

Counsel Based on Human Experience

by Theodore Epp

The sermon highlights the inaccuracy of Eliphaz's argument that suffering is always a result of sin, using examples from the Bible to show that suffering can be due to various reasons.

Scripture: Job 4:1

Topics: "Wisdom in Trials", "Suffering"

Description

Theodore Epp discusses the flawed reasoning of Eliphaz in the Book of Job, emphasizing that age and experience do not guarantee wisdom. Eliphaz's philosophy, rooted in personal observations, leads him to wrongly conclude that Job's suffering is a punishment for sin, reflecting a common misconception that trials are always deserved. Epp highlights the examples of David and Jesus, who suffered despite their innocence, to illustrate the inadequacy of Eliphaz's argument. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a deeper understanding of suffering that transcends simplistic judgments based on human experience.

Transcript

Job 4:1-7

Eliphaz was possibly the eldest of the group and supposedly the wisest also. However, superior age does not mean superior wisdom.

The philosophy of Eliphaz was based on what we will call general observations and spiritual illumination. He claimed to have some kind of vision, on which he laid a great deal of stress. Several times in Job 4 he stressed what he had seen and experienced.

Eliphaz used what is today called the psychological approach--he commended Job before he condemned him.

Eliphaz then leaned heavily on his observations, which were all related to his experience. No one, as far as he had seen, had ever perished if he was innocent.

Suffering, according to his experience, was always the result of God's judgment of sin. His conclusion was that Job was no exception to this rule and was being punished for some sin he had committed.

Some people have this idea today. They believe that if a person or a family is going through severe trials, such trials are deserved and are the result of sin.

If this were true, why did David suffer as he did before he became king? He had to run for his life, not because he had done wrong but because Saul was jealous of him.

And what about our Saviour Himself? He did not sin. In fact, He could not sin. And yet He suffered.

It is easy to see that the argument of Eliphaz was not correct.

"For I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute" (Luke 21:15, NASB).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/theodore-epp/counsel-based-on-human-experience/>

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