

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

**2 “If one ventures a word with you, will you be impatient?  
Yet who can keep from speaking?**

3 Behold, you have instructed many,  
and you have strengthened the weak hands.

4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling,  
and you have made firm the feeble knees.

5 But now it has come to you, and you are impatient;  
it touches you, and you are dismayed.

**6 Is not your fear of God your confidence,  
and the integrity of your ways your hope?**

**7 “Remember: who that was innocent ever perished?  
Or where were the upright cut off? Job 4:1-7**

Anyone who went to Sunday School as a kid knows, if you answer “*Jesus*” to any question the teacher asks, you have a great chance at being right. The same is true of the many questions in the book of Job. The answer is often “*Jesus*”.

Following Job’s opening lament, Eliphaz is the first of Job’s three friends to speak. Eliphaz’s initial questions (v.2) are rhetorical and introductory and are followed by an accusation. Eliphaz accuses his friend of inconsistency, because he claims Job once encouraged many suffering people, but is now exhibiting impatience and dismay during his own trial.

Whether or not there was a hint of truth to this accusation, there is no truth to the assumption Eliphaz makes next, when he asks Job, “***Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?***”. In asking this question, Eliphaz wrongly assumes Job’s suffering is a direct result of his personal sin. Finally, Eliphaz tries to reinforce his belief with his next question to Job, “***Remember: who that was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off?***”.

Jesus’ disciples once asked a similar question, “As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, “**Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?**”” (John 9:1-2). To which Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.” (John 9:3). Like the blind man, Job’s suffering was not the direct result of his personal sin, but that the works of

God would be displayed. Of course, this spiritual truth was ultimately displayed on the cross when the perfectly innocent and upright One perished and was cut off willingly for sinners to the glory of God the Father.

So, in all your suffering remember your situation isn't *necessarily* the direct result of something you've done (see John 5:14), rather God may have sovereignly brought it about to display His works, perhaps by relieving your suffering temporarily (Job's fortunes were restored and the blind man received his sight), but undoubtedly in eternity when He raises you from the dead to suffer no more. Also remember, you serve and are infinitely loved by the One who is the answer to the question, "***who that was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off?***". The One who, after dying, was raised, ascended, and is glorified in the presence of the Father as He was before the world existed (John 17:5).

In Christ,

Pastor Rich