

# JOB

## INTRODUCTION

The theme of the Book of Job is “Why do the righteous suffer? The theme is not why does suffering exist in a world which was created by an all-powerful and holy Creator-Redeemer God, but why do “good people” suffer?

Two basic issues must be faced by all Christians as we witness to a world where evil intensifies daily.

1. What is the cause of Evil? Is it caused by rebellion against the will of God or economic and social injustice, or genetic and environmental factors?
2. What is the explanation of evil?

Job’s wealth consisted of cattle and slaves like Abraham. Job appears as priest for the family. There is neither a central place of worship nor priesthood mentioned in the text of Job.

Job is both a pious and prosperous man. He lives east of Palestine in the Arabian desert.

The patience of Job is short lived. Three friends enter the world of Job’s hurt.

1. Eliphaz: begins by first showing sympathy, but later it is turned into an assertion of Job’s guilt.
2. Bildad: begins a verbal tirade against God for His irresponsible use of power in bringing Job into existence and permitting evil to elicit more than its just share of Job’s happy and prosperous life.
3. Zophar: first condemns what has been going on in the form of the “multitude of words,” then sets forth God’s incomprehensibility as balm for Job’s woes.

There were three cycles of speeches between these three men and Job.

In the last five chapters of Job, God shatters the silence. Only if God is sovereign Lord of heaven and earth is there grounds for human hope in the

midst of a tragedy-filled world where malignant forces perpetuate injustice in millions of lives. Human suffering is a problem fit for God!

Charges and countercharges are always delivered with an economy of words. Each dialogue is between two individuals only.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Job's wealth and piety.**

#### **Verse 1-5, Verse 1**

Job is identified with "the people of the east," Haran, that is, a location northeast of Palestine. Job is not described as a Jew but rather as a foreigner. Job's homeland is located near Idumea and Arabia. His name means "the hated one" or "aggressor".

He is pictured as a great near eastern potentate. Job's character is analyzed in four virtues.

1. Blameless, His character is without flaw or inconsistency. The Hebrew word does not mean sinless.
2. Upright, His life and behavior measured up to a standard; one who is upright in relationship to others.
3. Fearing God, means a relationship based on obedient reverences.
4. Avoiding evil, means turning away from evil and that Job deliberately and persistently chooses the good. Right living before God always means obedience to the will of the Lord; and reverence is the very foundation of obedience.

#### **Verse 2**

Following the analysis of Job's character, our text reveals the close connection between Job's uprightness and the Lord's reward of many children. Seven sons and three daughters were born to him.

#### **Verse 3**

Job was blessed with sheep, camels, oxen, and female donkeys. The female donkeys were valued for both their milk and their foals. They were also easier to

ride than the male donkeys. His wealth was so enormous that he was the greatest of all of the men of the east.

#### **Verse 4**

Even though the text states that the sons had their own homes, we do not know if they were married. Job's unmarried daughters stayed in their father's home.

The feast was probably a yearly affair. Each of the sons celebrated in his own home and their sisters were present at each feast.

#### **Verse 5**

It appears that Job did not attend any of the festive celebrations. For as soon as the sons and the daughters had completed the days of their feast, Job would summons them to his home inviting them to the sacrifices which he would offer.

The prescribed sacrifices were seven bulls and seven rams which he offered as burnt offerings. He offered the sacrifices in case his sons had sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

#### **Satan's insinuation.**

#### **Verse 6-10, Verse 6**

When the sons of God along with Satan came before God, Satan is challenged to find a single flaw in Job's character. Satan begins by questioning the motives of Job. The character of Satan is clearly defined. He will challenge the uprightness of Job, and inflict calamities on Job. Satan's game is that every man has his price!

#### **Verse 7**

God asks Satan to give an account of his doings. God's question does not imply ignorance rather it becomes a point of encounter. Satan responds that he has been roaming (walking or strolling) throughout the earth.

### **Verse 8**

Job is God's example of a righteous man. God asks Satan, "Have you turned your attention (your heart) to My servant Job?" In asking that question Yahweh sets forth Job as an example of perfect human loyalty to Himself.

### **Verse 9**

"Is it for nothing that Job fears Elohim?" That question is addressed to every one of us. Do God's good gifts come to those whose motives are self-interest? If we do good, good fortune follows as a reward; if we do evil, punishment follows.

### **Verse 10**

Satan declares, "No wonder Job is loyal. You have built a protective hedge with thorns for the purpose of protecting him. The thorn hedge is Job's prosperity! Everything Job does, he prospers. Little wonder that he is God's man. Job's possessions are literally overflowing in uncontrolled prosperity.

Satan asks and receives permission to test Job. Verses 11-12

### **Verse 11**

Satan suggests to Yahweh that if You remove the security of his wealth, he will curse You to Your face.

### **Verse 12**

Yahweh accepts Satan's challenge. What is the real motive of Job's piety? Will Job love God when His physical security is removed? Real piety must not be based on expecting reward or punishment. How relevant this issue is for contemporary man!

Job immediately is confronted with Satan's attack. The speed with which God allows Satan to afflict Job is surely evidence of God's complete trust in Job's integrity and piety.

## **The first trial, loss of possessions and loved ones.**

### **Verses 13-19, Verse 13**

Satan immediately proceeds to carry out the permitted testing. Swift disasters strike the household of Job. In rapid succession the entire lifestyle of God's servant has been violently removed.

Violence is basic to Satan's method in every age. How will Job respond to misfortune? How will he analyze his new condition—in view of his explicit trust in Yahweh?

### **Verse 14**

Life is progressing as usual; then Satan's plan begins. A messenger emphasizes the calm before the storm. "The oxen were ploughing," which describes the plans for the fall work was being fulfilled and then disaster strikes.

### **Verse 15**

"The Sabeans fell upon them." These people are those from the region now known as Yemen. This would imply a north Arabian identification. The lone surviving witness (the messenger) to the disaster bears the sad tidings, "I alone, escaped the sword."

### **Verse 16**

Even while he was still speaking disaster intensified. The first calamity came from the hands of man; the second from nature. The "fire of God" is probably lightning. The fire was so devastating that it literally "ate" all before it.

### **Verse 17**

First the Sabeans fell on them; then a marauding tribe of Chaldeans made a three-pronged attack on them.

### **Verses 18- 19**

Now disaster will strike deep into the very heart of Job's household. Before, property was the object of destruction, now persons. All the children are gathered in the house for the final hour of doom. Only a whirlwind could have struck the four corners of the house.

The first and third calamities were brought about by human agency and the second and fourth were the results of nature's violence. Satan has power over both men and nature. He has the greatest power in the universe, second only to our Creator-Redeemer God.

### **Job maintains his integrity.**

#### **Verse 20-22, Verse 20**

Job had received the agonizing news while seated. According to Near Eastern custom, he "arose" and "tore his robe" as a sign of grief. The robe was a mantle worn over the tunic by men of high social rank or by the high priest. Then follows the rite of mourning, that is, shaving his head.

Now Job falls to the ground in reverential awe, not in despair. Job has defeated Satan in the first series of catastrophes and now bows himself submissively to Yahweh's merciful grace.

#### **Verse 21**

Job now reveals his complete resignation to his tragedy. Satan's oath to God has thus far been completely broken. God's faith in His servant Job has been vindicated. Job's triumphant shout of victory is, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

#### **Verse 22**

In all these threatening circumstances, Job did not sin, either mentally or by some overt act like charging God with foolish (reproach or blame) behavior. Now we turn to Satan's most drastic measures. Will Job betray Yahweh?

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **The second trial, bodily suffering.**

#### **Verses 1-8, Verses 1-3**

Satan now begins his sustained attack on the "individual." Job's ultimate concern is neither things nor family, but his integrity before Yahweh. Strip him of all his values and security symbols and he will still reverence God.

The verb translated “holds fast” literally means to hold firmly or tenaciously to something.

#### **Verse 4**

“Skin after skin” means, “all that a man has he will give for his life.” The Lord gives Satan permission to get under Job’s skin, anything short of his death. Satan does not want Job dead because then he could never prove that Job’s piety rested in self-interest.

#### **Verses 5-6**

God has permitted Satan to only lightly touch Job, that is, externally and superficially. Now from “skin to skin,” into the depths of Job’s being—flesh and bone. Surely, now Job will revolt against Yahweh when He afflicts his flesh and bone. Such is Satan’s shrewd strategy. But stripped of honor and health, Job still fears God.

#### **Verse 7**

Job is afflicted with some unnamed but disfiguring disease which causes continual pain and sleeplessness. The first disease has been identified with leprosy. The Hebrew word means “to be inflamed, hot.” Thus, the disease which afflicts Job is an inflammation of the skin which causes sores and boils.

The symptoms of his despicable disease are presented throughout the Jobian drama: (1) inflamed eruptions, (2) intolerable itching, (3) disfigured appearance, (4) maggots in his ulcers, (5) terrifying dreams, (6) running tears which blind his eyes, (7) fetid breath, (8) emaciated body, (9) erosion of the bones, (10) blackening and peeling off of his skin.

#### **Verse 8**

Because of the intolerable itching, Job takes a broken piece of pottery “to scrape his body.” How much Lord? He sat among the ashes. This describes the dunghill outside of town. Here the rubbish was thrown. Children, outcasts, and dogs came here.

When tragedy came, men came here to sit, or roll in the ashes, or to throw ashes on their heads.

Job refuses to curse God. (Verses 9-10)

### **Verse 9**

Not Job, but his wife reacts as Satan intended. “Curse Elohim and die.” Resignation is not the chief attribute of Job’s wife. She like many of us, are only prepared for “good” not “evil” in God’s universe.

### **Verse 10**

The sufferer responds to his wife’s mindless suggestion. He calls her “foolish.” This is not a reflection on her intelligence, but rather on her moral character. David describes a fool as one, “Who says there is no God.” (Psalm 14:1)

The fool is one who wants to live as though there is no God before whom we will give an account of every thought and action. Job has accepted the loss of property and family. He here accepts his illness, in hope of resurrection.

Three friends come, and a further great trial begins (their insinuations).  
Verses 2:11-13

### **Verse 11**

Job’s three comforters are professional wise men from Edom. Their concern is both genuine and charitable. They find Job’s condition worse than they had expected and begin expressing the ritual gestures for mourning for the dead by a week-long silence. They wait for Job to break his silence before attempting to comfort him.

Three concerned wise men come to console Job.

1. Eliphaz, (probably means “God is fine gold”)—the Temanite. Teman is from a root meaning the right hand of “southland,” because when one faces the rising sun his right hand is to the south.
2. Bildad, (meaning “uncertain”) the Shuhite, Shuah is mentioned as a son of Abraham and Keturah.
3. Zophar, (means “young dove”)—the name appears only in Job the Naamathite.



The three made an appointment with Job for the purpose of consoling him.

### **Verse 12**

Job was so disfigured by the disease that they did not recognize him. As a sign of torturous grief each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust upon his head.

### **Verse 13**

The three wise men “sat down” with him on the ground. This was the Near Eastern custom for mourners. The seven days and nights were also the custom for mourning the dead. Surely they thought Job would die, so aggravated was his condition. Sympathy and grief comingled between the sufferer and the mourners.

## **CHAPTERS 3-14**

### **THE MEANING OF SILENCE—SPEECHES FULL OF SOUND AND FURY**

#### **CHAPTER 3**

Why me, Lord? Verses 1-26 He curses his day. Verses 1-10

#### **Verses 1-2**

Why me, Lord? We now encounter a series of alternate speeches by the three friends with Job’s response. We are presented with nine speeches by Job’s friends alternating with eight responses from Job.

The literary form is that of a lament, that is, a prayer of petition in which Job appeals to God for a hearing, describes his destitution, anxieties and attacks from his enemies, and asks God to break His silence and heal or explain his suffering.

Does suffering always imply guilt? Does a successful life always imply innocence? Job’s consolers only manage to intensify Job’s anguish. As Job’s condition worsens, the consolers persist in claiming that they are merely pronouncing God’s judgment on Job.

The central issue in Job’s trial is the nature of God, not the nature of suffering and evil. If God loves Job why all the suffering?

After seven days of silence, Job now breaks his silence as he “opens his mouth” and curses the day of his birth. Job must now face the present, but how and why?

### Verse 3

Job is so embittered that he wishes that his life had never begun. He even curses the man who brought the news of his birth to his father. Even in Job’s denial, God is indispensable. If He can control the days, why not control evil? Job, like others, wants darkness at noon. The good things in his life prior to his suffering did not produce such a response. “All sunshine makes the desert.”

### Verse 4

Our limited English vocabulary for darkness makes translation difficult in verses 4-6. Different words for darkness express everything that is mysterious and evil.

### Verse 5

Our text translates *salmawet* as the shadow of death. If the older view is correct, that is, that the word is a compound word from “shadow” and “death,” then the translation is sound; but more recent lexicography prefers *salmut* as the reading, thus the root for dark.

The word is used in the context where there is no thought of death—Amos 5:9; Job 28:3.

### Verse 6

“Let darkness seize it” in the sense of claim it for its own.

### Verse 7

Job asks that the night be “barren,” (Hebrew *galmud*), stony or unproductive. The same word is used in Isaiah 49:21 for “childlessness;” that is, barren. May the night never again see offspring, so that no one else experiences the misery known by Job. May the night be sterile, then surely suffering will cease.

### **Verse 8**

Out of Job's resentful heart comes only cursing. Curse—Curse! Job calls for a professional curser, that is, those “who are skilled to rouse up Leviathan,” meaning something coiled.

### **Verse 9**

The word *nesep* means twilight, either the morning or evening twilight. The reference here is surely to the morning stars Mercury and Venus. If they had remained dark, Job's day would not have come. Without the “light” of the dawn, he would not be able to see the new day.

### **Verse 10**

“My womb,” is reference to Job's mother's womb, that is, the womb from which I came. The night did not prevent the womb from conceiving, “nor hid trouble,” that is, toil, sorrow, and suffering from Job.

Now the sufferer turns from God to himself, and a new factor enters Job's complaint. The query “why” in verses 11-12, and again in verse 20, is a crucial new development.

Asks why he was born. (Verses 11-19)

### **Verse 11**

Job asks, “Why didn't I die at the time my mother gave birth to me?”

### **Verse 12**

“The knees” could refer to the father receiving the child as his own, or the mother receiving the child to nurse it.

### **Verse 13**

Job is now preoccupied with death. His measure of misery is that death would be better. Only when Job knows that his vindicator lives does he resolve his existential crisis. His sickness is then—not unto death.

#### **Verse 14**

Though the Hebrew could mean “rebuilt ruins,” it makes little sense in this passage for kings did not build among ruins. Perhaps the meaning is that “who build for themselves the ruins.” Nothing lasts forever.

#### **Verse 15**

Great kings were prosperous, but they, too, died. Rich and poor alike are leveled in death. If equality is unavailable in life, it is a virtue shared by all in death.

#### **Verse 16**

Job’s present misery blots out all the happy memories of the good years. We could not bear to carry every hurt (or joy) forever, so God’s grace is involved in our forgetfulness.

#### **Verse 17**

In Sheol, we are not troubled, we “cease from agitating” ourselves.

#### **Verse 18**

Even slaves suffer less than does Job. Captives who are in forced labor and are brutally treated are more at ease than Job.

#### **Verse 19**

In Sheol everyone is equal. The slave (servant) is free. And why he should go on living. (Verses 20-26)

#### **Verse 20**

In this verse “light” is life. The bitter in soul is plural, thus Job has reference to all those who suffer, not only himself.

#### **Verse 21**

The term “who long for death:” expresses Job’s eagerness for death. Buried treasure creates its own fever to dominate the searchers. Even the rumor of treasure creates almost uncontrolled excitement. This is the kind of frenzied search for death which is enslaving Job.

### **Verse 22**

Job searches “beyond measure,” for the place to house his body racked with excruciating pain. The grave would also free his agonizing soul. Spiritual hurt is always more painful than physical malady.

### **Verse 23**

Bewilderment intensifies because he cannot see any way out. “Whom God has hedged in,” in a restrictive sense, is that God has put a protective hedge about Job as said earlier in His conversation with Satan.

### **Verse 24**

“My groaning comes at the sight of my food, and my cries pour out like water.” “My groaning” is used here of the roaring of the lion and emphasizes Job’s loud cries.

### **Verse 25**

The torturous power of fear is actively controlling Job’s imagination. What new evil will befall him next?

### **Verse 26**

The patient submissiveness has turned to bitter complaint throughout his turmoil. But still Job has not cursed God! Surrounded by trouble, drowned by trouble, agitation keeps coming. Will it ever stop? What does it all mean? Why me, Lord?

## **CALAMITOUS COMFORTER—ELIPHAZ**

### **CHAPTERS 4-5**

Job should not complain; the righteous will not be cut off (mild rebuke).  
(Verses 1-11)

### **Verse 1**

Since Job has broken his silence, Eliphaz is now free to speak. He is presumably the oldest, thus the wisest, thus the first speaker.

He is also the most gracious and most eloquent. His deep esteem and profound sorrow for Job leaps from each phrase he utters. Eliphaz has been shocked at the fact that Job had wished death and has uttered no prayer for the recovery of prosperity and the joy of life.

Eliphaz asks Job, "Could you bear it? Are you physically and psychologically able to hear my analysis of your condition?" To Eliphaz, the calamities have been sent to punish Job for some sin or sins. Eliphaz has come to help Job examine his conscience.

### **Verse 2**

Eliphaz declares that if only Job would repent of his sins he could regain God's favor.

### **Verse 3**

First, he gently appeals to Job's own good advice to others in the past. The root of the word translated "instructed" means "discipline by suffering." Job has instructed many. His instruction has strengthened them, that is, from "weak hands" which hang down in helpless despair.

### **Verse 4**

His words have also strengthened "feeble knees."

### **Verse 5**

It is easy for a well man to give sound advice.

### **Verse 6**

"Your fear of God should sustain you." He should have confidence in his past faithfulness to God. Job's piety and integrity are being questioned—yet. Job is blameless.

### **Verse 7**

Each comforter, in his own way, sought recovery for Job. There is still hope, since he is alive. If Job will only confess his guilt and seek God's grace, recovery would follow. The power of confession has long since been clinically proven.

### **Verse 8**

“Those who plough iniquity” are those persons who are wicked.

### **Verse 9**

The wicked perish. This doctrine says that misfortune is Divine retribution.

This teaching is at the heart of America’s “Success Syndrome,” that is if you are prospering, you are being blessed; if you are in destitute circumstances, it is God’s way of expressing retributive justice.

God’s justice is likened to a scorching hot wind. Thanks be to God, Jesus repudiates this blasphemous and heretical instruction, Luke 13:1-5.

### **Verses 10-11**

The image of the lion is common in Near Eastern literature. When the roar dies down and the teeth of the lion are broken, it is powerless and can no longer hold the prey.

The Vision—no mortal can question God’s just acts. (Verses 12-21)

### **Verse 12**

Eliphaz now relates the content of a night’s vision to Job. The description is of the terrifying psychological effects of a nightmare.

### **Verse 13**

The Hebrew word *seippim* occurs only here and in 20:2. Its root meaning is probably “be disquieted” or deeply troubled. The deep sleep is the same that fell on Adam when God created the woman.

### **Verse 14**

The extreme form of pathological behavior manifested here reveals the terrible consequences of the nightmare long after the experience.

### **Verse 15**

Besides experience, Eliphaz brings a proof from a private revelation. He powerfully describes a mysterious audition.

In verse 12 he calls it a *dobar* or “word” and *semes* or a “whisper” which produced dread.

### **Verse 16**

It stood still. It is as though Eliphaz is attempting to catch his breath “as the horror of that moment returns to Eliphaz.” The awe-inspiring voice of silence is now contrasted with the voice of thunder.

### **Verse 17**

“Can a man be more righteous than God?” Job has never suggested that he was. Job has not yet attacked God’s holiness and righteousness. The meaning is that no man can be considered just and pure in comparison with God.

No one is blameless or innocent before our holy God. Eliphaz is emphasizing that Job should accept God’s verdict.

### **Verse 18**

The servants are the angels. The angels are charged with error.

### **Verse 19**

If angels err “how much more” a man whose body is a house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust. The “houses” are figures for bodies.

Man is compared to the moth. Man is crushed by God like man crushes a moth.

### **Verse 20**

Man’s life is quickly over “between morning and evening.”

### **Verse 21**

“Tent cord” is a technical term for pulling up stakes and ropes and moving on. Eliphaz’s speech is the contrast between men and angels, face to face with God, and not the fate of the wicked.

In essence, he says that man does not live long enough to acquire adequate wisdom to understand.



## **CHAPTER 5**

The fate of the wicked (foolish) is certain destruction. (Verses 1-7)

### **Verse 1**

None of the holy ones can save man. A sinner who refuses to repent cannot be forgiven, thus healed.

