makes accusations without evidence, driven by a desire to condemn Job regardless of facts¹. This pattern remains devastatingly common in Christian communities. Many congregations harbor members who constantly condemn pastors, church officers, or fellow believers without any factual basis¹. [Job 22](#) demands that believers examine whether they've become accusers—people who construct narratives of guilt around suffering without investigation or compassion. Before concluding that someone's hardship reveals hidden sin, ask yourself: Do I actually know this person's circumstances, or am I projecting my theology onto their pain? Eliphaz didn't even live in Job's territory, yet he announced accusations publicly without investigating whether they were true². The application is stark: refuse to participate in character assassination disguised as spiritual concern.

Application 2: Examine Your Theology of God's Pleasure

Eliphaz's accusation of pride assumes Job believed his character and conduct were important to God, reflecting a theology centered on a distant Judge rather than a Friend of sinners². Yet God's people bring Him either joy or sorrow, and He is not a passive, distant God who doesn't identify with His people but delights in them as they delight in Him². This reframes the entire conversation: your obedience matters not because God needs it, but because God loves you and takes pleasure in your flourishing. The application invites honest reflection: Are you serving a distant Judge who demands performance, or a loving Father who delights in your growth?

Application 3: Guard Against Weaponizing Suffering as Proof of Sin

Eliphaz and his friends believe Job's great troubles prove he must be a very great sinner¹—yet it was the greatness of Job's righteousness that actually provoked the afflictions¹. When you encounter someone experiencing severe hardship, resist the temptation to construct a moral explanation. Suffering doesn't automatically indicate divine punishment; sometimes it indicates divine trust.

1. John G. Butler, [*Job: The Suffering Saint*](#), Bible Biography Series (Clinton, IA: LBC Publications, 2008), [305–306](#).
2. Warren W. Wiersbe, [*Be Patient*](#), “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), [89–90](#).

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W.W. (1996). *Be Patient*. (pp. 88-93) Victor Books

Order in the Court!

What should have been an encouraging discussion among friends had become an angry and painful debate. Instead of trying to calm things down, Eliphaz assumed the office of prosecuting attorney and turned the debate into a trial. It was three against one as Job sat on the ash heap and listened to his friends lie about him. According to the Jewish Talmud, "The slanderous tongue kills three: the slandered, the slanderer, and him who listens to the slander." At the ash heap in Uz, it was death all around!

1. Three false accusations (Job 22:1–30)

Like any effective attorney, Eliphaz had the case well in hand and his brief all prepared. He made three serious accusations against Job: he is a sinner (Job 22:1–11), he is hiding his sins (vv. 12–20), and he must confess his sins and repent before God can help him (vv. 21–30).

Job is a sinner (Job 22:1–11). Eliphaz can't resist shooting a sarcastic barb at Job. "Is it for your piety that He [God] rebukes you and brings charges against you?" (v. 4, NIV) Courts don't try people for their righteousness but for their lawlessness! Therefore, since God has sent terrible judgments upon Job, he must be guilty of sin. "Is not your wickedness great? Are not your sins endless?" (v. 5, NIV) But Eliphaz missed the point that Job had been making: "Why does God send the punishment *before He arrests me, reads the indictment, and conducts the trial?*" It all seemed unfair.

Eliphaz first accused Job of the sin of *pride* (vv. 1–3). Job was acting as though his character and conduct were important to God and beneficial to Him in some way. Eliphaz's theology centered around a distant God who was the Judge of the world but not the Friend of sinners.

But Job's character and conduct *were* important to God, *for God was using Job to silence the devil*. Neither Job nor his three friends knew God's hidden plan, but Job had faith to believe that God was achieving some purpose in his life and would one day vindicate him. Furthermore, the character and behavior of God's people *are* important to the Lord because His people bring Him either joy or sorrow (1 Thes. 4:1; Heb. 11:5; Gen. 6:5–6; Ps. 37:23). He is not a passive, distant God who does not identify with His people but the God who delights in them as they delight in Him (Ps. 18:19; Isa. 63:9; Heb. 4:14–16).

