

## **RIGHT QUESTION, WRONG ANSWER**

### **The Book of Job**

The book of Job is thought to be one of the oldest manuscripts in the Bible. It has been the source of discussion for millennia concerning the thought of suffering and righteousness. Why good people suffer seems to be the prevailing drive of the debate, but I feel the more important question in the book is how sinful mankind can be reconciled with holy God. The drama of Job is a continued cycle of well-meaning friends encouraging Job to come clean and admit his sin, so God can remove His well-deserved judgment. This type of thinking fits easily into the mindset of humanity. We're all prone to think God operates this way. Had God not corrected this concept for us in the 7<sup>th</sup> verse of the last chapter, we might never have known that this great work is far deeper than a simple "why do bad things happen to good people" question. It's a cry from the heart of our compassionate Heavenly Father concerning how we can come to Him and be made whole. Job sets the dialogue in Job 9:2, "I know it is so of a truth; but how should man be just before God?" Job has some friends that seek to answer his dilemma. They give him WRONG answers to his RIGHT question.

### **HOW CAN SINFUL MAN BE JUSTIFIED BEFORE A HOLY GOD?**

#### **Wrong Answer #1 - Inquire of the spirits.**

4:12-17

Friend Eliphaz had a dream, and, in this dream, he concludes that man can't be made right with a holy God. Eliphaz is firmly convinced that his counsel is correct because his encounter seemed so real.

#### **Wrong Answer #2 - Listen to the wisdom of the ages.**

8:8-10

Friend Bildad's answer was to substitute the mind of man for the Word of God. The philosophers, mystics, and oracles of the ages have pondered the plight of humanity and concluded that we're basically in this thing alone, so eat drink and be merry, do the best you can, and it'll all pan out in end.

#### **Wrong Answer #3 - Practice the proper ritual.**

11:13-16

Friend Zophar encourages Job to meditate, develop a ceremony, and turn over a new leaf. This may be the most dangerous answer of all, because it sounds most logical. Millions of people follow this advice every week. It's called "Religion."

#### **God's Right Answer - Practice the proper ritual.**

9:32-33

Job concludes that he needs a mediator, one who can grab hold of God with one hand and mankind with the other and bring them both together. We know who Job was praying for, don't we?