### **Verse 2**

This verse may be a proverbial saying which suggests that one should not get excited about that over which he has no control. Only the fool will die of indignation or jealousy.

### **Verses 3-5**

On center stage Eliphaz says that he himself has seen the fool take root.

The unrighteous often strive deep into the earth their strange roots. Prosperity is thus effectively presented by an analogy with a vigorously growing tree.

The effect of this experience of Eliphaz was that he immediately cursed the dwelling of the prosperous fool. In so doing, Eliphaz was merely expressing the prejudice of his cultural ethics.

When misfortune visits the head of the family, the entire family suffers.

They cannot receive justice at the city gate, which was the administrative center where justice was dispersed and other legal issues were considered.

A helpless unfortunate person was not likely to receive much consideration in the gate.

### **Verse 6**

Eliphaz commits a logical fallacy by asserting that because a fool meets disaster, all who meet disaster must be fools. He declares that Job is responsible for all of his misery.

### **Verse 7**

A contradiction appears once more in Eliphaz's speech. If trouble comes naturally and inevitably to man, then this claim is in conflict with verse 6, which says just the opposite.

"As the sparks fly upward" might refer to the Resheph, the Phoenician god of the lightning. A better translation would be as sparks fly upward, man falls into sin, and he is responsible for his own decisions.

My advice—return to God who rewards the righteous. (Verses 8-16)

### **Verse 8**

Job is not prepared to agree that his misfortunes are God's judgment on his sins.

In verse 1, Eliphaz had warned Job against appealing to angels for help. He should go directly to God. "Seeking God" is a vital theme in the prophets.

### **Verse 9**

Eliphaz reveals a very perceptive mind but often draws erroneous conclusions from his own analysis.

### **Verse 10**

God is Lord of Nature. He sends rain upon the fields, which is an example of God's power and benevolence. He who makes the barren places fruitful can also change suffering into joy.

To His "power in nature corresponds His power among men."

### **Verse 11**

The high, steep almost inaccessible place is God's reward to the lowly. Mourners wear dirty black clothes or have dirty bodies, because they sprinkle ashes on their heads as a sign of grief.

### **Verse 12**

God frustrates the malicious devices of the crafty who scheme to gain from the poor and innocent.

The translation “cannot perform their enterprise” is a technical term. It means true wisdom or true prosperity. Those who trust God are truly pious.

### **Verse 13**

“The counsel of the cunning,” or tortuous men, will pursue any means to attain their ends. This type of person is “brought to a quick end.”

### **Verse 14**

The image of total confusion which ensnares the crafty is like blind people groping at mid-day.

### **Verse 15**

God frustrates the designs of the crafty, the poor He saves from their craftiness. The major problem in this text is whether deliverance is from the mouth or the sword.

### **Verse 16**

The social customs of the Near East are clearly set before us.

Men of power and wealth aggrandize themselves at the expense of the poor and defenseless, but there is hope in the time of abandonment.

This verse sums up the results of God’s intervention in human affairs—that justice always triumphs.

### **Verses 17-27**

#### **Verse 17**

According to Eliphaz, suffering is always a form of Divine discipline.

The emphasis is beautiful and moving in its attempt to bring Job to repentance. The thesis is only marred by its inapplicability to Job. He has not sinned; and Eliphaz’s argument makes no impression on him.

“Thus, the words which were meant for healing make his wounds smart all the more.”

The word for God (Almighty) is Shaddai.

### **Verse 18**

God Almighty makes sore and also heals.

### **Verse 19**

Eliphaz enumerates the blessings which Job can expect if he follows his advice. The numerical idiom is common in Hebrew poetry (six troubles He will deliver you, seven evil men will not touch you).

### **Verse 20**

The Almighty is able, Job, to deliver you from famine, war, etc.

### **Verse 21**

The tongue is a powerful weapon. The destruction (devastation) of the tongue might refer to efforts at incantations and use of black magic.

### **Verse 22**

The beasts of the field were feared in Palestine. But you will laugh at violence and famine, and neither will you be afraid of wild beasts.

### **Verse 23**

Stones will not accumulate to mar fields, nor will the beasts attack the flock.

The word translated “league” is *berith* or covenant. It is as though they have a covenant with the rocks and beasts.

### **Verse 24**

The Hebrew term “tent” as “fold” means dwelling. The word translated “miss” is one of the Hebrew terms for sin—which means to miss the mark or fail to attain a goal.

All of Job’s property will be safe if he follows Eliphaz’s suggestions.

### **Verse 25**

Eliphaz’s orthodox theology is consistently untouched by human feeling. Eliphaz apparently has forgotten that Job’s children were all destroyed. But he declares that his “offspring” will be great.

## **Verse 26**

Eliphaz knows nothing about the resurrection, only a full age—full vigor. This is a quality here assured to the righteous. Eliphaz’s pontifical announcements, which were meant to heal, only irritated Job’s sore soul.

## **Verse 27**

As Job’s counselor, Eliphaz offered “empty chaff well meant for grain.” Though it is no comfort to Job, Eliphaz’s discourse is one of the masterpieces of the book.

With only partial vision, Eliphaz identified his words with exhaustive truth. “To Job all these fine words must have seemed bitterly inappropriate.”

## **SEARCH FOR COMFORT AND JOB’S CONFRONTATION WITH GOD**

### **CHAPTER 6:1—7:21**

#### **There is adequate reason for his complaint. Chapter 6:1-7**

#### **Verses 1-2**

Job now replies to Eliphaz’s first speech. Job is responding to the three friends rather than Eliphaz alone.

First Job defends his first soliloquy (talking to himself), for which Eliphaz had rebuked him. Because of his suffering he desires to die. Being without hope and sympathy from his friends, Job seeks the friendship of death. Why is life so difficult, especially since he is innocent? Receiving no comfort from the three wise men, Job turns to God.

After an appeal to God’s compassion, without restraint, he asks why He plagues Job with impossible suffering.

Job’s three friends are bound to him by a covenant of friendship. Thus, they should not assume that Job is guilty of sin because of his suffering.

Since they fail to express covenant concern and sympathy, Job turns to God.

The speech falls into three parts.

1. Affirmation of his bitterness.
2. Disappointment in his friends.
3. Intensification of his complaint at his lot, and more open appeal against God's treatment of him.

### **Verse 3**

Job's anguish is heavier than the "sands of the seas." Job's theme is not God's indignation but his own underserved suffering. Job admits that his words have been wild but not unjustified. His speech has been "rash."

### **Verse 4**

Job now names God (the Almighty) as the author of his misery.

Job no less than Eliphaz, believes the suffering comes from God; but rejects Elisha's claim that Job is unrighteous, thus deserving of his plight.

The imagery of God as an archer appears frequently in the Old Testament. The poisoned arrows mentioned here are not referred to elsewhere in the Old Testament.

The "terrors" of God assault Job's very existence; they "wear me down," he boldly asserts. (Verse 5)

### **Verse 5**

Using powerful distress imagery (wild donkey in distress for a lack of food), Job suggests that it would be better to identify the cause of his sufferings rather than explain it.

The wild donkey "brays" is used only here and 30:7, where it describes the agonizing cries of social outcasts.

The verb translated "lows" is used of cows deprived of their calves. Even the animals understand what Eliphaz fails to comprehend.

### **Verses 6- 7**

Eliphaz's counsel is tasteless; it lacks the salt of sympathy.

Job rejects Eliphaz's explanation as he (*nephesh*—soul) would reject tasteless food.

In his wasted condition, death is desirable.

### **Verse 8**

Job's entreaty is that he be allowed to die. All that he desires is the healing of a hurried death.

### **Verse 9**

Oh, that God, "would be willing" to free this prisoner of pain. The Hebrew which is translated "let loose his hand" is a verb used of setting prisoners free.

### **Verse 10**

Job has one consolation—he has not betrayed God's trust; that is, even though called on to endure such severe punishment. Job has been and still is an obedient servant to the Holy One of Israel.

### **Verse 11**

Job can endure no more. Wait for what? Eliphaz's promised blessings.

### **Verse 12**

Men of stone and bronze feel nothing. Job is flesh and blood whose power to resist pain is all but exhausted.

### **Verse 13**

Job feels that it is a fact that I do not have within me the power to help myself. All human power to alleviate Job's suffering is already banished from him.

Job is not thinking of rescue from suffering but of the strength to bear the pain.

Bitter disappointments from Job's friends, who are unreasonably hard.  
(Verses 14-23)

### **Verse 14**

Job attacks his would-be sympathizers with this charge—your lack of sympathy reveals your lack of true covenant concern, that is, righteousness.

Kindness (covenant love) is due to a friend. If his friends really cared, they would treat Job with kindness, not groundless insinuations of his guilt.

### **Verse 15**

Note that Job still calls the three friends brethren, not foes. But he describes them as a brook, a stream which is a raging torrent during the rainy season, but dried up during the summer, when one really needs help. The streams of sympathy have dried up.

### **Verse 16**

This verse describes a thaw which breaks the ice and sends the waters raging downward. The phrase “hides itself” means to melt.

### **Verse 17**

When the snow and ice melt, they (the torrents) disappear, or “are extinguished,” the friends are as unreliable as a wadi that is empty.

### **Verse 18**

The travelers (caravans) expect to find water in the desert, but coming to them they find none; they soon perish under the scorching sun. This is Job’s blistering attack on his friends.

This disappointment describes Job’s despair.

### **Verse 19**

Tema is an oasis southeast of the head of the Gulf of Aqaba. Sheba is south Arabia, which is the home of the Sabean raiders, but here they are merchants.

### **Verse 20**

Job’s friends have been compared to “dry wadi” and now “dry oases.” There is no possibility that they can be of help to him.

### **Verse 21**

The sight of Job in his desperate and horrible condition has frightened his friends out of their wits and caused them to forget their covenant of loyalty to him. His oppressors are tyrants who would sell him, but not redeem him.



### **Verses 22- 23**

Job has not asked for money (which their covenant would have obliged), only friendship. Jeremiah cries, “I have not lent or borrowed, yet everyone curses me.”

Job responds here with strong sarcasm. He has not asked for charity, though he has lost everything; he asks only for concern.

Their words are academic. Where is his sin?

### **Verses 24-30**

#### **Verse 24**

If his friends can help him, he will listen in silence for their sympathetic words. He only asks for proof, not mere assertions, concerning his guilt.

#### **Verse 25**

Job asks once more for what specific sin do you accuse me? Your arrogant generalities are meaningless, and only provoke to me more pain.

#### **Verse 26**

"Are Job's words but wind?" His friends have only been concerned to rebuke Job for his expression of his grief, instead of comforting him by identifying the cause of his words,

“You think that your words are correct and hold the words of him who is in anguish to be vanity.”

“One that is desperate” is one that is as hopeless “a despairing man,” as wind, meaning they will soon be blown away, that we can forget them.

#### **Verse 27**

Eliphaz's complacent lecturing is inhumane. As a healer, he is more interested in the disease than the patient.

Job is suffering, while they are haggling with him.

### **Verse 28**

His friends have turned from him, unable to bear either his physical appearance or his violent words.

### **Verse 29**

Return does not mean that his friends are departing from him, but rather that he is asking them to change their attitude toward him.

### **Verse 30**

Job says if there was poison on my tongue, would I not know it? Cannot my palate discern mischievous things, that is, am I not able to discern the flavor of my own suffering? Neither his palate nor his moral integrity have lost their powers of discernment.

## **CHAPTER 7**

God decrees what man receives. (Verses 1-10)

### **Verse 1**

Job's friends reject his appeal. He then ceases to address them, as he returns to his lament. He compares life in general to forced military service, to the work of a day laborer, and to simple slavery, three wretched states of existence.

### **Verse 2**

In Mesopotamia it was assumed that everyone (not in high political lineage) was a slave and servant of the gods.

Every slave was compelled to work the long and hot days without respite. They longed for the decline of the sun and the cooling breezes of the evenings.

The slave received wages every day, which was his endurance motive. To withhold his pay was prohibited.

### **Verse 3**

Job now turns from contemplating man's universal condition to his own affliction. Months of vanity may mean emptiness, vanity, or moral evil—and nights of wearisome anguish. When will the months pass away?

#### **Verse 4**

The night, like months, are long. Job tosses and turns all night. There is no relief even from the dawning of the day.

Acute discomfort enslaves this vain searcher of peace. Even his dozing invites diabolic nightmares. The grave is no darker than his nights of loneliness and despair.

#### **Verse 5**

Job's ulcers are repulsive to the sight and smell. His skin is covered with dirty scabs filled with worms. The scabs break open and run with pus.

#### **Verse 6**

Is Job contradicting himself when first he claims that life passes so slowly and now complains that it is too brief? As the weaver's shuttle runs out of thread, so now Job's existence is running out of hope.

#### **Verse 7**

The pathos of this pitiful cry penetrates into the depths of every sensitive person. But will God hear? He has turned once more from his tormenting counselors directly to God.

Life is at best transient and he will never again see prosperity and happiness.

#### **Verse 8**

Time is too short to expect (hope for) his restoration. God alone will prevail.

#### **Verse 9**

"Vanish away" means "come to an end." Sheol is described as a place from which no traveler has returned; a land of darkness and despair; a deep place where the dead are hidden; a place for everyone. Only resurrection can break the spell of this despair.

#### **Verse 10**

The theme of the finality of death occurs several times.

He finds no mercy, neither from God nor from his friends. (Verses 11-15)

### **Verse 11**

For the first time, Job charges God with being his tormentor. Bitterness oozes out of the disease of soul sickness.

### **Verse 12**

God has set limits to the sea and watches that it does not violate its appointed boundary. Do I, cries Job, need to be watched like that great inanimate.

“Set a watch” means guard, or perhaps a muzzle. God, you are trying to put a muzzle on me, so I will be silent.

### **Verses 13-14**

Job accuses God of causing his nightmares. Terrify is a major word in Job’s theology, where it occurs in intensive form eight out of the total of thirteen times in the entire Old Testament.

### **Verse 15**

This verse means, “my soul prefers choking, my bones prefer death.”

To God he addresses some difficult questions. (Verses 16-21)

### **Verse 16**

“I loathe” can be connected with the previous verse, as “my life” is not in the Hebrew text. Meaning—“I despise death more than any pain.”

### **Verses 17-18**

We encounter strong irony in Job’s words “set my mind upon” or pay attention God, why are You devoting so much unfriendly attention to man in general, and specifically to Job?

### **Verse 19**

Job feels that he cannot get away from God’s hostile eyes, even for a moment. The idiomatic expression “Let me swallow my spittle” means “wait, or let me alone for a moment.”

### **Verse 20**

Surely Job is not that important to God that He should watch over him. Even if Job admits that he has sinned, he has not hurt God commensurate with the suffering with which Job has been inflicted.

The word translated “mark” is not a target, but something which one strikes.

Job is weary of being a mark for God’s hostile actions that life (burden) has become an intolerable malaise.

### **Verse 21**

Even inadvertent sin does not deserve all the inflicted pain which was fallen to Job’s lot. Even if God forgives, it will be too late. Job will be dead.

Job maintains that God will in the end realize His mistake, but it will be too late. Throughout Job maintains belief in a Creator-Redeemer God of Justice, Holiness, and Love, while attacking Him for cruelty and inhuman threat.

## **THE GREAT ABSENCE: EMPATHY AND SYMPATHY—BILDAD**

### **CHAPTER 8:1-22**

**God is just and has not been unrighteous. (Verses 1-7)**

#### **Verse 1**

Job concludes that even if God does not finally respond to his outcries, it will be too late.

Enter Bildad, the younger, less tactful comforter.

He is scandalized by Job’s familiarity with God. A fundamental assumption in Bildad’s thought is that God can do no wrong. Bildad sets forth retributive justice as a solution to our dilemma.

His world contains only two groups of people—the wicked and the righteous. Suffering is the evidence of sin; and Job’s only escape is repentance.

## **Verse 2**

The verb “say” is an Aramaism and means “a great wind” full of sound and fury signifying nothing. Bildad continues to concentrate on God’s justice, a question Job has never raised.

## **Verse 3**

God (Shaddai) and injustice are incompatible terms.

Does God distort (pervert) justice? The verb is repeated for strong emphasis (pervert—pervert) on the magnitude of Job’s sin.

## **Verse 4**

Bildad does not hesitate to emphasize an obvious conclusion, that Job’s children were punished for their sinfulness. They received what they deserved.

Sin carries its own punishment. This is expressed in the translation “into the hand of their transgression.” Bildad’s inexcusable cruelty is apparent in his suggestion regarding Job’s children, that is, they brought their deaths upon themselves.

Even though the Hebrew grammar expresses a conditional form, Bildad’s deadly concept of God’s justice could only more intensely aggravate Job’s troubled spirit.

## **Verse 5**

Job had spoken of God seeking him. Bildad suggests that it is imperative that Job seek God, if he desires healing.

## **Verse 6**

Is the creator of the universe asleep or insensitive to Job’s tragedy? Bildad promises Job that God will literally “restore the habitation of thy righteousness” if he will but follow his advice.

## **Verse 7**

Bildad unconsciously prophesies of Job’s future restoration though not for the reason suggested by Job’s comforter.

The wisdom of the ages teaches that it is the godless who perish.

(Verses 8-19)

### **Verse 8**

“For inquire” of the wisdom of the ancients, see that I am right.

### **Verses 8-10**

The longest life is but a brief-flickering candle, so we need to consider the experience of humanity, not merely that of an individual.

Bildad claims that the instruction comes for the depth of their understanding (heart) and not from their lips as mere verbal advice.

### **Verse 11**

Bildad now recites some proverbial sayings which might have Egyptian background. Could the papyrus and reeds grow with a proper environment? Can Job prosper without environmental righteousness?

The law of retribution is as sure as physical law. The unrighteous will perish in the midst of their prosperity, just as plants die when they are deprived of water.

### **Verse 12**

When deprived of its life-sustaining environment, it withers “before all,” that is quicker than anything else. This symbolizes Job’s condition.

### **Verse 13**

The paths, that is, the fate of all who forget God is suffering. The word translated “godless” occurs eight times in the book. The verb means “to be profane, irreligious, or worldly person.”

### **Verse 14**

Job’s confidence is not in God’s justice, so his life will break like a spider’s web.

### **Verse 15**

The confidence of the wicked is no more substantial than the proverbial flimsy spider's web.

### **Verse 16**

Here we observe a radical shift in imagery, that of a flourishing tree suddenly cut down. The tree thrives, that is, is sappy, in a garden.

### **Verse 17**

The tree even grows in the midst of a stone-heap. Though they may appear secure, the wicked live in the midst of stones.

### **Verse 18**

There is no vestige of the tree left; it must be removed from among the stones, which is the final sign of its former state and presence. "He shall deny him" or disown him, reveals its final up-rootedness of the tree.

### **Verse 19**

Here "joy" can only be ironic. The sense is that others will soon replace him, and he will not even be remembered.

If Job is upright, God will restore him. (Verses 20-22)

### **Verse 20**

Bildad now uses the very term by which God described Job, "blameless," and in the Hebrew, it means to "grasp the hand" or take the hand.

### **Verse 21**

God will "redeem" you, that is, cause you to laugh, shout of jubilation, at your pain, once it has departed and wholeness returns.

### **Verse 22**

Shame is conceived as the garment which the wicked wear. The tent of the wicked will be no more.



## **NOT GUILTY—THE CRIME OF INNOCENCE—JOB’S CRY**

### **CHAPTERS 9, 10**

#### **Man is no match before the all-powerful, all wise God**

### **CHAPTER 9:1-12**

#### **Verse 1-2**

Job’s second response has the same general structure as his first. He answers his friends, gives a brief soliloquy, and a direct address to God.

It is less personal than the previous speech. Job responds more to the things asserted by Eliphaz than Bildad.

Job’s opening words contain a sarcastic recognition of the principle enunciated by the three friends, that no man can be righteous in God’s eyes. God’s justice is identical with His power, that is, whatever He does is just.

#### **Verse 3**

“Contend” is a term meaning “go to court” with God, with the odds of winning “once in a thousand times.”

#### **Verse 4**

No one can challenge God and survive. One can never harden his heart against God and win in the encounter.

#### **Verse 5**

We should take the meaning to be “suddenly,” that is, before anyone realizes it, God has overtaken them. Content is limited to God’s power, not His love and mercy.

#### **Verse 6**

The verb translated “tremble” is found only here, and has the root idea of “tremble with horror.”

#### **Verses 7-8**

God is presented as Creator of the universe. Job is concurring with his three friends regarding God’s creative work in nature.

### **Verse 9**

The order and identity of these constellations varies in different texts. Who makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades?