As God's children, we should follow the example of Jesus who said, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). Then the Father will be able to say of us as He said of Jesus, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

Along with pride, Eliphaz accused Job of *covetousness* (Job 22:6). He was a greedy man who abused people to acquire more wealth. He used his power and reputation (v. 8) to intimidate people and rob them. In the Mosaic Law, a creditor could take security from a debtor but not anything that would jeopardize his work, his health, or his dignity as a human being (Ex. 22:25–27; Deut. 24:10–13). Eliphaz accused Job of taking security from his brothers when none was

needed, and he left people naked because he took their clothing from them until they paid their debts!

Eliphaz didn't even live in Job's territory, so how would he know how Job had treated people in his business dealings? Had some of Job's enemies passed these stories to Eliphaz? If so, he should have investigated the charges before announcing them publicly. The whole thing was pure fabrication, a feeble attempt to discredit a godly man who had helped many people (Job 29:11–17).

Job's third great sin was *lack of mercy and compassion* (22:7–9), which was a sin of omission. No wonder the Lord was not answering Job's prayers! "Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard" (Prov. 21:13). Job had turned away the weary, the hungry, the widows, and the orphans, instead of sharing with them out of his rich resources. Since showing hospitality is one of the first laws of the East, Job's sin was especially heinous.

Throughout Scripture, God shows a great concern for the poor, especially widows and orphans, and expresses anger at those who oppress the poor and exploit them (Ex. 22:22; Deut. 24:17, 26:12). The prophets scathingly denounced leaders, both political and religious, who oppressed the needy and robbed the poor (Isa. 1:17; Jer. 7:6; 22:1–4; Amos 4:1; 5:11; 8:4–10). Jesus had a special concern for the poor (Luke 4:16–19; Matt. 11:5), and the early church followed His example (Gal. 2:10; James 1:27; 2:1–9; Acts 6:1; 1 Tim. 5:1–16). The church *today* needs to follow that example.

Eliphaz clinched his first point with evidence anybody could see: Job was suffering great trials, which were the consequences of his many sins (Job 22:10–11). Why else would he be in darkness, danger, and the depths of suffering? This was the hand of God indicating that Job was a godless man.

The people who were standing around and listening to the discussion must have been shocked when they heard these accusations against their neighbor Job. They must have looked at each other and asked, "How can this be? Why didn't we know about Job's wickedness?" Eliphaz's next point answered their question.

Job is hiding his sins (Job 22:12–20). In other words, Job was a hypocrite, a statement that was made—or hinted at—more than once since the discussion began. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish," said Bildad (8:13). "For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate," said Eliphaz (15:34). And Zophar said, "The joy of the hypocrite [is] but for a moment" (20:5).

A hypocrite is not a person who fails to reach his desired spiritual goals, because all of us fail in one way or another. A hypocrite is a person who doesn't even try to reach any goals, *but he makes people think that he has*. His profession and his practice never meet. The Puritan preacher Stephen Charnock said, "It is a sad thing to be Christians at a supper, heathens in our shops, and devils in our closets."

Eliphaz advised Job to *look up* (22:12–14) and realize that nobody can hide anything from God. A hypocrite encourages himself in his sin by saying, "The Lord doesn't know and doesn't care"

(see Ps. 10). But God sees and knows all things, and the hypocrite can't hide his sins from the Lord. God may not judge immediately, but eventually judgment will fall.

Then Eliphaz advised Job to *look back* (vv. 15–18) and remember what has happened to sinners in the past. Job had made it clear that he had nothing to do with “the counsel of the wicked” (21:16), but Eliphaz accused him of walking on that very path (22:15). History shows that hypocrites can hide their sins for only so long, and then their sins find them out. God is not only patient with them, but He is good to them and fills their houses with good things (v. 18). The fact that Job was a very wealthy man was evidence of God's kindness and not Job's righteousness. Poor Job! No matter which way he turned or how he tried to reason with his accusers, he was wasting his time and energy. First they said that God blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked, and now Eliphaz claims that God blesses the hypocrite and fills his house with good things!

The tragedy of hypocrisy is not only that God sends judgment, but that hypocrisy brings its own judgment. It destroys character; and when character is gone, when the salt has lost its flavor (see Matt. 5:13), what does a person have left?