### **Verse 10**

Job maintains that God's immeasurable power is used for His cosmic chess game of arbitrary play with His creatures.

### **Verse 11**

Job avers that he knows God's presence only by His power, manifested in nature. As a result of God's passing by, Job's life lies in ruins.

### **Verse 12**

God "snatches away" and no one can stop Him.

Arbitrarily God deals with him, no matter what he may do. (Verse 13-24)

### **Verse 13**

Job' gratitude is now poisoned by more bitterness. God has all along only been preparing Job for torture.

Rahab (be excited or agitated) designates Egypt. Rahab is one of the sea monsters slain by God. (26:11; Isaiah 51:9)

### **Verse 14**

Job relates that it is impossible to face God in His cosmic court, because God would refuse Job's summon. He would simply manifest His superior power, and Job would be destroyed,

How can Job expect to face God, if a sea-monster cannot? Job would be so overwhelmed that he would be unable to choose his words in order to challenge God.

### **Verse 15**

Even though he is innocent, he cannot expect justice. Job's only recourse, since he cannot force a response from his adversary, is to cast himself on His

mercy. One of the central themes in Job is that man is hopelessly lost without God's grace.

### **Verse 16**

Now God does answer Job's summons. But Job does not have confidence in the sense of believing that God is listening, giving an ear, or paying attention to his cries.

Because God cannot be required to testify or justify His actions, He is responsible to no one but His own nature.

### **Verse 17**

God is now charged with "crushing" Job. "Crushing" is often translated as "bruise," but surely the context calls for crush or destroy.

God crushes him without cause as though he were a mere trifle.

### **Verse 18**

The God of Heaven has filled Job with bitterness.

### **Verse 19**

God is supreme in power and thus subject to no summoner, Job included. Surely this represents an effort to remove any suggestions that man could call God to account.

### **Verse 20**

Even Job's own speech condemns him. Is he saying that I am innocent; I am forced to assert my own guilt?

### **Verse 21**

He defends his innocence, though it may cost him his life. He would forfeit his life, but not his integrity in claiming his innocence.

The intense emotional strain causes Job to cry that, "I neither know myself nor care."

### **Verse 22**

Is “truth forever on the scaffold and error forever on the throne?” The wicked and the unjust triumph. Job denies any moral order in the universe.

If the universe is amoral, then there are different types of behavior, but no moral or immoral human acts. Job is contradicting what Bildad has set forth in chapter. (Verses 8 - 20)

### **Verse 23**

The “scourge” means calamities in general, war, plague, disease, famine, etc, which take lives regardless of their spiritual condition and relationship to God.

Eliphaz has said (5:22) that if Job accepted God’s discipline, he would ultimately laugh at famine and destruction.

Job’s response to Eliphaz is that it is God who laughs when calamities (despair) come.

Job says that God is not testing men by disaster, but rather destroying them.

### **Verse 24**

Job holds God solely responsible for the human condition. There is no Satan, or anyone else to blame. Job is actually challenging his friends to declare who is, if God is not to blame?

He will be held guilty in spite of everything. (Verses 25-31)

### **Verse 25**

Complain—complain. Job returns to a preoccupation with his own condition. Cosmic disorder to personal disorder, how pathetic. Life is passing so rapidly. The “courier” refers to a fast runner with the royal messenger service.

### **Verse 26**

Reed means papyrus. Reed boats are very light and fast. The word “swoop” refers in falconry to the swift swoop of the bird on the prey.

The falcon can attain a speed in excess of 150 mph in such a swoop. The “prey” is the general word for food.

### **Verse 27**

Job says, "I will abandon my face," that is, I will change my countenance. His entire attitude will be changed. He will "be of good cheer," that is, brighten my face.

### **Verse 28**

He no sooner decided to cheer up than he "became afraid." Dread fear haunted him with such intensity that his agony was only magnified.

### **Verse 29**

He was guilty without trial. All his efforts are futile.

### **Verse 30**

I will make my hands ever so clean with lye soap, snow or snow water.

### **Verse 31**

"Thou will plunge me into the pit." The context calls for filth; and the root suggests repulsive matter and slime, that is, a characteristic of the netherworld. Job is saying, "If I wash my body, God would make it so filthy that my clothes would refuse to cover me."

There is no mediator between man and his creator. (Verses 32-35)

### **Verse 32**

A fair trial before God is an impossibility. "Come together in judgment," means to go to court or before the law."

### **Verse 33**

Since God is prejudiced by His despotic power, Job calls for an arbiter (mediator) one who decides with equity. Job is still searching for a just reconciliation.

### **Verse 34**

Remove your rod. To David, God's rod was his defense against His enemies; for Job, God's rod brings only violence and pain. To Job, the rod signifies coercion and intimidation.

### **Verse 35**

If there is no mediator, then I will speak for myself. But what shall I say that has not already been said?

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **Verse 1**

Job begins to theorize on the motives for his suffering—is God sadistic?

My complaint is that “my soul is sick of life.” Job is conversing with himself. Does God have a secret motive for afflicting him.

### **Verse 2**

“Do not condemn me” reveals that Job as well as his friends concluded from his suffering that God holds him guilty.

### **Verse 3**

Job here charges God with injustice. Since God made the righteous and unrighteous, Job requests to know why men are not treated equally.

### **Verse 4**

Job’s basic question is not does God have limitations, but can He really understand the human condition?

### **Verse 5**

Are God’s days as limited as man’s, is that why He is quick to exact punishment, even before Job does evil?

### **Verse 6**

He does not believe that God has found any sin in his life, even though He continually searches for it.

### **Verse 7**

If God knows that Job is innocent, then why does He seek to extract a confession of guilt? He knows that no one can take Job from His hand. Why is He punishing Job, as though he is about to slip through His fingers?

### **Verses 8-9**

You formed me with your hands; why are You destroying Your own creation?

### **Verses 10, 11**

The imagery alludes to the formation of the embryo in the womb.

### **Verse 12**

By using imagery from the miracle of conception and birth, perhaps Job is affirming his belief in the providential order of God, before the suffering and pain befell him.

This verse is of crucial importance for the understanding of chapters 9-10.

“It shows that, although Job wrestles with God, he is conscious of his absolute dependence upon Him.”

God’s grace and covenant love are gifts for which he could never be adequately grateful.

### **Verse 13**

Job’s present condition has convinced him that God concealed His true attitude toward His “servant” Job. Job, mournfully contrasts his life when he thought that God truly cared for him in his present state. God all along was preparing a victim for sacrifice.

### **Verse 14**

God was watching every act and thought of Job and had already determined to deal cruelly with Job. If your version uses the word “mark” it means guard or protectively watch over. God’s gracious watch has turned to hostility. God is no longer his protector: He is now his cruel accuser.

### **Verse 15**

Does Job merit all this misfortune? He is sated with ignominy, guilt, shame, and misery—but why? Has God determined that Job suffer whether he is wicked or righteous? Job has no pride left; he cannot lift up his head. Job receives nothing from God but trouble and more trouble.

### **Verse 16**

If my pride causes me to lift up my head, God would immediately attack me as though I were unrighteous.

### **Verse 17**

His bitterness now overflows in irony. God's witnesses against Job are his sufferings. God is ever bringing "fresh attacks, hosts, warfare, against him." There is no relief. God is hounding him to his grave.

### **Verses 18-19**

He now returns to his lament over being born. But since not being born is not a live option for Job, he just suffers.

In all his suffering, Job shows no sympathy with the idea that the ultimate philosophical problem confronting man is—why not commit suicide, if we live in a meaningless amoral universe?

### **Verse 20**

Job asks God to take His attention (watch-care) away from him, in order that he might find comfort.

### **Verse 21**

Job aspires to go into "deep darkness."

### **Verse 22**

This verse contains an abundance of synonyms for darkness. In Sheol light is but darkness. He is wearing his shroud of despair as he describes the miserable prospects of death.

Job vainly attempts to harmonize the God of his past and present experience. Chaos reigns in Sheol as well as here. Even death will not help his situation. He is not prepared "to pull his cloak about him and lie down to pleasant dreams."



## **PIETY AND PROSPERITY—ZOPHAR’S RECOMMENDATION: REPENTANCE**

### **CHAPTER 11:1-20**

**Job’s punishment is less than he deserves. (Verses 1-6)**

#### **Verse 1**

Zophar, the third of Job’s friends, enters. He is the least original and most vitriolic of Job’s counselors. He is more intense in asserting Job’s guilt than Job is his innocence.

Zophar claims that Job should be thankful that he does not get all the suffering he deserves.

His speech falls into three sections.

1. Zophar claims that Job should be thankful that God would break His silence. (Verses 2-6)
2. God’s wisdom is beyond human comprehension. (Verses 7-12.)
3. Restoration from Job’s present situation is contingent on repentance. (Verses 13-20)

He neither appeals to personal experience, as does Eliphaz, nor to wisdom of the ancients, as does Bildad.

His authority is identical with God’s authority, and his wisdom is self-authenticating. Therefore, Job fails to heed his advice at his own peril.

Bildad defended “Divine justice,” while Zophar defends “Divine wisdom” which must be defended against Job’s scandalous criticism.

But like the other two friends, he, too, suggests that Job’s repentance is imperative if restoration to a happy prosperity is to be anticipated.

His fundamental heresy, which is shared by contemporary western man, is that happiness will elude all non-prosperous persons.

#### **Verse 2**

Zophar is annoyed by Job’s long speech.

### **Verse 3**

“Boasting” means “idle-talk,” that is “babbling.” Job has denied the doctrine of retributive justice and in Zophar’s theology this means “mocking at religion.”

### **Verse 4**

“My doctrine is pure” was understood by his friends to be an attack on their wisdom, by claiming a superior understanding.

The problem is—if Job is saying that he is pure in God’s eyes, why is he complaining about God’s injustice.

### **Verse 5**

Zophar believes that if God would break His silence, then Job would hear his indictment from God Himself.

### **Verse 6**

God’s wisdom is beyond the human mind’s comprehension. The sense that God knows both the hidden and non-hidden, declares that God gives Job less than he deserves.

The Almighty is not fooled; He recognizes iniquity. (Verses 7-12)

### **Verse 7**

Zophar is affirming that God’s mind and purpose are beyond human capacity to measure. In all probability the translation, “can you find out,” should be “can you reach” God from your sinful human vantage point.

### **Verses 8-9**

God has no limits.

### **Verse 10**

Job has already declared that God’s power is limitless, and that it is futile for man to oppose Him. The meaning here is that God does not need to investigate man’s condition in order to understand it; He knows immediately.

### **Verse 11**

The only ultimate knowledge available in the universe is God's, so men ought not to revolt against God for this reason.

### **Verse 12**

Hollow men or men without hearts will not understand their need and return to God. The meaning is probably "a stupid man will get understanding, when a wild donkey colt is born a man." (R. S. V.)

The penitent will prosper; for the wicked there is no hope. (Verses 13-20)

### **Verse 13**

Zophar calls for Job to do four things.

1. Get his heart right with God.
2. Pray to God for forgiveness.
3. Reform his life style to conform to God's expectations.
4. Set his entire household in order.

### **Verse 14**

Put evil far away from you. Do not permit it to exist in your household.

### **Verse 15**

Job's face will no longer bear the marks of the guilty. The word translated "steadfast"—secure--comes from a verb used for describing the pouring of molten metal.

### **Verse 16**

Here the phrase "waters that are passed away" is a metaphor for oblivion; in 6:15, it is a metaphor for treachery.

Zophar has also promised Job restoration to his former prosperous state. Ultimately, Job's restoration did not come as a result of following any of the advice of his friends.

### **Verse 17**

Hope and security will be Job's once more. "Your life," (means durable, vigorous) will last into advanced age.

### **Verse 18**

Job's security (means to search or dig about), Zophar's claims, will be based on his removing the guilt. When Job's guilt is removed, "rest"—peace—will result.

### **Verse 19**

God will grant Job confidence. When Job lived in the good graces of God, he was famous. When he is restored to God, his fame and respectability, and social influence, will also return.

### **Verse 20**

The highest hope of the unrighteous is death. The ultimate goal should be to give up the spirit, that is, "to breathe out of the soul."

This assertion is Zophar's not so subtle suggestion to Job. In response, Job lashes out at this vehement sarcastic attack in chapters 12—14.

## **COURAGEOUS CONFRONTATION—JOB'S RESPONSE**

### **CHAPTERS 12—14**

#### **He ridicules the wisdom and judgment of his friends. (Verses 1-6)**

### **Verse 1**

This is Job's longest speech apart from his final soliloquy. Each of his three friends has spoken and has unanimously refused to accept Job's claim to innocence,

Now, after his attack on God, he turns with burning sarcasm on his three would-be counselors.

Job could endure this brief pitiful pilgrimage of pain if there could finally be happy reconciliation with God.

The speech falls neatly into three themes.

1. Job's resentment of the assumed superiority of his friends and recognition of God's power and wisdom. (Chapter 12:2-25)
2. Rejection of the empty arguments of his friends and his determination to reason with God. (Chapter 13:1-28)
3. Painful acknowledgement of the brevity of life and the finality of death. (Chapter 14:1-22)

### **Verse 2**

Job addresses his listeners as "people of the land" who represent the upper class male citizenry. Only royalty and the priesthood rank above them. With biting sarcasm, Job suggests that wisdom will pass from the earth at their demise. They really have only a monopoly on ignorance.

### **Verse 3**

In view of Zophar's comparison of Job with a wild donkey, Job asserts that he has "a heart," in the American Version, it is translated "understanding (or comprehension)."

### **Verse 4**

Job expected sympathy, but received scorn. Instead of support, his friends make him an object of derision.

The just and blameless man is a laughing stock.

### **Verse 5**

This could represent an adage expressing a general attitude toward anyone who has fallen into difficulties. Job's prosperous friends have nothing but contempt for him in his misfortune.

The friends not only withhold help, they even intensify Job's misfortune.

### **Verse 6**

The meaning of this verse is probably "those who make a god of their own power" are secure; at least the empirical evidence often suggests this deduction.

God is responsible for all that is. (Verses 7-12)

### **Verse 7**

Job begins by addressing all three friends. He is focusing on one, presumably the last speaker, Zophar. The wisdom which is being exemplified by Job's friends is common wisdom even to the lowest animals in God's creation.

### **Verse 8**

Why should Job's friends emphasize God's sovereignty over the universe, even the birds of the air and beasts of the field know it.

Nature is "red in tooth and claw," and only by brute predatory power do they prevail within nature.

### **Verse 9**

Job's friends are Arabs, and not children of the covenant. The root significance of Yahweh is probably at the heart of the discussion, that is, the cause of everything is God.

### **Verse 10**

God is Lord of every "human individual."

### **Verse 11**

As the palate tastes food, so the intelligence of man evaluates available ideas. Job suggests that the ideas of his friends are not palatable.

### **Verse 12**

Job and his friends have different views of God and His transcendence and immanence within nature and history.

God alone decrees what will be. (Verses 13-25)

### **Verse 13**

God only has power and wisdom. Though Job's friends have not asserted that might and wisdom are possessions which only the "old" may receive, neither does Job assert that God keeps all of this wisdom and power to Himself.

If God is the ultimate source of all things, then He is responsible for pain and suffering.

#### **Verse 14**

Though God's might may be applied with loving kindness and beneficence, Job sees only destructive violence and human ruin.

#### **Verse 15**

Job presents an example of God's amoral behavior by the extremes of flood and drought. God has the power to dominate the water systems of His creation, but He does so with complete disregard for man's needs. God's might is arbitrary and despotic.

#### **Verse 16**

God's wisdom is always efficient, that is, it is always victorious. All of mankind falls into one of the two categories—deceived or deceiver.

Thus far God has been scrutinized under three categories.

1. Wisdom and power.
2. Counsel and understanding.
3. Might and prudence.

But Job denies Zophar's conclusion about evil.

#### **Verse 17**

God makes all human counselors go stripped or barefoot. Perhaps the meaning is that God leads all would-be counselors into confusion or error.

#### **Verse 18**

Here we encounter imagery of the liberation of prisoners.

This verse contrasts former glory with present humiliation. The binding of a king's loins is an image of being reduced to the status of a menial laborer.

They are stripped of their royal robes and sandals and made to work with their hands and backs.

### **Verse 19**

Priests are mentioned only here in Job. Honored and influential persons are as nothing in the face of God's power.

### **Verse 20**

The honored community leaders are baffled by a sudden turn from prosperity to ruin.

The spokesmen for the community are reduced to silence (deprived of speech, literally, removes the lip).

Their discernment (taste-palate) is also removed.

### **Verse 21**

The belt referred to here was used to strengthen the back, especially during hard labor.

### **Verse 22**

God recovers plots and conspiracies out of the deepest darkness. Before Him, there is no hiding place. He exposes all secrets. Even Sheol cannot hide its prey from Him.

### **Verse 23**

Another example of the amoral nature of the universe is seen in the rise and fall of nations and civilizations.

### **Verse 24**

Where there is no intelligence, no nation or civilization can long endure. When the organizing principle of any social group is either abandoned or forgotten, it does not have long to live.

### **Verse 25**

Men grope in unrelieved darkness. They grope as blind men and stagger and wander.

When God removes understanding, men continue to move and function, but purposelessly.



Life is meaningless to millions in our present world because nothing and no one organizes their lives meaningfully. But if the universe is purposeless and thus amoral, then what else could either Job or contemporaries expect?

## **THE SHATTERING OF SILENCE**

### **CHAPTER 13:1-28**

#### **The friends are self-deceived. Verses 1-12**

##### **Verse 1**

Job warns of defending God dishonestly. He turns to face God with his charges regardless of the cost.

##### **Verse 2-3**

Job's "but as for me" is possibly a sarcastic response to Eliphaz's use of the same phrase. He told Job, "But as for me, I would seek God."

Job replies, "But as for me," I will challenge Him to defend His behavior. Job desires to "reason" together with God. "Reason" means to argue, reprove, to reason in the sense of establishing a case.

##### **Verse 4**

Job accused his friends with forging a lie (plaster of lies) to "besmear" to cover up the pain and agony which God causes.

##### **Verse 5**

Even a fool that is silent is counted among the wise. He implies that if his friends are truly wise they would show it by their silence. It is not their lot to shatter God's silence.

##### **Verse 6**

Hear my reproof, argue my case.

##### **Verse 7**

The meaning is that—for God—you lie or speak deceitfully. Will you defend God by speaking "proverbs of ashes"?

### **Verse 8**

Will you present God your face as His defender? What would God think (and do) if He investigated your actions?

If God is a foe of injustice, He would be your foe. God's cause is always the "cause of truth." He is not flattered by your present dishonorable behavior.

### **Verse 9**

Sarcasm continues to flow as mighty waters from Job's mouth. If God searched out the truth, He would condemn you too.

### **Verse 10**

Job's prediction is later fulfilled.

### **Verse 11**

There is a magnificent play on words here in the Hebrew text. The parallelism between God's majesty or "lifting up" and "show partiality" indicates that God's face (lift up His face) will strike fear or horror not joy in the beholder.

### **Verse 12**

Job accuses his friends of coming to his aid with "proverbs of ashes." Their words serve no purpose; they are already dead.

Their answers are like crumbling clay with biting sarcasm. He becomes more aggressive. Your words and arguments are useless bits of clay.

Job would dare to present his case before God. (Verses 13-19)

### **Verse 13**

Once more Job is asking that his friends keep silent that he may speak to God.

### **Verse 14**

Since his life may pass away any moment, he will not hesitate to risk his life by confronting God.

### **Verse 15**

With abandoned desperation, Job is prepared to challenge God. Absolutely nothing will cause Job to refrain from defending his innocence.

His suffering is not self-entailed, his conscience is clear. He is not a rebel without a cause,

Job is not revolting against God; rather he is going to face Him.

#### **Verse 16**

Perhaps he can be saved by boldness. To Job, his readiness to face God is his guarantee of innocence.

#### **Verse 17**

Job calls for his opponents to listen carefully.

#### **Verse 18**

Job says I will set my things in order and gain for myself acquittal.

#### **Verse 19**

My things are in order—now “who can contend with me? Who can sustain the charge of guilty?”

If one could reveal to him his guilt, he would gladly become silent and acknowledge his wickedness—through silence.

He calls on God for an arraignment. (Verses 20-28)

#### **Verse 20**

Spare me two things: one request is negative and the other is positive. Job addresses God directly throughout the remainder of his speech.

#### **Verse 21**

Job’s two-pronged request is here stated:

1. “Withdraw Your hand” used in both the positive sense of protection, and the negative sense of afflicting pain and suffering.
2. Do not use your sovereign power to terrify me.

#### **Verse 22**

The imagery is that of a law court where Job offers to appear as either appellant or respondent. The call is for either fellowship or indictment.