It has well been said that the highest reward for a faithful life is not what you get for it but what you become by it. Bishop Brooke Westcott said, “Great occasions do not make heroes or cowards; they simply unveil them to the eyes of men. Silently and imperceptibly, as we wake or sleep, we grow strong or we grow weak, and at last some crisis shows what we have become.” *Job must repent of his sins (Job 22:21–30)*. Eliphaz was sincere in his appeal to Job, just as Zophar was sincere when he asked Job to return to God (11:13–20). “Submit to God and be at peace with Him; in this way prosperity will come to you” (22:21, NIV). The word translated “prosperity” means “good of every kind.” Of course, a hypocrite should return to God, not just to get out of trouble and restore his or her fortunes, but to please and glorify God in the rebuilding of character and service.

What does it mean to “submit to God”? It means to stop fighting God and accept His terms of peace (James 4:1–10). It also means to listen to His Word and obey what God says (Job 22:22). A sinner must put away sin (v. 23) and make God his greatest treasure (v. 25); he must pray and seek God's face (v. 27).

What does God promise to those who repent and return to Him? God will restore them (v. 23) and make Himself precious to them (v. 25) so that all their delight will be in the Lord and not in earthly wealth or pleasure (v. 26). God will answer their prayers and enable them to do His will (v. 27) as He gives direction and light (v. 28). Because they are restored to fellowship with God, they can help others who have fallen (vv. 29–30).

Eliphaz says some excellent things in this appeal, but he says them to the wrong man. When we get to the end of the book, we will discover that it is Eliphaz and his two friends who are out of fellowship with God. They will need Job to intercede for them so they can be restored (42:7–10). If you were Job, how would you respond to this appeal?

Zuck, R. B. (1985). *Job*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, pp. 745-746) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

1. Eliphaz's third speech (chap. 22)

Eliphaz opened this speech abruptly without even mentioning Job's wordiness. He seemed determined to bring Job to his knees, to force him to repent for his wrongdoing.

a. God's disinterest in Job (22:1–5)

22:1–3. Man's goodness is of no **benefit to God**; He would **gain** nothing if Job **were righteous** or **blameless**, as Job so vociferously affirmed. Since God is not affected by whether one person is prosperous and another poor (cf. 21:23–26), they must be that way because of their righteousness or lack of it. How else could one explain such seeming indiscriminate conditions? **Eliphaz** simply could not accept the idea that God would be responsible for any deviations from justice.

22:4–5. Therefore it was totally unreasonable, Eliphaz said, for Job to think that God would rebuke him for being righteous. Why would God bring **charges against** someone who was not guilty?

b. Job's social sins (22:6–11)

22:6–9. With no evidence, Eliphaz indicted Job for several social evils: (1) Job took **security** from others (**brothers** here, as in 19:13, means countrymen), **leaving them naked**. If a debtor gave his outer garment to a creditor as a pledge of payment, the garment was to be returned at night to protect the debtor from the cold (Ex. 22:26–27; Deut. 24:10–13). Failing to return such a garment was a sin. Later Job answered this false charge specifically (Job 31:19–22).

(2) Job refused to give **water** and **food** to people in need, even **though** he was **powerful** and **honored** and could obviously afford to give occasional meals to **hungry** travelers. Job also answered this false arraignment (31:16, 22).

(3) Abuse of **widows** and orphans, an atrocious felony (Ex. 22:22; Deut. 27:19; Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Zech. 7:10), was another indictment from Eliphaz. Again Job responded to this accusation (Job 31:16, 21–22). Certainly Eliphaz's theology was wrong when he lied in order to back up his position about Job's conduct.