### **Verse 23**

Job boldly asks for God to list the number and nature of his sins.

### **Verse 24**

God does not break His silence.

### **Verse 25**

Why should God as sovereign of the universe, assail one so trivial and impotent to meet His challenge.

### **Verse 26**

Has some sin in my youth brought on your bitter punishment? The word translated “bitter” is used of poison and gall bladder.

### **Verse 27**

The three images employed here suggest arrest and the impossibility of escape. God draws a line and no one can step beyond it. Slaves were identified by markings on various parts of the body apparently also on the sole of the slaves’ feet, in order to make tracking easier.

### **Verse 28**

His life is rotten and like a pest-eaten vine decaying with no hope of recovery.

## **COURAGEOUS CONFRONTATION**

### **CHAPTER 14:1-22**

**So brief is man’s allotted time he should be left to enjoy it. (Verses 1-6)**

### **Verse 1**

Job continues to generalize his agonizing cry. Man’s frail origin betrays him to the suffering in an amoral universe. Life is so short.

Here both pity and contempt are mixed. The Hebrew text will not sustain the assumption of some of the church Fathers that this verse sets forth the doctrine of “original sin.”

**Verse 2**

Even the longest life is but a brief flickering candle—and filled with strife.

**Verse 3**

To “open your eyes” means to focus attention on or to pay attention to.

**Verse 4**

Job is concerned with his sin and guilt. “Who will give cleanness to the unclean?” The text says “not one,” but ultimately only God.

**Verse 5**

Since man’s life is so short, why doesn’t God just leave him alone?

**Verse 6**

God, stop your cruel surveillance of man. Let him alone. Let him enjoy each day like a laborer who receives his reward each evening at the close of the work day.

When man goes to his death, he does not return. (Verses 7-12)

**Verse 7**

The figures now change to a tree. Trees can be cut down, but some species will sprout again. Even trees have more hope than men.

**Verse 8**

A tree may not be completely dead, but drought retards its growth. The roots are withering in the ground.

**Verse 9**

But the scent of water will bring new hope for life.

**Verse 10**

Even a strong man dies and is no more. Job here reflects a very limited view of life after death.

### **Verse 11**

The Hebrew term is used in a wider sense than the sea; it can mean a lake. The sea could not dry up; if it did it would not make any difference to the dead.

### **Verse 12**

When men lie down to pleasant dreams, “They shall not awake,” as long as the heavens do not burst.

Job longs for an afterlife. (Verses 13-17)

### **Verse 13**

Job passionately longs for life. If there is a positive possibility of life after death, then Job could endure the present affliction.

Perhaps he is acknowledging a belief in life after death, or a strong desire there might be one.

### **Verse 14**

The image is derived from a military figure of soldiers being relieved after strenuous service.

### **Verses 15 - 16**

Again, two views of God are struggling within Job’s heart.

He “longs for” the former days of fellowship with God, from which his present agony has cut him off. Job so deeply longs for this relationship with God, that he is sick with care (pale, color of silver).

God is jealously observing every detail in his life. Job’s hope is in the future; perhaps God will change His attitude toward him.

### **Verse 17**

The imagery reflects that of accounting or recording of Job’s sins. He seeks to be acknowledged as righteous.

Righteousness is always a correlate of right relations in our daily experiences.

Job desires to meet God face to face but “neither to change nor falter, nor repent.” Job has sought justification by seeking righteousness.

“Rather than seek help he would prefer to be himself with all the tortures of hell, if so it must be.”

Job has come before God with a radical self-estimate of himself; and therein is his “sickness unto death.”

But hope is destroyed in Sheol. (Verses 18-22)

### **Verse 18**

How can man hope to escape destruction, since the greatest mountains can be leveled, and the deepest valleys covered over? Impermanence is the central theme.

### **Verse 19**

As water erodes the stones, so God is destroying (eroding) man’s hope. Job here dismisses the very possibility of life after death.

We can hope—until that ultimate leveler—death smashes our last moment of life.

### **Verse 20**

In man’s last moment of struggle against death, he is defeated by the despair of finality.

Death is extreme and permanent in its conflict with human hope. The phrase, “sends them away” is a verb used euphemistically of dying.

### **Verse 21**

The dead have no knowledge. This is the fate of all mankind. Even children, who think only of life, also share in this fate.

### **Verse 22**

Job now abandons the traditional resolution of man’s troubles, that of leaving a prosperous family behind.

The first series of speeches is ended. Job is enslaved more deeply in despair than in the initial lament. The “slough of despondency is deeper than his pain. There he was “half in love with easeful death” here he stands alone before “the

grisly terror.” But “Death Be Not Proud” for The Shattering of Silence is yet to come.

## **THE GOODNESS OF GOD AND THE FATE OF THE WICKED—ELIPHAZ’S REBUTTAL**

### **CHAPTER 15:1-35**

**Job’s speech and conduct are perverted and show that he is guilty.**

#### **Verses 1-16**

##### **Verse 1**

The second cycle of speeches now begins. Eliphaz’s second speech has an entirely different ring to it than his first speech.

In his first speech he looked on Job as a wise, God-fearing man. Now after hearing Job deny his guilt, rejects the thesis that his suffering is the inevitable result of his sins, and challenges God to explain His existential situation to him.

Eliphaz’s deep insecurity finds expression in his attack on the person of Job.

The encouraging tone of the first speech—reward to the righteous—has escaped from his consoling heart, and now the negative and menacing one—punishment of the unrighteous—controls the speech. He accuses Job with being a windbag, full of hot air.

Job’s claim to wisdom, which is in complete opposition to the wisdom of the ancients, is adjudged to be sheer arrogance. Job is now presented as a rebel without a cause, whereas Eliphaz in his first speech asserted Job’s essential piety, now he is hardened against the Sovereign Creator of heaven and earth.

Now in Eliphaz’s second speech, the irreligious and impious Job is confronted with his inevitable fate.

1. Job is rebuked for his irreverent rashness. (Verses 2-6)
2. Denounced for his presumptive confidence in his superior wisdom. (Verses 7-16)
3. The doctrine of the fate of the wicked. (Verses 17-35)



### **Verse 2**

Job has claimed that his wisdom is not inferior to that of his friends. This stance receives Eliphaz's blistering denunciations—it's all empty knowledge.

The parallel between Job's words and the dreaded, hot violent sirocco winds is self-evident. If Job were truly wise, he would have better arguments.

### **Verse 3**

Job's arguments are profitless. The words are useless; they neither convince nor convict.

### **Verse 4**

Job's words bring only pain and spiritual suffocation to man. His speech does away with reverence.

In fact, Job's words, if taken seriously, would destroy his religion, and impair the faith of others. The verb employed here means "to violate" the covenant or vow.

But Job remains a seeker after Truth who is still deeply pious.

### **Verse 5**

Job's blasphemous utterances are too grounded in his diabolical desire to conceal his own evil heat.

Job is, like the "crafty" serpent of Genesis 3 attempting to misrepresent God.

Eliphaz, like his many contemporary counterparts, seeks to psychoanalyze Job, rather than answer his arguments. Job's attempts to express his innocence, Eliphaz insinuates, are really efforts to hide his guilt.

### **Verse 6**

Eliphaz is arguing that Job's own protestation of innocence is his own condemnation. Thus far Job has admitted only of youthful sins, but he has asserted that God could coerce him into a false confession of guilt. Job is convicted out of his own mouth.

### **Verse 7**

This verse declares that if you were the first man (Adam) you might be wise enough to say what you're saying, but you are not.

### **Verse 8**

Jeremiah derides the false prophets who talk like they have stood in God's council room and heard Him speak directly to them.

The word "council" (meaning intimate and confidential) is one of the designations of the assembly of the gods.

The usage of the council of the gods is at least as old as Mesopotamian and Canaanite antecedents.

Eliphaz is asking Job whether or not he has a monopoly on wisdom.

### **Verses 9-10**

Here we encounter questions which assume that Job is claiming the possession of "superior knowledge."

He has never made such claims. He has only criticized "their" claims to "superior knowledge" of God's will and purpose. Job's friends are the ones claiming "superior knowledge," not Job.

### **Verse 11**

Eliphaz is claiming that the consolation of Job's three friends is from God. Yet, Job dismisses his friends as "miserable comforters."

Perhaps he "deals gently" does apply to Eliphaz's initial speech, but certainly not his second.

### **Verse 12**

Why do you allow your heart (feeling) to carry you away? Job is being rebuked for his uncontrolled passion, not his helplessness.

### **Verse 13**

Job is rebuked for his anger against God. Your spirit refers to Job's anger. In anger you attack God by letting such words out of your mouth.

#### **Verse 14**

The image suggests impurity not finitude (having limits). The Near Eastern negative attitude toward women is here apparent.

#### **Verse 15**

Eliphaz returns to his thoughts expressed in earlier verses. The holy ones, perhaps angels, are not without fault before God.

#### **Verse 16**

Perhaps a proverbial saying—"a man sins like drinking water" presents Eliphaz's judgment of Job. "One" is abominable, that is, disgusting, revolting, loathed.

The destiny of the ungodly shows the retributive justice of God.  
(Verses 17-35)

#### **Verse 17**

Here again is Eliphaz's favorite theme, the destiny of the wicked. Once more the doctrine is supported by reference to the accumulated wisdom of the ages.

Eliphaz's unbridled eloquence is still not very convincing, though he claims revelation (prophetic gazing) as source for his message.

#### **Verse 18**

Eliphaz is here claiming that his convictions are confirmed by the observations of past generations.

#### **Verse 19**

Eliphaz's provincialism shines forth in his belief that the purest wisdom is that in the possession of his own people. Remember, he is not a member of the covenant nation.

#### **Verse 20**

Job has earlier asserted that robbers prosper. Eliphaz responds to Job that the wicked are in constant agony. The prosperity of the unrighteous man is hollow because he is tortured psychologically, by a guilty conscience—"all his days."

The word translated oppressor in the A.V. comes from the root “to terrify” or “to inspire awe” and means here a ruthless person. The verse means that the unrighteous are miserable and short-lived, but the pious are happy and long-lived.

#### **Verse 21**

Eliphaz continues to describe the frightful calamities that come upon the corrupt man. The imagination of the wicked condemns him.

Prosperity is only temporal security to the wicked. There is a constant dread of coming destruction.

#### **Verse 22**

Darkness, the figure of misfortune, hovers over the life and possession of the wicked. The condemning conscience of the wicked is haunted by the finality of darkness.

The sword is waiting for the wicked. The threat of assassination generates constant dread. All evil conscience creates a constant comprehension of disaster.

#### **Verse 23**

This verse means that the wicked-prosperous is always haunted by fears of poverty. They expect the worst and receive the worst.

#### **Verses 24**

“A day of darkness” terrifies him. Anguish and “sickness unto death” prevail against him. Misfortune is pictured as an army of vultures prepared to attack.

#### **Verse 25**

A Divine assault is imminent. Suddenly, Eliphaz switches to imagery portraying an attack on God. Job is here projected as one attacking God. An outstretched hand is a symbol of threat.

#### **Verse 26**

The picture of Job’s foolish defiance continues.

Job stubbornly (stiff neck—pride) opposes God “with the thickness of the bosses of his shields,” that is, the bosses (or convex side of the shield turned toward the enemy) of his shields are set closely together for more protection against the Almighty.

### **Verse 27**

The image is one of gluttonous fatness, the characteristic of spiritual insensibility.

The wicked insensitive person sits around and gets fatter. The Hebrew *pimsh* means “blubber” or a superabundance of fat on the man’s loins. This imagery stands in marked contrast to Job’s present physical condition.

### **Verse 28**

Formerly inhabited cities, now desolate, were considered to be so because of God’s judgment.

Again, the same theology appears—failure means judgment, success means blessing.

### **Verse 29**

The stretching out of the shadow is a figure of the extent of a person’s influence.

### **Verse 30**

Here the fate of the wicked is described. Darkness is an image of misfortune. The destiny of the wicked is not an accident, but rather it is set by God.

The verse describes the swift disaster of the unrighteous, whose security through prosperity will vanish like flames that reduce a forest to ashes.

### **Verse 31**

He who trusts in emptiness will be rewarded by emptiness. All of the promised greatness will not reach fulfillment, rather it will be rewarded with destruction.

### **Verse 32**

The subject “it” refers to his recompense which will be demanded of him before his number of years is finished, that is, his end will be premature.

The metaphor becomes more vivid when we recall that the palm tree is the symbol of longevity.

### **Verse 33**

The vine does not cast off its unripe fruit.

The Syrian olive tree bears during its first, third, and fifth years, but rests during the second, fourth, and sixth years. It also sheds many of its blossoms like snowflakes.

### **Verse 34**

Bribery is frequently condemned in Scripture and is here used as a general term for injustice.

The word rendered “barren” in A.V. appears in 3:7 and should be translated “sterile.”

The phrase “tents of bribery” carries the meaning that the wealth of the wicked has been obtained through deceptive and unjust means by either giving or receiving bribes.

### **Verse 35**

At the beginning of his speech, Eliphaz attacked Job for filling his “belly” with the hot east wind.

Here, once more, their belly, translated “heart” produced only deceit. Eliphaz’s conclusion is that misfortune is self-entailed.

The penalty of the ungodly is premature death and lack of prosperity.

## **JOB'S TRIAL—VINDICATION OR ?**

### **CHAPTERS 16:1—17:16**

#### **Verses 1-5**

**The words of his friends are aimless and unprofitable.**

#### **Verses 1-2**

Job's fourth reply continues the lamentation form and emphasizes the denunciation of enemies, who are his three friends and God. But suddenly in the midst of his response there is a sudden appeal to "a witness in heaven," who will take up Job's defense.

But the speech ends, as do his previous responses, with consideration of approaching death and Sheol. He begins with a statement of weariness. He has heard all of this unprofitable talk before.

#### **Verse 3**

Their comfort only serves to increase his suffering. He turns their talk upon them by calling them men of "windy words," which only irritate.

#### **Verse 4**

In verses 4-5 Job is speaking to all three friends.

Were our positions only reversed, I would have no difficulty playing a pious moralist, "shaking my head in scandalized self-righteousness."

Job further encroaches on his self-righteous friend by crying out that he too "could join words together" as Eliphaz had done.

The imagery of the shaking of the head is associated with mockery and derision.

#### **Verse 5**

Job continues to heap scornful sarcasm on the heads of his helpers.

Though innocent, he suffers the hostility of God and man. (Verses 6-17)

#### **Verse 6**

Job here presents his alternatives by forcibly depicting his dilemma.

Neither vehement protestation nor silence would bring him healing. Both his physical and mental anguish tenaciously hold his soul in a state of unwelcome torture.

Job is not asking, “What?” but rather strongly asserts that nothing eases his suffering.

### **Verse 7**

The subject of this verse is probably “my sorrow” rather than God. The best sense seems to be “my pain hath made me weary”

### **Verse 8**

Job’s calamity has seized (grasped tightly) and is a witness against him. In the eyes of his friends, his suffering was evidence of his sin.

### **Verse 9**

Job here pictures God as a ferocious animal tearing him apart with His teeth. The verb *satam* means to bear a grudge or sustain hate against.

The imagery of “sharpness” comes from a verb used of sharpening a sword. Here it means looking sharply as does an animal for its prey.

God like an animal pursuing its prey, is concentrating His hostility on Job.

### **Verse 10**

These are the people who like jackals follow God’s attack by their assaults. All the figures in this verse are human actions “wide mouth”—desire or greed. They insult or talk openly behind his back and mobilize against him.

### **Verse 11**

Job says that God has delivered him to the ungodly, perhaps a sarcastic denial of their status as wise men and supposed accumulation of wisdom because of their age.

The word translated “casted” means to “wring out.”

He is asserting that God has cast him into the hands of wicked men who “wring” him out.



### **Verse 12**

Suddenly and unexpectedly God attacks him. How? Through whom? This verse makes a couplet with verse 13a, both emphasizing the archer and target. God is directing the attack on Job, though the volleys come from human archers. He is the target.

### **Verse 13**

Job is a target; God shoots arrows at him. “His rein” is a metaphor of the most sensitive and vital part of the body, his kidneys. He slashes me open. “He pours out my gall,” (used only here and stands for the liver, that is, (the seat of emotions) upon the ground. God has dealt him a death blow.

### **Verse 14**

Now Job metaphorically compares his body to that of a fortress which is being repeatedly assailed. He feels like a stronghold being stormed by warriors, not giants as in the A.V.

### **Verse 15**

Sackcloth is the symbol of mourning and was worn next to the skin. The sewing of it on his skin was a sign of permanent mourning. Literally the text says, “I have caused my horn to enter,” which is a symbol of pride or strength.

### **Verse 16**

Involuntary weeping is a symptom of leprosy, which could be Job’s physical ailment. His face is red, that is, inflamed from crying. Eyelids stand for his eyes.

“The shadow of death” is the blackness around the eyes of a sick person.

### **Verse 17**

This cruel suffering has come upon me, though I have done no violence. He completely rejects the possibility of his guilt; thus he once more asserts that his suffering is unmerited.

When the hands are unclean, prayer is unacceptable to God. He affirms that his hands are clean, and here that his prayer is pure. Job’s last possession is the certainty of his being before God.

He must be vindicated by a heavenly witness. (Verses 18-22)

### **Verse 18**

Shed blood cries out for vengeance, hence the effort to hide it in the dust. Job desires that his blood remain uncovered as a protest and appeal to God for vindication.

### **Verse 19**

The witness in heaven is Job's Mediator, Redeemer (or vindicator), even though God is already Job's Accuser, Judge, and Executioner.

### **Verse 20**

"My scorers are my friends," so as I turn from them, I turn to God with tears streaming down my face. The word for "friend" is used of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

### **Verse 21**

The one to whom Job turns is surely the same person as the witness in the preceding verse, and the vindicator. This is one of the most profound verses in all Scripture.

Job appeals to God, who had charged him with cruel agony. As the God of Job's faith, He is also Lord of Justice and Righteousness, the one who will "maintain the right" from which the word umpire is derived. Now he pleads that God might present the case to himself. "A son of man" simply means a person, that is, Job. Neighbor comes from the same word that is translated "friend." The neighbor is not God, as some suggest, rather a fellow human being.

### **Verse 22**

Job here lapses into the thought of the inevitability and finality of death that has been expressed before.

Yet his condition is such that his hope will soon go with him to the grave. (Chapter 17:1-16)

## CHAPTER 17

### Verse 1

Job sees his vindication in heaven, not on earth where his condition is hopeless. To him, death is inevitable, but his estrangement from God is not permanent.

### Verse 2

“I swear that” there are mockers around me. Eliphaz’s illusory promises of Job’s restoration Job adjudges to be mockeries.

### Verse 3

The striking of the hand ratified the pledge. Job is asking God, not his friends, to ratify a pledge.

### Verse 4

He appeals to God since his friends have deprived him of insight. The friend’s hands have not been raised to strike a pledge or guarantee, until Job’s innocence can be established. No one will risk providing Job’s bail until his trial is arranged.

Job is left alone. God is responsible for Job’s condition and his friends lack understanding.

### Verse 5

The K. J. V. follows the old Jewish interpreters in taking *heleq* to mean flattery or smooth. The A. V. translates “he who informs” as “divide” or “share.”

Job’s friends are represented as turning against him for no higher motive than an informer’s share of his property.

The second line asserts that their children will suffer for the lack of compassion. In verse 4, Job declares that God would not permit his friends to triumph, and he asserts that their treacherous behavior will negatively affect their offspring.

### **Verse 6**

“He has made me” an object of scorn of the neighboring people.

Culturally, the bitterest insult and expression of contempt is to spit in someone’s face.

### **Verse 7**

The verb employed here expresses eyesight dimming with age. Grief causes the dim eyesight. Job’s body has deteriorated to a skeleton.

### **Verse 8**

Righteous men are deeply perplexed when they see what is happening to me.

### **Verse 9**

Job taunts his friends. Nothing will cause him to abandon the path of righteousness. The righteous are astonished because of the misery which has befallen the just Job.

This is against all rules; they have to cling to their force, to defend themselves against this “trial of their faith.”

### **Verse 10**

Job challenges his friends to renew their attack on him. Your unsympathetic words will only expose your unfeeling folly. Repetition of their old words will not convince Job of their validity.

### **Verse 11**

The verse reflects Job’s deep emotions. Convulsed with fear, Job acknowledges that death is near. His plans or purposes are thwarted.

Prodding ever deeper into his inner self, Job cries out that even his desires (thoughts) are destroyed.

### **Verse 12**

Job’s mockers distress him so that his nights turn into days. Sleepless nights and distress-filled days add up to dark despair.

### **Verse 13**

His morbid preoccupation with death returns in this verse and continues through verse 16.

He is resigned to death without any hope, even in the time of abandonment. Is Sheol the best Job can anticipate?

### **Verse 14**

Job speaks to corruption as though it is his origin and destiny. Job feels the closest kinship with “corruption.”

### **Verse 15**

His prospects are poor; thus he predicts the ultimate end of his hopelessness. He has no hope of the future prosperity, which his friends have suggested.

### **Verse 16**

The only ones who will see his hope will go down to Sheol with him. Job is here asserting that his last hope for a happy and prosperous life will be carried to the grave. Only in Sheol does he have a future.

## **THE GRANDEUR AND MISERY OF MAN OR IMPOSSIBILITY OF SELF-JUSTIFICATION**

### **CHAPTER 18:1-21**

#### **Sharp rebuke of Job. Verses 1-4**

##### **Verse 1**

Bildad’s second speech reveals a consciously restrained lack of feeling. He attacks Job for his lack of appreciation for ancient wisdom, his abusive language, and also implies that Job cannot expect to be exempted from the universal law—that suffering is inevitably punishment for sin.

##### **Verse 2**

The first part of his speech seeks an answer to the question: Why is Job so contemptuous of his friends?

He charges that Job is so egocentric that he suggests God to change the laws of creation for him.

Bildad suggests that Job has spoken long enough and should stop long enough for his friends to give rebuttal.

### **Verse 3**

Bildad resents Job's comparison of his friends as "dumb beasts. "Why are we stupid?"

### **Verse 4**

Bildad asserts without feeling, "That Job is the cause of his own suffering" because he refuses to take the proper means to remove God's judgment from himself and his household. The rock is sometimes an epithet of God, probably so here.

The law of retribution is as solid and firm as a rock and is part of the structure of the universe.

If the established order of the universe dictates that suffering is the empirical proof of sin, does Job think this order is to be modified for him.

The certain dreadful doom of the hardened evil doer. (Verses 5-21)

### **Verse 5**

This verse initiates the second part of Bildad's speech. Job's sole remaining possession is the horrible memory of his past prosperity and present agony.

The light burning in a house is symbolic of continuous prosperity. The extinction of these symbols of happiness and prosperity is a mark of judgment on the household. Failing light is a sign of disaster.

### **Verse 6**

The tent implies that the event is occurring in the Patriarchal Age. Bildad's speech progresses with the use of proverbial sayings.

1. Sinner's light goes out. (Verses 5-7)
2. Deterioration to downfall. (Verses 8-11)

3. Final condition. (Verses 12-14)
4. Extinction of his race and names. (Verses 15-17)
5. Horror of his fate, (Verses 18-21)

His home is engulfed by darkness—“his lamp above him shall be put out.”

### **Verse 7**

Like the strength of an aging man, the fortunes of the wicked will fail.

Metaphorically, “the steps of his strength” expresses the confident stride of a prosperous man.

The evil motives of an unrighteous man will ultimately “throw him down,” that is bring him to calamity and ruin.

### **Verses 8-9**

Bildad uses a variety of terms for the traps and snares which the wicked will encounter in life. The steps of the unrighteous man are reduced to a feeble hobble, then ensnared by his own evil motives.

The net for catching birds and toils (network, webbing, things interwoven) are means of his own destruction.

Probably the latter snare has reference to “webbing” placed over a pit to catch an animal—suddenly and unawares.

This is Bildad’s description of Job’s ensnaring himself. The gin is a fowler’s trap.

The term “snare” comes from a root meaning evil. Probably it refers to a trap made from some kind of mesh.

### **Verse 10**

A rope, or cord, lies hidden in the ground. This type is used to ensnare birds and smaller animals. The term “trap” means to capture.

### **Verse 11**

Bildad is here referring to an actual experience which a wicked person will have, not one caused by a fearful conscience.

The verb translated “chase” is usually employed to denote the scattering of a group, but here of an individual. The image suggests bewilderment and almost total emotional and intellectual confusion.

#### **Verse 12**

Trouble and calamity, about to seize him, are ravenous and hungry. Let his strength be “hungry.” Hungry one, is an epithet of death.

The second line literally says “from for his rib” can mean wife. But the general sense is that misfortune is always ready and able to bring him to destruction.

#### **Verse 13**

Here is a cryptic reference to the lethal disease that is consuming Job’s body. “His skin is being devoured by disease.” “The firstborn of death devours his limbs.” (In the Hebrew language it means: “it eats part of his skin.”)

“The firstborn of death” is probably a metaphor for Job’s deadly disease.

#### **Verse 14**

The wicked is marched from the security of his own tent, then conducted into the presence of the “King of terror,” (death). This phrase is a personification of death, as “first-born,” is of disease.

#### **Verse 15**

The Hebrew literally states, “In his tent no trace of him remains . . .” Perhaps the brimstone or sulphur is to be understood as disinfectant.”

#### **Verse 16**

Nothing will remain of Job’s household.

#### **Verse 17**

Job and his posterity will be completely cut off from the earth. His children are destroyed, and even his name will be erased from memory.

#### **Verse 18**

The Hebrew word found here and translated as “world” expressed the finality, totality, and cosmic absence of his name.



### **Verse 19**

The feared fate of the extinction of the family is set before Job. Nothing could be more disastrous than the demise of a man's household. A lack of progeny is a lack of God's blessings.

### **Verse 20**

The "day" is his final day or fate. The words translated before and after are literally "behind" and "before"—meaning followers and predecessors.

### **Verse 21**

Bildad assures Job of his fate, as a member of the class of the wicked.

Job, can you not see the irrefutable proof that you are a godless man? Here again Bildad's truth is half a lie.

Severity, not sympathy flows from his lips. Violent indignation, but no mercy, is heaped upon Job's pitiful head.

## **HOPE IN TIME OF ABANDONMENT—VINDICATED BY HIS VINDICATOR CHAPTER 19:1-29**

### **He condemns the friends for shameless abuse. (Verses 1-4)**

#### **Verse 1**

Job's comforters show no development in their encounter with him. In contrast, Job has analyzed his position as the result of their criticism. Job thus becomes our great paradigm of growth through suffering.

We either see our troubles through God, or God through our troubles.

In this discourse, he achieves a profound faith, which enables him to triumph over his destructive despair.

New power and pathos enter Job's literary style. This new power retouches themes which are set forth in his earlier speeches.

1. Validity of a clear conscience.
2. Knowledge that God must yearn for him as he does for God.
3. His hope that God will finally vindicate him.

Job's response to Bildad contains four parts.

1. His impatience with his friends. (Verses 2-6)
2. God's abandonment and attack. (Verses 7-12)
3. Laments his forsaken condition and appeals to his friends once more. (Verses 13-22)
4. His certainty concerning his vindication. (Verses 23-29)

Though Job's friends are uncharitable, and God is silent in the presence of his agonizing cries, Job waits for vindication. But until then!

### **Verse 2**

His friends have grievously wounded (tormented) Job by their insinuations. "Vex" is not strong enough for the Hebrew word which means "crush" describing the effects of the charges from Job's friends. "I am crushed" by your insinuations, not led to repentance.

### **Verse 3**

Job is enduring God's silence; need they add their inhumane treatment to his already overburdened life?

### **Verse 4**

This is a very difficult verse whose meaning is not self-evident. Perhaps the best understanding is that this verse is not an admission of secret sin, which Job has consistently denied, but meaning, "Even if I have sinned, I have not injured You."

He has been overthrown by God. (Verses 5-12)

### **Verse 5**

Job chides his friends for assuming an air of superiority.

### **Verse 6**

Bildad has asserted that the godless man is caught in his own net in 18:8. The word for net is a different one from any employed by Bildad. Here the image is one of a hunter's large net into which animals are driven.

### **Verse 7**

Job's friends have built their arguments on the doctrines of "Divine justice" from the assumption that he is "conscious of his own innocence. "

His pitiful cries for help go unheard. God remains silent.

### **Verse 8**

Job has been hemmed in; restrictions surround him. Satan had asserted that God had placed protective barriers around Job.

### **Verse 9**

The crown of glory is a metaphor for esteem. Job's crown of righteousness has been removed from him. Shame as a garment is an image used in 8:22. Honor is a garment worn by the godly or removed from—striped off—the unrighteous. Job was once a prosperous man who enjoyed an honorable reputation; now he has nothing.

### **Verse 10**

In this verse God has pulled Job down as one wrecks a building.

The second metaphor is that of a tree uprooted. "Walk" here appears as an image of death, death as a way of existence.

### **Verse 11**

The metaphor now shifts to warfare. God will not cease His aggression against Job. God is pictured as a leader directing one attack after another on Job.

### **Verse 12**

The military metaphor is extended. Here the troops are raising a siege ramp. But there is a strong conflict between the image of the siege ramp and a tent. One does not need to besiege a tent with an attack force. Perhaps this tension suggests the inequity of it all.

Job is despised by all people, including his kindred. (Verses 13-19)

### **Verse 13**

God's apparent hostility produces human hostility.

Isolation and loneliness are radically contrasted with the sequence of relationships which develop from less to more intimate. All of the intimate relationships necessary for life have been ripped apart. Total estrangement is Job's pitiful lot.

### **Verse 14**

Job has a right to expect his most intimate friends to stand by him in his great hours of darkness. In his most desperate hours, he is abandoned by all those with whom he has had interpersonal relations. To whom can he turn? Who cares?

### **Verse 15**

Even "the sojourners" of his house rejected him. He even lost the respect of his maidservants and obedience of slaves; this is the depth of humiliation. Job has experienced a totally broken existence, from alienation to humiliation.

### **Verse 16**

He has sunk so low that even his personal servant ignores him. This is the bitterest form of humiliation and proof of the incredible depth into which he has fallen.

### **Verse 17**

Job's skin is ravaged with eruptions and itching. Now halitosis is added to his other symptoms. His personal appearance is appalling, and has contributed to him being socially ostracized.

### **Verse 18**

Even the children show disrespect for Job, as he rises and attempts to walk. Such disrespect calls for drastic punishment. Even little children "turn their backs" on Job, rather than "speak against" him.

### **Verse 19**

Literally this verse says “men of my intimate group” or my “bosom friends”—“have turned against me.”

Job utters a plea for pity. (Verses 20-22)

### **Verse 20**

Job says, “I have nothing but my bones and the skin of my teeth.” Mere survival is the only claim he can make.

### **Verse 21**

The repetition of “have pity on me” is a powerful rhetorical device. The hand of God has “stricken” me.

### **Verse 22**

His friends are here accused of imitating God by their ceaseless hounding of Job. They are inhuman. Job is their prey. The idiom means “spreading false and harmful statements about me.”

How appropriate for our age which is preoccupied with the humanization of man, without the redemptive activity of God is the world.

Job asserts his hope for a vindicator. (Verses 23-27)

### **Verse 23**

Job still holds out hope of the vision of God. The foregoing appeal has fallen on deaf ears. Job is completely alienated from family; men; that is intimate friends; and apparently God.

Yet out of his depth of despair, he achieves a heightened faith in God which maintains that He will “shatter His silence” in the future.

His traditionalist friends have appealed to the wisdom of the past, how Job is enduring the present, and that only the future holds the solution to his dilemma.

Job wants the protestation of his innocence to survive after his death in the form of a book or engraved scroll.

### **Verse 24**

A lead stylus could not make an impression on even the softest stone; therefore, the lead here must be to fill the incisions made by an iron tool.

### **Verse 25**

Here is the central verse of the entire book. Job knows that there is no imminent power within man or nature that can meet his needs.

If death is the ultimate and absolute monarch of all life, all of reality moves toward death. Job's concluding remarks clearly reveal that his Redeemer is God. His vindicator is living and will stand on the earth. Job's God is a living God.

Job's answer comes by the resurrection. Death in Sheol never means extinction or annihilation, only existence that is less to be desired; as many claim, especially, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists (Soul Sleeping), and Armstrongites.

### **Verse 26**

Here is one of the Old Testament high water marks in the development of a belief in the resurrection, which culminates in the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

This fact is the very essence of the Christian faith. Jesus alone has revealed the true nature of Job's God. Job's desire is to (see a vision, a revelation) from God.

He is certain of two things: (1) his Vindicator will vindicate his innocence; and (2) he will see his God.

### **Verse 27**

God will appear on Job's behalf and break His silence. Job will see Him for himself, not through someone else's eyes. When he sees Him, He will appear as a friend, not as an enemy or stranger. Job is overcome with emotion. The bowels and kidneys are regarded as the center of emotions, as was the heart of intelligence.

He warns his friends to cease their persecution. (Verses 28-29)

### **Verse 28**

Job is probably charging his friends with prejudice and persistent persecution.

### **Verse 29**

If you continue persecuting me, you will be judged by the sword, (because the iniquities of the sword are wrath.)

After Job's great assertion, he now lapses back into his not so obscure despair. In Babylonian literature, the sword is a symbol of Nergal, the god of war; perhaps the ideograph has Near Eastern application.

Contemporary man is troubled over the very existence of God. Here Job adds to our anxiety by declaring that God will manifest objective wrath in the form of judgment.

## **POWERLESSNESS OF PROSPERITY—NO ULTIMATE SECURITY— ZOPHAR'S WARNING**

### **CHAPTER 20**

#### **Verse 1**

Zophar explodes with anxiety at Job's charges and closely parallels Bildad's speech in chapter 18. Both deal with the destruction of the godless. More heat than light flows from Zophar's speech.

Job's speech was a living faith; Bildad's and Zophar's speeches were a rigid retribution-oriented religion.

#### **Verses 2-3**

Zophar has almost choked on his silence; now in exasperation he must speak. For the first time one of Job's friends admits to being impressed by his speech. "I hear censure which insults me." Zophar's thoughts cause him to intervene once more. He is boiling over inside and cannot control his hostility.

Job has shamed him; he must respond.

#### **Verse 4**

Zophar is not asking himself if he knows, but, "Do you not know?"

If the wicked prosper, it is only for a brief time. He continues to maintain the invariableness between ungodliness and disaster.

### **Verse 5**

The solution to the problem presented by the prosperity of the wicked is that it is only for a short time.

Ultimately the only consolation of the righteous is in the resurrection. The injection of resurrection possibilities is the basis of 20<sup>th</sup> century efforts at the humanization of man, through socio-political means. Central to this naturalistic humanism is a denial of a vertical dimension to sin, which leaves only a horizontal vision of salvation.

### **Verse 6**

His loftiness, that is, his eminence, is only momentary. But great will be the fall, "It is not Zophar's sermon against pride that makes him a false prophet, but the application of it to Job."

### **Verse 7**

Zophar sinks to a new low in his use of the brutally inelegant metaphor. His vigorous coarseness is bested only by his boorish brutality.

### **Verse 8**

Job is contrasted to a dream which is gone upon awakening. He will be as unavailable as a night vision.

### **Verse 9**

"Saw" means "to catch sight of" and emphasizes the brevity of the appearance.

### **Verse 10**

The poverty of the wicked will force their children to beg from the poor, so destitute is their condition.

Perhaps Zophar is suggesting that the sons of the wicked will be forced to return to those whom he had made impoverished through his illicit gain.



### **Verse 11**

Here the imagery suggest that the wicked will die prematurely, that is, “full of youth.”

### **Verse 12**

The riches of the ungodly are like sweet food in the mouth which turns to poison in the stomach. Evil is compared with something tasty. “The sweetness of sin turns into the gall of retribution, and riches wrongfully acquired must be vomited up again.”

Sin is so sweet that it is hidden under the tongue to retain maximum pleasure for as long as possible.

### **Verse 13**

The verb translated spare means to have “compassion” on it and not let it go. His secret sins are concealed in his mouth.

### **Verse 14**

The sweet-tasting food has become poison. The enjoyment of sin metamorphoses into tragic bitterness and destroys the imbiber.

### **Verse 15**

The figure is in keeping with Zophar’s coarse rhetorical devices. The evil greedy man must vomit up all his ill-gotten wealth.

Here God does not administer an emetic to cause the unrighteous to disgorge the poison; the evil person is so sick that he self-imposes the vomiting.

### **Verse 16**

The poisonous greed proved the undoing of the ungodly.

Greed generates oppression; oppression generates alienation. The central problem of western economic man, from Keynes to our gross national product, is that greed is the dynamic which enable unwise and unreasonable men to make decisions as though infinite economic growth is possible. Perhaps we note here the assumption that the darting tongue of the viper, is the actual source of poison.

### **Verse 17**

The time of enjoyment for the wicked is passed. The joy of leisure is an unavailable goal for the ungodly.

### **Verse 18**

The wicked cannot swallow the profit of labor. The metaphor depicts one who is gagging, that is, one who cannot swallow what is in his mouth. “The profits of his trading” is choking him, therefore, not rejoicing.

### **Verse 19**

The wicked have callously abandoned the poor to their fate, after oppressively mistreating them. The second line declares that the wicked man does not enjoy the fruit of his violence, even though he will not abandon it. He is not satisfied even after violently oppressing the powerless poor.

### **Verse 20**

The greed of the wicked is insatiable. Those with insatiable appetites defeat themselves. How appropriate these thoughts are for 21 century America.

### **Verse 21**

The verse is not emphasizing gluttony for food, but an oppressive aggression which consumes the pitiful powerless poor.

### **Verse 22**

The imagery suggests that avarice consumes the wicked. Anguish in the midst of luxury; how can this be?

### **Verse 23**

While the ungodly person is filling his belly, God will send His burning anger upon him.

### **Verse 24**

The metaphor changes from fiery rain from heaven to that of heavy iron weapons. While trying to elude one death-dealing weapon, another will fall on him. There is no hiding place.

### **Verse 25**

The image is a description of the wicked wounded by an arrow, seeking to withdraw it from his body. Finally the glittering point, that is, (the lightning-flashing point of the arrow) is pulled out of the gall.

### **Verse 26**

The consuming fire is not of human origin, and it will destroy everything.

### **Verse 27**

Job has already asked for a heavenly witness and that the earth not silence the witness of his blood. Here heaven and earth will combine their witness against him.

### **Verse 28**

The word translated “depart” means “to go into exile.” Others will carry away his prosperity into their tents. Nothing remains their own. The flood (torrents), are like the fire in verse 26, has its origin in the purposes of God. The expression of Divine judgment will result in the total destruction of the wicked.

### **Verse 29**

This is the conclusion of Zophar’s speech and repeats what he has already asserted—the end of the wicked in destruction.

## **INTEGRITY, PROSPERITY, AND THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY RIGHTEOUS GOD**

### **CHAPTER 21:1-34**

#### **Job pleads for a sympathetic hearing. (Verses 1-6)**

##### **Verse 1**

For the sixth time Job responds to Zophar out of the depths of his realistic experience.

Job confronts their thesis that the righteous are happy and the wicked are miserable with a counterclaim that the wicked are often prosperous. This Jobian speech falls into five sections.

1. Job appeals for a hearing. (Verses 2-6)
2. The wicked prosper. (Verses 7-16)
3. He asks, do the wicked suffer. (Verses 7-22)
4. Death levels everyone and everything. (Verses 23-26)
5. Universal experience contradicts the arguments of his three comforters. (Verses 27-34)

### **Verse 2**

Eliphaz had identified his words with the “consolation of God.” Now Job asks him to consider real consolation. He has emerged victorious over the temptation presented to him by both his friends and his wife. He has asserted his faith that God knows his innocence and will ultimately testify to it.

He still believes in God’s goodness and has a basis from which to reject the accusing recommendations of his friends. He passes from mere defensiveness to frontal attack.

Theologically, his friends have attacked him from behind the bulwark of the eternal universal principle of retributive justice.

Job brilliantly and relentlessly undertakes to falsify the principle from which they continually deduced so many erroneous conclusions.

First, it is not universally self-evident that God sends retributive justice in this life.

Secondly, God does not destroy the godless in a moment.

Thirdly, that the impious do not always prosper, but they often do. Job asks only for their discreet silence and attentive ears.

### **Verse 3**

Job is focusing attention on Zophar’s just-ended discourse on the fate of the wicked. After what I have to say, you will no longer mock me.

#### **Verse 4**

Job's complaint is against God, not man. He would expect at least sympathy from man. He receives no consolation from either God or man.

He is protesting the moral anomalies that God allows in His world. Job has inquired of God, but God remains silent, therefore, Job is impatient.

#### **Verses 5-6**

Laying one's hand over the mouth is the gesture of awe and voluntary silence. Job's friends will be silent when they hear and understand his argument concerning the prosperity of the wicked.

The wicked enjoy great peace and plenty. (Verses 7-1)

#### **Verse 7**

Zophar had said that the wicked die prematurely. Job counters with evidence to the contrary.

Zophar's argument is sophistry. If one dies early in his life, then he was wicked.