22:10–11. **Snares**, terrifying **peril**, darkness, and a **flood** result from mistreating others, according to Eliphaz. Such a wicked person's life is hindered ("snares" is translated "trap" in 18:9), he is frightened (cf. 18:11; 20:25; also cf. 4:5; 21:6; 23:15–16), in darkness he is confused and frustrated (cf. 15:30; 18:18; 20:26), and he faces devastating catastrophes such as a flood (cf. 20:28). Job, of course, was experiencing all these problems, but not, as Eliphaz presumed, as consequences of sin.

c. Job's spiritual defiance (22:12–20)

22:12–14. Once again Eliphaz stressed God’s distance above man (cf. 4:17–19; 5:9; 15:14–16). Since **God** is so majestic, in **heaven** beyond the distant **stars**, how could Job be so insolent with **God**, questioning His knowledge and awareness of man and His ability to **judge** since He is separated from man by the **clouds**? But Eliphaz twisted what Job had said (21:22), thus again revealing the bankruptcy of his own airtight theological system. Job had said God *does* know, and that was the very thing that frustrated Job. Job had not said God cannot see man; in fact he affirmed just the opposite (7:17–20; 14:6).

22:15–18. The senior accuser then maligned Job for being a malicious sinner following the **path** (cf. 23:11) of **evil men who were carried off ... by a flood**, possibly the flood in Noah’s day. They defied **God**, telling Him to **leave them alone** (even though He blessed them), which was now what Job was wanting. This sneering quotation of what Job had just said (21:14–16) reveals Eliphaz’s hateful haughtiness. He then added, **I stand aloof from the counsel of the wicked**, an exact quotation of Job’s words (21:16), mockingly belittling Job for rejecting the wicked. Eliphaz wanted it known that *he* was rejecting the ideas of the wicked, but that he was doing so by **not** agreeing with wicked Job!

22:19–20. When sinners come to **their ruin**, then **righteous** people—Eliphaz and others—**rejoice** that justice is done. Job had said they could mock him (21:3), so now Eliphaz said he would gladly **mock** sinners (including Job!). Eliphaz, at first courteous (4:2), had now become unbelievably vicious. He even sounded like Bildad and Zophar, both of whom had spoken of the wicked person’s possessions being burned up (18:15; 20:26).

d. Eliphaz’s appeal for repentance (22:21–30)

22:21–30. Having conjured up homemade lies about Job and having twisted Job’s statements into falsehoods, Eliphaz again pleaded with Job to repent.

Eliphaz set forth what Job needed to do: (a) **Submit to God**, rather than questioning and accusing Him; (b) **be at (make) peace with Him**; (c) **accept** God’s teachings (as if Job were not willing to do that!); (d) assimilate and live out **His words**; (e) **return to the Almighty**; (f) get rid of **wickedness** (again assuming that Job was a secret sinner); and (g) quit trusting in wealth (**assign your nuggets to the dust, your gold of Ophir**; 28:16; Isa. 13:12; on the southwestern Arabian coast, **to the rocks in the ravines**). This last point was another false insinuation. How could Eliphaz prove that Job trusted in his material things? In fact he now had no gold in which to trust!

If Job would meet those conditions, Eliphaz proposed, God would then restore him and give him these blessings: (a) **prosperity** (Job 22:21), (b) restoration (v. 23) to fellowship with God, (c) trust in God (v. 25, **the Almighty will be your gold and silver**), (d) **delight in the Almighty** (the fifth time Eliphaz referred to God by that title in this chapter: vv. 3, 17, 23, 25–26), (e) fellowship with **God** (v. 26), (f) answered prayers (v. 27), (g) desire to **fulfill his vows** (v. 27), (h) success (v. 28), (i) help to other people who were **low** and discouraged (v. 29), (j) deliverance of others through his intercessory prayers offered from a clean life (v. 30).

Eliphaz’s point seemed to be that though Job’s piety would not affect God one way or the other, it would affect Job.

Garrett, D. A. (1998). The Poetic and Wisdom Books. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), Holman Concise Bible Commentary (p. 209). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Eliphaz's Third Response (22:1–30). Eliphaz now hit Job with a frontal assault. He directly accused Job of being a great sinner and particularly charged him with greed and oppression. But the attack began and ended on ironic notes, although Eliphaz did not know it. He sarcastically asked Job if God had rebuked him for his piety, when in fact that was the precise reason for Job's misfortune. He also promised that if Job would repent, he would be able to intercede for sinners. And Job would intercede—for Eliphaz.

The friends had nothing more to say. They repeatedly made their point on the lot of sinners. Their accusations against Job could hardly become any more brutal. Job now began to turn from them.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (Job22). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.