Not only do many wicked live long lives, but their prosperity continues unbroken. The evidence does not support Zophar's claim that the prosperous wicked never attain a level of true happiness. The holy pagan, moral atheist, the good-living humanist might be as "happy" as the righteous man, then and now.

The only motives advanced by Job's friends for serving God have been.

1. Fear and punishment.
2. Hope for reward.

This kind of motivation will never produce truly pious people.

#### **Verse 8**

Job directly contradicts the claims of Bildad concerning the fate of the wicked.

He first attacks Bildad's assertion that Job's ill-fated prosperity and progeny are proof of ungodliness. The wicked have before them their offspring.

### **Verse 9**

Here Job sets the security of the ungodly against Eliphaz's claim in Chapter 5 Verse 24. He had promised Job security in his tent if he would accept his present condition as God's judgment and repent.

In Chapter 9 Verse 34 Job complained that there was no "mediator" to remove God's rod of anger from him; here he asserts that the ungodly do not feel the rod of wrath.

### **Verse 10**

Another mark of God's blessing was fertility in herds and flocks. If this is a sign of God's blessing, then He is blessing many wicked people with success.

### **Verse 11**

Here we note a beautiful picture of peace, progress, and prosperity as children are playing and singing like happy little lambs. But the children of the wicked are as numerous as a herd or flock.

### **Verse 12**

Revelry of the wicked is seen in the worship of Baal.

The same mode, but not motive, is employed in the worship of God. Festivity and celebration are marks of both pious joy as well as sensual revelry.

### **Verse 13**

The wicked often know intense prosperity and come to a peaceful ripe old age. In peace they go down to Sheol.

They have a long life and complete life, with little or no suffering and no lingering illness.

### **Verse 14**

Radical self-interest is no motive for them to acknowledge God. They already have everything they want.

What profit is there in knowing God? The happy people have no self-interest to induce them to worship God.

### **Verse 15**

The wicked have no obligation of love or gratitude to worship God. This philosophy of religion says that we will give if we get in return. But the righteous man desires above all else to know God and His ways. The perverse reject God, while they continue to prosper.

### **Verse 16**

God does not concern Himself with the wicked, but leaves their prosperity to themselves; it is their sole and ultimate award.

Job then says that the counsel of the wicked is removed far from him in the sense that despite their success, Job does not wish to be prosperous on their terms.

Sometimes they suffer, but not regularly. (Verses 17-22)

### **Verse 17**

Job admits that there is some evidence for the claims of his friends, but not enough to claim universal inevitability of the law of retribution. In a moral universe, everyone is responsible for his or her own deeds.

### **Verse 18**

The images are figurative for destruction.

### **Verse 19**

The verse presents the ancient view that a man's sins are visited upon his children. Job objects that this is unjust.

### **Verse 20**

The wicked ought to receive the retribution themselves, not their children as, "Let his own eyes see his destruction (punishment)."

### **Verse 21**

What concern does a dead man have for his house? What difference does God make to a dead ungodly person?

### **Verse 22**

Who can teach God anything? Shall even the “high ones” (probably angels and not God) teach him. Job is asserting that moral considerations alone do not explain the varieties of human experience, for the intensity of either happiness or despair.

The only equality is to be found in death. (Verses 23-26)

### **Verse 23**

One dies “in his perfection,” that is prime of life. Death levels everyone. One person dies in prosperity, another in poverty.

### **Verse 24**

The Hebrew word *hapaz* perhaps is a euphemism for “buttocks” which is plump or fat.

The second line contains the figure (moist bones are figures of health) which suggest that the person is well fed or prosperous. Death takes them all, regardless of social status or physical condition.

### **Verse 25**

This verse is Job’s description of himself.

### **Verse 26**

The ungodly and the righteous share the same—death.

So, your argument that I am wicked because I suffer is false. (Verses 27-34)

### **Verse 27**

Job has thus far claimed that there is no evident connection between happiness and virtue.

He knows that his friends meant him while they were claiming that the wicked are destroyed; Job is destroyed; therefore, Job is wicked. His suffering is the price paid for his sins.



### **Verse 28**

Here the implication is a wealthy but wicked prince who has exploited the poor. God's vengeance has swept his house away.

### **Verse 29**

Any wayfarer (those who travel the roads), could tell Job's friends that their claims are not universally the case.

The daily experience (signs or monuments) of many will refute their claims.

Why do they persist in their evaluation of the wicked and the righteous, when the evidence refutes their claims?

### **Verses 30-31**

The reference here is to the successful, powerful despot, not God. The way (life style; way of life) represents the behavior pattern of the wicked but successful man.

### **Verse 32**

There is abundant evidence that wicked men are honored in both life and death. They are so respected that men watch over their tombs.

Job is claiming that often the wicked are buried in pomp and much circumstance. How different from his own situation.

### **Verse 33**

Burial was often in a ravine or valley. After the rains, the clods would become as hard as rocks and so continue to mark the grave.

He has no beautiful mausoleum only "clods" to identify the spot where the earth entombs his once strong body.

### **Verse 34**

Job dismisses the arguments of his friends as vain in view of the rocks of reality. Their answers are perfidy, that is, sacrilegious attacks on God. The things they have been saying on God's behalf are all lies when tested against experience.

## FALLACIES, FOLLIES, AND LOGOTHERAPY—THIRD TIMES A CHARM

### CHAPTERS 22:1—26:14

#### ELIPHAZ ON THE FUNCTIONAL VALUE OF MAN

##### CHAPTER 22:1-30

God needing nothing is not self-seeking in punishing Job, so the punishment must be the result of sin. (Verses 1-5)

##### Verse 1

The third cycle of speeches now begins. From the very beginning Eliphaz has found Job obstinately perverse.

The speeches have thus far been along three lines of thought.

1. The three friends have argued to the conclusion that Job has sinned and that his suffering can be alleviated only through his repentance.
2. The second cycle develops the thesis of the fate of the wicked and that the universe is governed by moral structures.
3. In the third series they turn with vehemence upon Job and charge him with grave sins.

Eliphaz returns to his earlier theme that repentance would lead to Job's restoration. His speech contains four divisions.

1. Since God is disinterested, that is, silent, Job's suffering is proof of his sins. (Verses 2-5)
2. Eliphaz's deduction concerning Job's sin. (Verses 6-11)
3. Eliphaz's envisagement of Job's assumption concerning God's silence. (Verses 12-20)
4. Eliphaz's promise and appeal to Job. (Verses 21-30)

The central issue in this speech is the distance between God and man because of sin. If a man suffers, it is a result of his personal sins.

Eliphaz here abandons all efforts at gentleness.

In his first speech he set forth encouragement; in his second speech he spoke of Job's irreverence; and now he openly charges Job with hypocrisy and secret sins.

The principles from which Eliphaz begins his reasoning is true, that is, God is just, but it is not the entire picture; God is also loving.

### **Verse 2**

God can derive no possible advantage from man, but a pious life style can benefit man.

### **Verse 3**

Is it any advantage or pleasure to God, if you are righteous?

Can a professional wise man give instruction to the Almighty? Eliphaz dismisses these ludicrous possibilities.

### **Verse 4**

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament witness to our unprofitableness and God's gracious concern. Eliphaz is assuming that since God is disinterested, His relationship to man must be our advantage and not God's.

### **Verse 5**

Job will later protest that he is innocent. Chapter 31:5ff will contain his response to Eliphaz's charges.

Job's accuser has no evidence. His accusations are derived from his presuppositions. The two words for sin in this verse are:

- (1) wickedness (loose, ill regulated); and
- (2) deliberate and premeditated.

Eliphaz declares that if God's discipline is not for your piety, then it must be for your sinful rebellion.

If your suffering is limitless and God is just, then your sins must also be boundless.

Specific sins charged against Job, and their consequences. (Verses 6-11)

## **Verse 6**

Eliphaz begins an analysis of Job's specific sins.

Hebrew law required that if a poor man gave his undergarment in pledge for a given transaction, that the creditor must return it by sundown, so the debtor would have at least this covering to protect him against the chill of the night.

Here Eliphaz charges that Job in his greed has stripped the poor debtors and reduced them to nakedness (strongly denied in chapter 31).

Where is the evidence for this charge? Does he bring some mistreated poor to witness against Job?

## **Verse 7**

Eliphaz continues to confront Job with the violation of the standard list of social crimes which the wealthy and powerful could commit with impunity.

The next accusation hurled against Job is that he has neglected basic hospitality to the poor. The charge is serious since he is charged with calloused indifference to even the minimal needs of the poor.

## **Verse 8**

Job is identified as a "man of arm," that is a person of wealth and rank. Here we read of an oblique reference to Job as a land-grabber. He is also described as the favored man (lifted of face), that is, on the basis of wealth.

## **Verse 9**

Supposedly, Job has sent widows away empty handed. He also crushed the arms of orphans.

To exploit defenseless orphans or widows was a most heinous crime. Job responds to these charges in Chapter 29 and 31.

## **Verse 10**

What Bildad has earlier predicted of the ungodly in general, Eliphaz here specifically applies to Job. In retribution for his sinful acts, God spreads snares or traps around Job.

Terrified with sudden dread Job falls into the traps with paralyzing fright. The snares are proof of Job's evil deeds, according to Eliphaz.

### **Verse 11**

Job, do you not understand the true cause of your troubles? The crushing misfortunes are metaphorically expressed by blinding "darkness and destructive floods." Water and darkness are figures for the perils of death and Sheol.

Warning that all evil men have been punished. (Verses 12-20)

### **Verse 12**

God's transcendence is understood here in the sense that he is so far off that He is unconcerned with man's condition.

Job has actually used this theme to describe the practical atheism of the prosperous who go unpunished in spite of their impiety.

Eliphaz deliberately distorts Job's discourse in order to identify him with the ancient wicked.

### **Verse 13**

Eliphaz intentionally distorts Job's theology as he asks, does the vast distance create darkness so God cannot discern human deeds?

This verse contains the first overt distortion of Job's position concerning God's transcendence.

### **Verse 14**

God is only concerned with the "circle" of the heavens, not with the events on the earth, so declares Eliphaz.

This perhaps is in response to Job's question in chapter 21:22.

God is elsewhere depicted as riding upon the clouds—and making the clouds His chariots.

"Vault" or dome carries a connotation not presented in the creation narratives or here. God is not described as being outside an enclosed world.

### **Verse 15**

Eliphaz next asserts that the attitudes espoused by Job have brought destruction on the ancient wicked. The wicked walk the path of ignorance of God's presence.

### **Verse 16**

The foundations of their existence collapsed from beneath them, swept away as by a flood. They were snatched away without warning.

### **Verse 17**

Eliphaz is commenting on some of the remarks of the ancient wicked.

He remembers what Job has claimed, in order to assert that his prosperity was only a prelude to his devastation.

### **Verse 18**

Eliphaz again distorts Job's words—21:16—in order to assert that the God he scorns was the source of his prosperity.

Any forthcoming disaster was merited. The blessings which the wicked receive will become to them a curse. God's ultimate overthrow of the wicked is proof of His just rule over the affairs of men.

### **Verse 19**

Note: For imageries depicting the righteous rejoicing over the destruction of the wicked, see Psalm 52:6ff; 69:32; and see Psalm 107:12 for rejoicing over the victories of the righteous.

### **Verse 20**

“Our adversaries,” that is, the wicked and their possessions are destroyed.

Repent and restoration will be certain. (Verses 21-30)

### **Verse 21**

Eliphaz entreats Job to “reconcile or yield himself to God,” promising him great material reward. This will result in Job's submission to God, “Then he will be at peace.”

Eliphaz still claims that the rewards of the righteous constitute its attraction.

#### **Verse 22**

The only occurrence of the word Torah in Job is here. It means instruction or revelation. His “words” is parallel in line two and reflect a scribe taking dictation from God.

#### **Verse 23**

If you become reconciled to God, “you will be built up.” “Built up” is used here of persons made prosperous, implying here healing or restoration.

#### **Verse 24**

Eliphaz is promising Job the restoration of his wealth if he will but return to God. God will make his gold as common as dirt. The word translated “treasure” means ore, or that which is dug out of the earth.

#### **Verse 25**

Eliphaz exhorts Job to make God, not gold or silver, his treasure. Job vigorously responds to this charge though Eliphaz means that God’s favor brings wealth.

The word rendered “precious” probably means “heaps of,” that is, a large amount of silver.

#### **Verse 26**

Eliphaz asserts that if Job will make God his treasure, he will be able to lift up his head in confidence.

“Face to face” implies the fact of reconciliation.

#### **Verse 27**

God’s silence will be broken and His presence will be restored to Job.

#### **Verse 28**

If Job would return to God, the light of constant success would shine on his way. Instead of darkness, he would walk in light.

## **Verse 29**

The righteous man has great influence with God. Daniel, Noah, and Job were credited with great powers of influence. Here we see an early form of the Rabbinic concept which gradually develops into the Roman Catholic theology of the merits of the saints.

## **Verse 30**

The first line means by the cleanness of Job's hands, the wicked shall be delivered.

## **JOB'S PERSISTENT DESIRE OR VALUE OF ARGUING WITH GOD?**

### **CHAPTERS 23:1—24:25**

## **Verse 1**

This begins Job's seventh response. This speech is profoundly mournful.

God still has not broken His silence.

Job's dark night of the soul haunts him oppressively and God's absence is tormenting his soul as the soul of one who loves and formerly knew God face to face.

His reply to Eliphaz falls into four sections.

1. Job's longing to meet God. (Verses 2-7)
2. The power and inaccessibility of God. (Verses 8-17)
3. Silence of God in the face of human oppression and injustice, chapter 24:1-17.
4. Problem about continuity. (Verses 8-25)

The friends have charged Job with impious rebellion against God's standards of morality. He responds— "Even or still today my complaint is rebellious . . ." Job declares that he will continue to be a rebel in their eyes.

## **Verse 3**

Even though God suppresses Job, he desires to see Him.

Job aspires to appear before God's dwelling place, His judgment seat.



#### **Verse 4**

Once more the courtroom scene is evoked. But Job is no longer afraid that God would refuse to hear him or continue His agonizing silence. He would prepare his case and present it to God.

#### **Verse 5**

Job merely wishes to hear God's charges against him. The Divine indictment Job would accept, but not the wrathful innuendoes of his three consolers.

#### **Verse 6**

He is confident that God would give him a fair hearing and ultimately a vindication.

#### **Verse 7**

If he would get an audience with God, he would be vindicated as a righteous man. The verb here is used in 21:10b of a cow giving birth. The image is that of justice emerging successfully as from a womb.

#### **Verse 8**

His hope for encountering God is shattered. He goes forward, that is, in all directions—seeking God, but He is elusive.

#### **Verse 9**

The Hebrew text says, "When I turn to the left I do not see Him."

#### **Verse 10**

There are two possible understandings of this verse.

1. God eludes Job's search because He always knows where Job is going.
2. In spite of God's unavailability to Job, he knows that God is still watching over him,

When God has completely tested Job, He will discover no dross in him, only pure gold.

### **Verse 11**

Job's assurance is grounded in his conviction that he has always walked in God's way. His integrity is matched only by his loyalty to God.

### **Verse 12**

Eliphaz has exhorted Job to receive instruction from his mouth and lay up His words in his heart. Job responds to this exhortation by asserting that he has always lived in that manner.

Job's possible Israelite (patriarchal) background is suggested by his use of the word in Hebrew *miswah* for, "In my bosom I treasured the words of his mouth."

### **Verse 13**

"He is one (unique)" means that God freely chooses His own course and His power is irresistible.

### **Verse 14**

God's decrees are unchangeable. The last line is ambiguous; it is not certain whether God has more suffering reserved for Job or others or both.

### **Verse 15**

When he thinks of God's mysterious ways with men, he is terrified once more.

### **Verse 16**

The verb translated "made . . . faint" means to "be tender." Contemplating all of his misery, Job's heart fills him with horror.

### **Verse 17**

In bondage to fear and darkness, Job is reduced to utter despondency. What disturbs Job more than his misery is the thought that God has decreed it.

Many other cases of unequal treatment show God's unconcern. (Chapter 24 1-25) The wicked and their victims. (Verses 1-12)

### **Verse 1**

Job's reply continues. As in Chapter 21, he moves from his specific experience to man's experience in general.

He describes the oppression of wicked, unscrupulous princes and the resultant misery of the poor enslaved by the burdens engendered by poverty.

There God did not punish the impious; here He does not recover the poor from oppression. These two emphases are fundamental in the Old Testament doctrine of God, that is, that He will judge the wicked and liberate the oppressed.

### **Verse 2**

“The wicked remove the landmarks,” but the Law strictly condemns such action. The powerful wicked not only remove the boundary stones but also seize the flocks of their weaker neighbors and openly pasture them on stolen land.

The images here are crystal clear; the powerful aggressively dispossess the weak and nothing is done about it.

Does God know this? Does He have any compassion at all?

### **Verse 3**

The defenseless orphans and widows are reduced to abject poverty. Members of these classes had only one animal and thus they would be rendered without any means of support after the donkey or ox was plundered. The wicked publicly flaunt the helpless.

All pledges from the poor were to be returned if they were necessary for livelihood. Job asks God what He does about the behavior of such calloused men. Their heinous crimes against the poor must be judged if we dwell in a moral universe.

### **Verse 4**

The poor are deprived of their rights. The poor, once deprived, have no place to turn.

### **Verse 5**

Hopelessly oppressed, the poor have been destroyed by extortion and wicked or cruel degradation.

Our own American history has its own record of depriving thousands, sometimes millions, of their rights, originally from God as beings in His image.

### **Verse 6**

The poor subsist on the type of food used to feed animals. They gather their fodder and each one gathers his own.

### **Verse 7**

The abject poverty of those described in this verse leaves them without clothing in the cold night wind. Misery begets misery—no food, no clothing, no shelter from the cold.

### **Verse 8**

The poor embrace the rocks in the mountains since they have no other shelter. They cling to the security afforded by the rocks. Their dearest friends are the rocks.

### **Verse 9**

The imagery takes us from one exploited group to another. Job has thus far described the meager possession of the poor, the humiliating circumstances under which scavengers seek out a minimal subsistence. We have toured the cities and the desert places; now we must face those in slavery.

Those harsh taskmasters are heartless creditors and take a pledge from off the poor. The Hebrew means to take something that is on the poor, that is, their clothing, not merely something from the poor.

The first line relates a cruel tyrant removing a baby from his mother's breast while she is being sold at auction. The parallel line suggests taking the clothes from their back.

### **Verse 10**

Their clothes have been removed as pledge, in that they are here described as naked. They are starving and yet must carry the sheaves of their masters. Even the animals were not treated like these outcasts.

In Israel one could not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain. Here a laborer is hungry while working in the midst of abundance. How torturing it must be to carry food, which one could not eat, when one is starving.

### **Verse 11**

The Hebrew text can be rendered “between their rows,” that is, “among the olive rows of the wicked they make oil.” In the sight of mouth-watering succulent grapes, they are panting with thirst.

### **Verse 12**

In verses 12-16 Job focuses attention on violations of the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth commandments, that is, murders, adulterers, and thieves, who compose “the city of men.”

From the city men cry out because of violence and social departure from the regular order. Men cry out, but God pays no attention to the moral malaise. The lovers of darkness. (Verses 13-17)

### **Verse 13**

Why do these wicked people escape Divine retribution? Earlier he describes those who steal because of the circumstances of their poverty; but here Job describes those who are dominated by a wicked heart.

### **Verse 14**

The first violator of the light is the murderer.

The destitute condition of the social structure in which one finds this kind of rebel is clear from the type of persons they prey on. Why the needy and the poor; why not more profitable prey?

### **Verse 15**

As the prostitute seeks the double protection of disguise and darkness here the adulterer also seeks the hiding power of darkness.

These violators of light seek only to perform transgressions in secret.

## **Verse 16**

Generally, a thief would gain entrance by digging through the wall of the house.

All three groups commit their dark deeds hiding from the day.

The verb here means “to set a seal upon” night and suggests that the thief had marked the house that he would enter come nightfall.

But, perhaps and more probable, the seal identifies the person. The image conveys a search for security. Perhaps Job is saying that these criminals are as secure as if they were “sealed.” God does nothing about their malignant evil deeds.

All wicked people hide from the light because it terrorizes them.

## **Verse 17**

Just as ordinary people fear the darkness of the night, the wicked dread the daylight.

The unhappy fate of the wicked. (Verses 18-25)

## **Verse 18**

These verses express the viewpoint of his friends, rather than Job.

After his description in verses 2-17 of the oppressions which are inflicted upon the poor, the question arises: What is the fate of the evil-doers? Are they protected in their wicked life style?

The wicked person is carried along hopelessly by the flood. They derive no happiness from their estates; because they are cursed, they are also unfruitful. They know that their vineyards are unfruitful and do not visit them, because there are no grapes to tread.

## **Verse 19**

The heat is so intense that snow water is dried up. The verb rendered “consume” means to seize violently or tear away; as the snow dissolves in the intense heat, so does the wicked in Sheol.

### **Verse 20**

The wicked man is even forgotten by his own mother's womb. Only the worms who are eating his body find pleasure in him. Wickedness will ultimately be broken to pieces as a tree.

### **Verse 21**

The images refer to the ungodly who exploit and mercilessly oppress the poor women without sons.

### **Verse 22**

The metaphor used in the A.V. presents a powerful God using His might to destroy the confidence of the wicked.

### **Verse 23**

Job seems to be bitterly claiming that God watches over the wicked so that their path is secure.

### **Verse 24**

The wicked are, in the midst of their exaltation, cut off like flowers or heads of grain before the reaping knife—and as all others, they fade and wither. This is his description of the fate of the wicked.

### **Verse 25**

The bitter indictment of God's injustice is Job's final words in his speech.

He concludes, if I am mistaken about my description of the actual state of affairs, you may call me a liar and my words empty, as you have previously charged. Now Bildad's third speech.

## **MAN—A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS**

### **CHAPTER 25:1-4**

#### **Man cannot argue with God. Verses 1-4**

### **Verse 1**

The Chapters 25-27 contain the third speech of Bildad, the eighth response of Job, and the third speech of Zophar.

One cannot but be struck by the brevity of Bildad's speech. He fails miserably in responding to Job.

### **Verse 2**

God alone is Lord, the omnipotent Creator of the universe. His magnificence inspires awe.

### **Verse 3**

Bildad's thesis is that God's power is His purity. His light emanates and illuminates the entire creation. Nothing is concealed from God's sight.

### **Verse 4**

In comparison to God who can presume to be righteous? No human can be faultless.

Man is not pure before God. (Verses 5-6)

### **Verse 5**

Eliphaz had contrasted men and angels; now Bildad contrasts men and the brightness of the moon and stars. In contrast to God's radiance, all creation pales into darkness.

### **Verse 6**

To Bildad, the smallness of man is symbolic of his worthlessness. In the text the first word suggests "decay" and the second "abasement."

No man should have the brashness to assert his innocence before God. Certainly no "worm" should argue with God about his integrity or seek self-vindication.

Man is only fit to be compared to a maggot or to a worm.

Bildad, like Eliphaz, is a forerunner of Islamic Monotheism, which ignores the facts of good and evil, the nature of God beyond power, and Job's moral integrity before the holy God.



## **GREATNESS AND GOODNESS OF GOD**

### **CHAPTER 26:1-14**

#### **What a giant of comfort Bildad has been! (sarcasm) Verses 1-4**

##### **Verse 1**

In Chapters 26-30, we have Job's final response to his critics.

Job's sarcastic self-assurance leaps forth from every word, far from confessing his own moral malaise; he taunts his friends for failing to bring him God's consolation.

Despite many textual enigmas, we encounter some of the loftiest insights ever vouched safe to a tortured human spirit, concerning the greatness and grandeur of God.

##### **Verse 2**

In an almost violent burst of sarcasm, Job responds to the irrelevance of Bildad's speech.

The speech is composed of two parts.

1. Job's confrontation with Bildad.
2. Job's unmodifiable protestation of innocence.

It is most likely that Job is asking what consolation has Bildad brought to him in his hours of despair.

##### **Verse 3**

Bildad's speech was, the bearer of abundant "plentifully declared" wisdom in only five verses.

His speech was packed with super-abundant wisdom explaining why one wicked man dies at the peak of his life without disease or despair, who has all along been robbing, murdering, and committing adultery, while another wicked man dies enslaved and embittered of spirit. Explain that, Bildad, if you are so wise.

#### **Verse 4**

Job is saying that he is as wise and informed as they are—and who are they to give him instruction on the sovereignty of God and that awe is the only appropriate human response.

Job is ironically asking, "Is the source of your wisdom, revelation, and illumination of God?"

No mysteries are hidden from God. (Verses 5-14)

#### **Verse 5**

From these verses we have the theme of God's omnipotence set forth again. He is absolute authority over heaven and earth and Sheol.

Bildad has previously declared God's greatness; now Job declares his own faith in the greatness of God.

The dead are still in God's control. They cannot hide from Him, even in Sheol. Even the inhabitants of Sheol tremble before God.

#### **Verse 6**

Abaddon is another name for Sheol. Abaddon comes from a root meaning ruin or destruction and is a personal name translated as Apollyon in Revelation 9:11. No one and no place holds secrets from God.

#### **Verse 7**

The Hebrew word for north (*Sapon*) originally was the name of the mountain of Hadad or Baal, the Syrian weather-god.

The mountain lay directly north of Palestine.

The earth stands on nothing.

#### **Verse 8**

Job stands in awe at the clouds pictured as full of water but which do not burst under the weight of their burden.

### **Verse 9**

God hides the face of the full moon by covering it with the clouds. Even the bright light of the moon is under His authority.

### **Verse 10**

God “has described a circle,” which means that He has set a limit or boundary. Darkness suggests limitation. God here transcends all pagan mythological dualism; He alone controls chaos.

### **Verse 11**

The earth is here called “the pillars of heaven.” The pillars tremble or shake at God’s rebuke.

### **Verse 12**

“Disturb or stir up” suggests that the powerful water supply which the heavens sustain is powerless when God intervenes—Rahab might refer to (Egypt)—Psalm 87:4—and the experience of the parting of the waters.

When God liberates, nothing stands in His way. He is claiming that it is by God’s wisdom and understanding, not His power, that He is victorious.

### **Verse 13**

The text probably refers to the clearing of the skies after a storm. The wind referred to is, in all probability, the wind which clears the clouds out of the skies after a storm.

### **Verse 14**

The secret of God’s power will forever elude the seeker.

The solution to God’s providential control over creation will only baffle and frustrate until in complete faith-trust Job rests in His everlasting arms through resignation to God’s wisdom and justice. He finally confesses that only God had infinite wisdom and knowledge.

## **THE LONELINESS AND ISOLATION OF JOB**

### **CHAPTERS 27:1—31:40**

#### **The affirmation of innocence. Chapter 27:1-6**

##### **Verse 1**

The preceding chapter contains the most powerful cosmological section in the dialogue. Now Job resumes his response to Bildad by his inflexible protestation of innocence.

##### **Verse 2**

The fact that Job made his vow in God's name suggests that he loved Him.

##### **Verse 3**

Job is affirming that though he is suffering, he still has control over his mental faculties. The conviction of this battered giant remains unshaken.

##### **Verse 4**

Job contends that all along he has spoken the truth. This is the content of the oath.

##### **Verse 5**

As long as Job lives, he will not grant his friends the right to assert his guilt. So long as he lives, he could not deny his own integrity before God. I could never "justify you," that is, admit that you are correct regarding my righteousness.

##### **Verse 6**

The heart is the Hebrew seat of intelligence, reason. Job denies any awareness of sins such as his consolers had charged to him. (Chapter 22:6-9)

No believers anonymous, that is, no universal salvation. (Verses 7-23)

##### **Verse 7**

The lot of the wicked, that is, those without God and hope, is inevitable punishment. Though the words are strong, they are not vindictive but rather express the author's abhorrence of evil.

### **Verse 8**

The verb rendered “get gain” means gain by violence, cut off, break off. Note that verse 9 speaks of God’s deafness to the prayers of the wicked. The verse is relating how lonely and isolated the wicked are, even in this life.

The ultimate fate of the wicked is again death. Only the godly man can pray to God; all ears are deaf to the ungodly, as a class of men.

Why do his friends implore him to pray for forgiveness, if God does not hear the prayers of the ungodly?

### **Verse 9**

If I am unrighteous, God will not hear my prayer for forgiveness. Job presents them with a theological dilemma of their own making. How devastating.

### **Verse 10**

It is useless to pray to God in times of trouble if we have ignored him in all other circumstances.

### **Verse 11**

He here launches on a new theological theme that of God’s immoral behavior “in governing the universe.” The “you” is again plural. Both Job and his friends claim superior knowledge.

### **Verse 12**

How can you be uninformed concerning the universal phenomenon of God’s justice, if you are so wise?

### **Verse 13**

The judgment is from God.

### **Verse 14**

Numerous children were thought to be a great blessing; here they are for destruction. The sword is to break, shatter, scatter, his offspring.

### **Verse 15**

His survivors, that is, children, not destroyed by the sword will be left to the fate of death by pestilence.

The Hebrew text literally says, “His survivors will be buried in death by death,” a death which befits the ungodly.

Not to be buried or mourned was a disaster

### **Verse 16**

The image here suggests abundance. After the family is destroyed, their possessions follow the same fate.

### **Verse 17**

The only ones who will prosper are the righteous. What the ungodly accumulate will be divided by the godly.

### **Verse 18**

The imagery here comes from the harvest season when a watchman or guard builds temporary shelter from which to watch over unharvested crops. The verb, “he makes,” refers to the flimsy shelter which the watchman constructs.

### **Verse 19**

The rich lie down, but for the last time. The swiftness of the destruction of the wicked is here vividly expressed.

“It is not” or “he is not” and expresses the fact that a dying man is conscious of his own demise.

### **Verse 20**

As in verse 19, calamity calls him from his night chambers. The wicked man is haunted by terrors night and day.

### **Verse 21**

The east wind causes restless and sleepless nights; thus it signifies all that is unpleasant.

The sirocco wind is scorching and violent, destroying man’s peace.

## **Verse 22**

There is neither subject nor object to “hurl” but is likely a reference back to the “wind” in verse 21. The implication is that it is like a deadly missile hurled at him.

## **Verse 23**

When death and destruction come to the wise, men scornfully clap their hands, while hissing (gesture of horror) at the very thought of them.

## **SOURCE OF TRUE WISDOM. CHAPTER 28: 1-28**

### **Man finds hidden treasures of the earth, as in mining. Verses 1-11**

#### **Verse 1**

The theme of this marvelous chapter is the transcendence of Divine wisdom and its inaccessibility to man.

Man may discover certain dimensions of God’s wisdom, but human efforts can never completely fathom the Divine purpose.

This beautiful portion of Job falls into three divisions.

1. There is no known road to attain wisdom. (Verses 1-11)
2. No price can purchase it. (Verses 12-19)
3. God alone possesses it, and only when God makes it available through special revelation can man possess it. (Verses 20-28)

This verse clearly means that every valuable thing in creation has a dwelling place. The emphasis in Hebrew is on “there is” a source—a “place of coming forth”, that is, the mining of silver and gold. There are only a few references to mining in the Old Testament.

We have confirmation of the presence of a great copper refinery, from the time of Solomon, near Ezion Geber. Silver was not mined, to our knowledge, in Palestine but was imported from Tarshish.

The name Tarshish is probably derived from the Akkadian word meaning, “refinery.”

Gold was imported from Ophir and Sheba. The verse is concerned with the source of silver and gold in contrast to wisdom.

### **Verse 2**

The Promised Land was described as one whose stones are iron. In Saul's day the Philistines monopolized the iron deposits. In David's time iron became plentiful,

Copper was smelted very early in Palestine.

### **Verse 3**

The metaphors express how the miners penetrate the dark recesses of the earth with their lamps.

Miners open up deep shafts and let the sunlight into the hole.

### **Verse 4**

The first line means "alien people break shafts," that is, slave labor is being used to do the mining.

The second line suggests that they are deep within the earth and thus the miners are remote from those walking or working above ground.

The third line is probably a reference to miners suspended by ropes into the ground and swinging in the dark caverns digging for copper.

### **Verse 5**

As the surface of the earth produces food, so deep below a smelting operation is yielding rich ore, or perhaps more likely, the mining below produces piles of debris similar to that produced by a fire.

### **Verse 6**

The earth yields not only metals but precious stones. It is not impossible that lapis lazuli is meant; thus the iron pyrite particles found in lapis lazuli which glitters like gold provides a meaning for "dust of gold."



### **Verse 7**

The paths of miners are remote from most men, as is wisdom. Birds (perhaps falcons) of prey live even more remote from men than do the miners.

The bird intended by this reference is impossible to identify with certainty, but the reference to its keenness of sight suggests the Falcon.

The gold miners worked by the Egyptians in Nubia were more than a seven days' journey into the desert.

The emphasis here in verse 4 and in verse 7 is on the remoteness and inaccessibility of the mines, and indirectly also of wisdom.

### **Verse 8**

The “sons of pride” have not even been there, that is, where wisdom is found.

Men and beast can find many valuable things, but not wisdom. Even the “fierce lion” has not been there, that is, where wisdom is found.

### **Verse 9**

The images in verses 9-11 emphasize man’s stubborn insistence in searching for treasure.

Flint, the hardest rock, yields to his persuasive insistence, and the mountains maintain only momentary resistance.

### **Verse 10**

The word rendered channels is the plural of the designation of the Nile. It can refer to mine shafts or drainage ditches.

### **Verse 11**

The meaning is that of a man exploring the sources of rivers by digging down to their underground springs.

But where wisdom is, man cannot discover; only God knows. (Verses 12-28)

### **Verse 12**

Man can mine silver, gold, precious gems, but what about “wisdom” and “understanding”?

**Verse 13**

The thesis here is that man knows the way to find things discussed in the preceding verses; but he is completely at a loss as to how to locate wisdom.

**Verse 14**

Man may explore the watery abyss as he digs for gold and silver, but he will not find wisdom.

**Verse 15**

Wisdom cannot be purchased with gold.

**Verse 16**

The things men value most cannot purchase wisdom.

**Verse 17**

The only direct reference to glass (crystal) in the Old Testament is found here. Glass was made in Egypt as early as 4000 B.C. It was used for ornamentation and was very valuable. Because of its value, no one would exchange wisdom for “vessels of fine gold.”

**Verse 18**

The gems mentioned here cannot be identified with certainty, but Lamentations 4:7 gives us a clue as to their color as reddish.

**Verse 19**

The price of wisdom continues to be contrasted with topaz (“green pearl” or “yellowish stone”) and pure gold.

**Verse 20**

Both the living and the dead fail to ensnare wisdom. All human searching is futile.

**Verse 21**

Wisdom is not made available to man through his searching the earth, sea, Sheol, or the heavens. No one can locate the hiding place of wisdom.

**Verse 22**

Man's most dreaded enemy—death—has only a vague rumor as to wisdom's home source.

**Verse 23**

God knows the nature and source of wisdom.

**Verse 24**

Heaven and earth were created by wisdom and understanding. The Creator surveys His entire creation and knows it's every need.

**Verse 25**

God's providential guidance of the cosmos is illustrated by the fact that He regulates "the force of the wind and measures the waters."

**Verse 26**

The Hebrew word—*hoq*—should not be translated decree as in the A.V., but in the sense of boundary or limit.

God also sets limits on the way, (path), of the lightning or the thunder (thunderbolt), probably this means a thunderstorm.

**Verse 27**

The reference here is to the time of creation. Man was not present; therefore, He could not reveal the nature of wisdom to man.

**Verse 28**

After evaluating the process of creation, after man is created, God says to him that there is a practical wisdom available to man which is the way to ultimate wisdom, that is, "Stand in awe before God." "Awe" or "reverence" (not fear as dread or horror) of God is the head or foundation for wisdom.

Reverent submission to the gracious will of God is the only place in the universe where one gains hope of ultimate victory over sin and evil.

Evil man is separated from God, self, others, and nature by sinful self-evaluation.

When pride is destroyed by being born again the self is crucified, and we accept a new center from which to maintain integrity—that new center is Job's redeemer, Lord of heaven and earth.

## **THE SOLILOQUY OF A SUFFERER**

### **CHAPTERS 29:1-31:40**

#### **Reminiscence—his former happy life. Verses 1-25**

#### **The outward aspect. Verse 1-10**

##### **Verse 1**

Job's debate with his friends is at an end. Now we will listen to his final soliloquy. The speech is divided into three sections, one chapter each.

1. His former happiness. (Verses 2-10)
2. His past graciousness to the needy. (Verses 11-17)
3. His confidence. (Verses 18-20)
4. The esteem in which he was held. (Verses 21-25)

##### **Verse 2**

His thoughts move back into a happier time in his life. For the moment, the harsh realities of his existential situation are suppressed. Nostalgia enthralls him. He is confronted by thinking of the time when God watched over him.

##### **Verse 3**

The lamp and light are metaphors of God's blessings and presence.

The sense being if God is not present, there is nothing but spiritual darkness.

##### **Verse 4**

The word rendered ripeness symbolizes prosperity and maturity rather than decline.

### **Verse 5**

Job places his relationship with God above his most intimate human companionship.

Job refers to the loss of his own children. Numerous children were a sign of God's favor.

### **Verse 6**

When Job was prosperous, his herds were fertile; butter flowed like mighty waters. The olive-tree grows profusely in rocky soil, and the olive presses are cut in the rock. The rocks poured out "for me," that is, when God watched over my household, blessings came from the most unexpected sources.

### **Verse 7**

The city gate was the central meeting place for the distribution of administrative justice. Job's social prestige is clearly emphasized in that he has a prominent seat.

The "broad open place" stood at the entrance of the city gate.

Job's former happiness was based on three relationships.

1. Fellowship with God.
2. Companionship of his own children.
3. The respect of his community.

### **Verse 8**

Job's public influence is projected by two images in this verse: (1) The young men withdrew and (2) while the older men remained standing in respect until Job was settled in a prominent place. In this manner both showed respect for a righteous man.

### **Verse 9**

Another image reveals the overt expression of respect for Job. The princes stopped in the midst of their conversations and waited respectfully to hear his evaluation.

### **Verse 10**

Their voice became veiled—hushed and is quiet in deferential respect.

The image in line two expressed nervousness (tongue cleaved to the roof of the mouth in the presence of Job. The cause of his honored position was benevolence and righteousness. (Verses 11-17)

### **Verse 11**

Job's righteousness has been vindicated by both his eyes and ears. When his hearers heard of his deeds, they praised him.

Their eyes saw his impeccable conduct and also gave witness to his righteousness—"called me blessed" suggests that Job was not only blessed but that he deserved the blessings from God.

### **Verse 12**

Job's words stand in radical tension with what Eliphaz had said in 22:6ff. Job had graciously helped the poor and the fatherless as in 24:9

### **Verse 13**

Ministering to those in despair evokes their blessings upon Job. Here Job speaks of high tribute and rich satisfaction for his benevolence.

### **Verse 14**

Job wore his righteousness as a robe, which was publicly visible to all. He was so immersed in just acts that "it put on me," that is, clothed in as a garment.

### **Verse 15**

The social significance of Job's piety is here described in a beautiful fashion. He was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame.

### **Verse 16**

As a father who provided for his family, Job expresses his godly nature. The poor were utterly helpless before the law. Job undertook the task of securing legal justice for the poor. He fed them, protected, and provided in general for their personal and social welfare.

Job sought out those who needed help, even when he did not know them personally. He acted selflessly, not as a tyrant, as he was charged.

### **Verse 17**

The word rendered “jaws” literally means fangs or gnawing teeth, not jaws. The oppressive wicked are compared to a wild animal; when his “fangs” are broken off, its aggressive power is destroyed.

Job rescued the poor from their ruthless oppressors, but he also destroyed the power of the aggressor. The honor that was his. (Verse 18-25)

### **Verse 18**

Praised and honored by both God and man, Job felt secure in the blessings of prosperity. He thought that he would live to a ripe old age and die surrounded by his children (“in my nest”).

Job declares that his clan would be “as the sand,” that is, emphasizing longevity and numerous members of the family.

### **Verse 19**

Prosperity is expressed by images of a tree. The tree is green and full of life; water (long root systems, and “dew on the branches”) is everywhere abundant.

### **Verse 20**

His respect and social rank (glory) will continue undiminished. His bow, a symbol of strength, is ever in his hands. A broken bow is a symbol of impotence.

### **Verse 21**

Beginning with this verse and continuing to verse 25, Job speaks of the response which others afforded him when he spoke.

Before his present condition destroyed his prestige, his words brought comfort and hope to those who heard.

### **Verse 22**

The image used here with regard to how his words were received is a term describing a refreshing rain—his words were life-giving drops from heaven.

### **Verse 23**

His hearers drank up his words as the parched ground absorbed the rain.

### **Verse 24**

Even a smile from Job was considered an undeserved reward.

The A. V. rendering of “they had no confidence” should read “they did not believe,” which is the common meaning of the verb.

The second line means that the despondency of others never destroyed Job’s cheerfulness.

### **Verse 25**

Whenever Job gave directions, they were immediately carried out, as a prince (chief-king) directs his army.

But now all the nobodies to whom he had been so gracious despise him.

## **SORROWFUL DESCRIPTION OF HIS PRESENT SAD ESTATE**

### **CHAPTER 30:1-31**

#### **The contempt he has from men of lowest class. Verses 1-15**

##### **Verse 1**

This verse begins the second section of Job’s final soliloquy in his debate with his friends.

1. His present sad estate through the nobodies that despise him. (Verses 1-8)
2. The indignities he is presently enduring. (Verses 9-15)
3. His present dread. (Verses 16-23)
4. Contrast between his past and present. (Verses 24-31)

Job’s prestigious past is abruptly contrasted with the present chaos derived from the calamities he is presently enduring.



The prince who has shared his abundance to meet their needs, his compassion to heal their suffering, is now despised; he is beneath them. Those miserable outcasts now despised their former benefactor.

Their arrogant ingratitude is now one of Job's great burdens.

Job pours out his soul in this poem, which contains four divisions.

1. Irreverence of impious men.
2. Resentment of society.
3. God's indifferences.
4. Misery born of destitution.

The young had formerly treated Job with marked respect-now "they make sport" of him. He describes their gracious smile; here their vulgar mockery.

But those who watched over his former flocks with their guard dogs publicly expressed disrespect. The dogs were scavengers and so were those who watched my flocks.

### **Verse 2**

Perhaps this verse describes the fathers of the youth in verse one. The fathers are weaklings unfit and unable to do hard work. These men, who are not profitable to anyone, even they despise me.

### **Verse 3**

Through hunger these men are stiff and lifeless. The word "gaunt" is from a word meaning hard or stony and is rendered barren. They are so destitute that they gnaw the roots of the dry ground. Even the "desert rats" hate me.

### **Verse 4**

Their diet is so poor that they eat "saltwort." This is a saline plant with sour leaves, which grows in the salt marshes. The broom roots yield charcoal, but they are not edible. Only the destitute would eat this type of plant.

### **Verse 5**

“With a shout they are driven forth,” that is, driven away when they approached inhabited places. They are social outcasts who are chased away from any community.

### **Verse 6**

Since they are not welcome in any community, they live in the dreadful ravines among the rocks. Job bitterly relates how even these people taunt him, now that he is also an outcast living on a dunghill.

### **Verse 7**

“Bray,” suggests lust, like a stallion but surely here its meaning is the horse cries of hunger.

The miserable rabble huddle together under the plant rendered nettle. They huddle for warmth not sexual perversion.

### **Verse 8**

These outcasts are “sons of no name.” They have no respectable standing in any community; they are nobodies.

### **Verse 9**

These nobodies sing taunting songs which make Job the butt of their mockery.

### **Verse 10**

Yesterday kings and princes revered Job. Now the most contemptuous men despise him. This conglomeration of socially wretched even “spit on the ground in front of me”—the height of insult!

### **Verse 11**

Removal of the restraint is an insolent act intended to humiliate Job.

### **Verse 12**

All of the images suggest an assault context. They drive Job down roads of ruin or destruction.

### **Verse 13**

The outcasts make Job's path impossible. Those who aggressively attack him have no restraint.

### **Verse 14**

The imagery of a besieged city under attack is also maintained in this verse. Here the wall is breached and wave after wave of soldiers pour through the wall like a tempest.

As if inexhaustible, Job's enemies roll over him as a storm-tossed sea.

### **Verse 15**

Terrors are overthrown on top of me. The picture is strikingly violent. Job's princely dignity, once so widely acknowledged, is now blowing in the wind.

His well-being—prosperity, often rendered (salvation) passes swiftly way.

His unhappy misery. (Verses 16-23)

### **Verse 16**

Now he experiences only "days of affliction." His soul can absorb no more emotional strain. His suffering has drained him of all zest for life.

### **Verse 17**

The night is the time when his suffering is most severe. "My gnawers" do not lie down, that is, sleep.

### **Verse 18**

God seizes his garment and distorts or disfigures it. The line suggests a tightly fitting collar that binds, but this is problematic in that eastern garments were loose and free flowing. Job is declaring that his diseased body is very uncomfortable.

### **Verse 19**

"Dust and ashes" are to be understood as symbolizing Job's humiliation.

### **Verse 20**

Job cries to God for respite but God will not break His silence.

### **Verse 21**

The image suggests one falling into enemy hands and being gradually and progressively infected with new and more intense pain.

### **Verse 22**

The image shifts to that of a violent windstorm. He is “tossed about” and can neither control nor resist the wind. God rides the storm, but for Job it represents terror and destruction.

### **Verse 23**

The Hebrew has “bring me back” in the sense of return, but it should read “bring” him to death and leave him there. The grave is the house appointed for all the living.

The disappointment of all his hopes. (Verses 24-31)

### **Verse 24**

In his prosperity Job did not strike the unfortunate; why is he now receiving God’s hostile hand? Job declares that I always extended sympathy to anyone in distress, but me, I receive my calamities.

### **Verse 25**

Job continues—did I not weep for those who experienced—“the hard of day” or the ones grieved. Now no one grieves for me. Will not even God show sympathy to Job.

### **Verse 26**

He disputes the views of his friends that virtue produces happiness. His prosperity did not continue as a result of his generous sympathy, as they had claimed it would.

### **Verse 27**

His heart, seat of emotions boils within him. His anxiety rages, yet no respite. God, please break your silence.

### **Verse 28**

Job's blackened appearance is not caused by the sun, but rather his disease.

The sense is that he is "blackened with the sun." He says that I stand in the assembly and cry for help, but no one hears.

### **Verse 29**

Jackals live in the desert, and the only place that Job is welcome is there. The jackals are also known for their plaintive cry, with which he also identifies.

The ostrich, too, is known for its hissing, cackling, and doleful moaning.

### **Verse 30**

The disease is ravaging Job as his skin peels off his bones. His skin is black from the final stages of the disease. Fever penetrates (burns) deeply in his bones.

### **Verse 31**

The harp is often used for a joyful religious celebration. Here the celebration has turned to mourning.

The glad, happy sounds are no more. The flute also expresses the spirit of lamentation.

Here is a beautiful but pathetic contrast between Job's past happy experiences and his present "sickness unto death."

Solemn declaration that neither in him nor in his conduct was there justification for the charge, and he is ready to face God. (Verses 1-40)

He was not lustful. (Verses 1-8)

### **Verse 1**

This verse begins the third and final section of Job's soliloquy in his debate with his friends.

1. His vindication: his integrity sustained. (Verses 1-12)
2. Denial of abuse of power. (Verses 13-23)
3. Reaffirmation of his piety. (Verses 24-34)

4. Appeal that specific charges be made against him. (Verses 35-37)
5. Invocation of a curse upon himself if he has not been telling the truth. (Verses 38-40)

In the ancient Israelite legal procedure, the oath of innocence repudiating an accusation was of crucial importance. Where clear evidence was lacking, it was taken as proof of the innocence of the accused.

Thus, the swearing of such an oath was a solemn religious celebration, which placed the verdict in God's hands.

Job here swears his innocence, then, he challenges the Creator of the universe to give His verdict, that is, acknowledge that he is innocent.

Job examines both his interior motives and exterior behavior to enumerate what sins or crimes he has been tempted to commit.

His moral standards are perhaps the highest to be found in the Old Testament. He shows sensitive respect for the dignity of his fellow men, even slaves.

Job here is discussing "sinning by desire," and below the act of adultery.

Job is here setting forth his controlled modesty, though as an Eastern prince he could do, with no impropriety or social repercussion, what he has made a covenant not to do. This is religious motive for morals of the highest order.

### **Verse 2**

In the previous verse, Job is clearly thinking of his behavior in the days of his piety, prosperity, and privilege.

God has not rewarded his righteousness; rather He has punished him for it.

### **Verse 3**

Job thought that he could depend on the above principle in his own life. "Workers of iniquity" is a common expression for the wicked in the Psalms. Disastrous calamities would be appropriate for the wicked, but not for a righteous man like he is.

#### **Verse 4**

God was his friend. He used to graciously watch over his life. But now God is silent in the presence of his suffering.

God “sees” his thoughts and actions and “counts” the steps in his entire existence.

#### **Verse 5**

He begins his series of oaths rejecting evil with a general repudiation of any sort of unrighteous conduct walking and hastening “toward” falsehood and deceit.

#### **Verse 6**

The Old Testament condemns false balances consistently. Job is not a moral fraud; if he were weighed, God’s judgment would be positive, as before.

#### **Verse 7**

He has not coveted what is another’s. Clean hands are symbolic of one’s righteousness.

#### **Verse 8**

If he has sinned in thought or deed, Job here invokes a curse upon himself. His entire lineage is being removed from the earth, his children are dead, and he is dying. He was upright in his domestic relations. (Verses 9-15)

#### **Verse 9**

The sin of adultery is repudiated by Job. The “woman” is a married woman, that is, “neighbor’s door” or house. The picture of lying in wait suggests that of an adulteress. Here the thought is of an adulterer who waits for his opportunity, which he might find at dusk.

#### **Verse 10**

The work of a slave is grinding. Samson was reduced to grinding by the Philistines.

In Hebrew law, adultery always involved a married woman.

**Verse 11**

The “heinous crime” comes from *zimmah* and is consistently used of lewdness, and indecent sexual conduct.

**Verse 12**

The sure punishment for adultery is compared with deadly fire.

**Verse 13**

In this verse the issue turns to the charge of the abuse of power. If he had abused his servants, permitted the weak to suffer injustice, he again calls a curse down upon himself.

Job had recognized his slaves as fellow human beings—who had rights which were not enforceable by law. He was always ready to listen to their complaints. They often helped Job during his tragedies.

**Verse 14**

Job here feels that he is answerable to God for his social behavior.

**Verse 15**

Job has spoken earlier (10:8ff) of God’s merciful care being lavished upon him at his birth. Here he asserts that he has extended this same care upon slaves, who legally had no such rights. He declares that men are one because of the creator.

He was kind and neighborly. (Verses 16-23)

**Verse 16**

Job denies Eliphaz’s charges under oath—22:7-9. He has not exploited the weak nor attained unjust victories in the community.

**Verse 17**

Job has invited, or at least permitted, the poor to eat from his own table. He has fed the destitute; thus, he cared and shared.

**Verse 18**

He went far beyond heartless charity; he gave them fatherly compassion.



This expresses a behavior pattern and not a single act of charity. It is revealed in the Hebrew text, which says “he grew up with me,” “from my mother’s womb.” He has always been a righteous man.

### **Verse 19**

He even looked around to locate the poor, fatherless, and the widows.

### **Verse 20**

The poor, whose loins once ached from the night cold, bless him for supplying a fleece covering. Their warmth praises him, as one’s bones might praise God. Job’s benevolence is rewarded by praise.

### **Verse 21**

The orphans, widows, and poor had no prospects of justice without the support of a person like Job.

### **Verse 22**

If what I have just declared is not true, then may my lower arm be broken off from the upper arm.”

### **Verse 23**

God alone, in all His majestic power, restrained Job from exploiting his power over others. He did not trust in wealth or in heavenly bodies. (Verses 24-28)

### **Verse 24**

He denies that he has ever made material wealth his God. Deeper and deeper into his own thoughts he penetrates. He exposes two kinds of idolatry.

1. Money rather than God. (Verses 24-25)
2. The secret sin of invoking strange gods. (Verses 26-28)

His confidence is in God, not gold.

### **Verse 25**

His former good fortune has not made him proud. His great possessions and power have not made him a bigot. He has not abused his wealth.

### **Verse 26**

Here Job denies that he has been an idolater, worshiping the sun and moon. Job denies even any secret longing to worship these two beautiful living lords of eastern skies.

### **Verse 27**

Job denies that his hand ever touched his mouth in homage to the sun and moon.

### **Verse 28**

If I had done that I would have denied God. That would have been a sin calling for judgment. He lived openly and would not have hesitated to have God publish his record. (Verses 29-40)

### **Verse 29**

Job declares that he has never found pleasure in the destruction of his enemies.

### **Verse 30**

Job uses the phrase, “my palate,” suggesting a dainty morsel, meaning he never permitted himself to taste such a delicious tidbit.

### **Verse 31**

Job’s hospitality has been shared by his slaves, not only his “social equals.”

### **Verse 32**

Extension of hospitality meant extension of protection from abuses of any kind.

### **Verse 33**

Now Job repudiates the sin of hypocrisy. Job identifies Adam as a person who has sinned and attempted to hide his guilt along with himself from God. The mark of hypocrisy is living a lie. Often men try to hide their sins, but I have not.

### **Verse 34**

If it refers to guests, then he refused to give up his guest to the aggressive ones outside. Protection both inside and outside the home is the mark of true, that is, non-hypocritical hospitality.

### **Verse 35**

What are the specific charges—God? Every accused person has a right to know the charges brought against him. State the charges—God. I will validate my oath by my signature.

Job's opponent ("man of controversy") is God. Divine accuser, specify my charges, write them down, either as a writ of indictment or of acquittal.

### **Verse 36**

To carry or wear something in this manner is to display it proudly. The exchange of dirty clothes for clean is the symbol of acquittal.

### **Verse 37**

There is nothing from his past that he is seeking to hide. He is willing to appear before God as an innocent man, not as an unrighteous one.

### **Verse 38**

Job's call is to testify. If he has gained the land unjustly, let it cry out. Instead the land weeps for joy. The land is personified and identified with its rightful owner, Job.

### **Verse 39**

The imagery is unclear. It is not certain whether the reference is to oppressive appropriation of lands which brought death to their owner, such as Naboth—or that the owner died from some other cause.

### **Verse 40**

If I have wrongly acquired the land, let it refuse to bear fruit, wheat, etc. Instead, let it bear thorns and putrid smelling plants.

Thus, he has delivered his final response to his consolers and his last challenge to God. Job's oath is in response to the friend's charges, and it will stand because of default of evidence. His case against them is intact, but he has not won a judicial hearing before his Creator.

Job has made at least one defective move, that is, presenting God as an adversary in a lawsuit.

His integrity has become a high wall, separating him from God, while he is searching for Him. He could never find God while walking the path of pride. God must come to him; he could never come to God—2 Corinthians 5:17ff.

## **RESISTING THE RESTRAINTS—BREAKING OF SILENCE**

### **CHAPTERS 32:1—37:24**

#### **Elihu cannot remain silent. 32:1-22**

#### **Introduction in prose: Elihu is angry with Job and with the three friends.**

#### **Verses 32:1-6a**

#### **Verse 1**

Job is finished speaking. Enter Elihu, who makes four speeches. He is described as a listener who has become too emotionally involved in Job's defense and the inadequacies of his friends' arguments that he must break his silence.

Theologically, his central theme is not suffering, as many assume, rather the nature of God. Elihu disapproves of Job's pride before God. He also rejects the traditional thesis of Job's friends that suffering is exclusively retributory.

Rather, he suggests that suffering may be God's way of warning against self-righteousness. If a person would repent, God would restore him.

After all of this is said, Elihu's practical advice is no different than Job's three friends.

In the first speech (Chapters 32-33), we are informed four times that Elihu is angry, and he enters the verbal arena to supply the deficiency, to redeem the failure, and to rebuke Job's three friends.

Following his introduction in 32:1-5, the speeches divide into six sections.

1. Elihu's youth is wiser than their aged wisdom. (Verses 6-14)
2. The collapse of Job's friends causes Elihu to intervene. (Verses 15-22)
3. He invites Job to give attention to his counsel. (Verses 33:1-7)
4. Elihu declares that Job's contention of innocence and unjust affliction is false. (Verses 8-12)
5. He maintains that Job's experience refutes his complaint that God is silent. (Verses 14-18)
6. Elihu's final appeal to Job. (Verses 9-33)

These three friends abandon Job. Elihu distributes blame impartially to Job and his three friends.

The debate was useless and futile because of Job's incorrigible self-righteousness. He is not innocent, and God has not afflicted him without just provocation.

### **Verse 2**

The name Elihu means "he is my God." He is the son of Barachel, which means "God has blessed." This is a strange inclusion of data that neither the father of Job nor the fathers of his three friends are mentioned.

Barachel is of the clan of Buz (an Aramean name), the brother of Uz and so is closely related to Job. Ram (means lofty) has Judahite connections. Thus, we have genealogical connections all the way to Job's redeemer.

### **Verse 3**

Elihu is aroused not because the friends condemned Job, but because they had not devised effective arguments against him.

### **Verse 4**

Elihu had "waited for Job's words." He gives as reason for his previous reticence his youth. Elihu's youthful modesty is excelled only by his youthful assurance.

### **Verse 5**

The intensity of Elihu's anger is suggested by the fact that the phrase "his wrath was kindled" appears three times in these five verses.

### **Verse 6**

Now Elihu begins his speech with the omniscience of youth. Silent because they are older, yet the spirit of the Almighty has given him understanding. (Verses 6b-10)

### **Verse 6b**

He denies that wisdom is the prerogative of the aged. He has given them adequate time in which to answer Job. He timidly held back "while they spoke." He is not troubled by timidity. He expresses his position with brashful speech, not bashful silence.

### **Verse 7**

Older men should speak out of their reservoir of experience. Because of his youth, he was silent but no more.

### **Verse 8**

The Spirit of God gives life, wisdom, intelligence, or any special and significant ability.

Wisdom does not necessarily flow from old age. Youthful Elihu believes that he has more understanding than his elders, because God is the origin of all wisdom. Wisdom belongs to God's Spirit rather than age. Elihu is correct in this part of his assertion, but his immodest assertions are inexcusable.

### **Verse 9**

He correctly claims that it is not "the great" that have wisdom. The word means something like seniors.

### **Verse 10**

Because wisdom derives from the Spirit of God, not from old age, Elihu said, "Hearken to me." The verb hearken or listen is in the singular form and thus addressed to Job. He will declare true knowledge based on real wisdom.

Since the friends have no answer, Elihu can no longer restrain himself from speaking. (Verses 11-22)

### **Verse 11**

Elihu now turns to the three friends. He merely repeats in more pompous words what he already has declared. He has listened for their most effective arguments against Job, but he was disappointed.

I listened until you had finished your supposedly wise words. Though they had “searched out,” by laborious efforts, some comforting words, they have been less than effective. In other words, they tried hard, but that was not enough.

### **Verse 12**

He had followed the debate with utmost care, but he failed to find any forceful words which actually convicted Job. Their calloused compassionless consolation lacked enough cogency to convict him of his crime against God.

### **Verse 13**

He could be suggesting that ultimately there is no human solution to Job’s problem, but that does not justify their dropping the argument. Like one might mean that they have found a wisdom that only God can refute.

### **Verse 14**

Elihu is saying that when I get finished with him, he will not need God to respond. But these are idle words filled with foolish promises, as his arguments do not go beyond the words of Job’s friends.

### **Verse 15**

Elihu first sets forth his claim of impartiality. His state of mind is also described. Most of his energy is utilized on rage, rather than effectively responding to Job. Yet, he is actually somewhat ridiculous, wordy, and unoriginal.

### **Verse 16**

Once more Elihu piously emphasizes his patience.

### **Verse 17**

Elihu, I will answer my share and tell my opinion.

### **Verse 18**

It would not require God's wisdom to refute Elihu's claim that he is "full of words." His conceit is insufferable. He claims God as authorizer of his position when he declares that "the spirit of my belly" is the source of his speech.

### **Verse 19**

He is as a bursting wineskin. He must speak in order to vent the wineskins, else it will split. The image is much more a Taste of New Wine. What is bubbling inside him is like the force of fermentation which must find an outlet.

### **Verse 20**

Relief can come to his troubled spirit only if he finds release. He is so full, all that he needs to do is open his mouth.

### **Verse 21**

Hypocrisy shall not lead him astray by deference to anyone's title or rank. He takes himself too seriously by his proposed impartial vigor (honorific title.)

### **Verse 22**

He would not dare to flatter anyone. If he were so tempted, he would immediately be visited by God's vengeance.

## **THE WORD FROM OUTSIDE—GOD HAS ALREADY SPOKEN**

### **CHAPTER 33:1-33**

**A mortal himself, formed by God's spirit, yet he will answer Job.**

### **Verses 1-7**

#### **Verse 1**

Elihu has called our attention to his wisdom, impartiality, and competence requisite for his present task of subduing Job's rebellious spirit. Here for the first time in the dialogue Job is addressed by name.



The familiarity is more to be attributed to Elihu's temperament than his close ties with Job, though he could be a blood relative of Job's (32:2).

He summons Job and he sarcastically refers to Job's complaint against God. He quotes two of Job's claims: (1) that he is innocent and (2) that God is his enemy. Elihu deals with each of these in this chapter.

### **Verse 2**

The boundlessness of Elihu's self-evaluation makes him a master of trivial ideas. His speech is stiltedly redundant.

### **Verse 3**

Job had asked that his friends be sincere; Elihu now declares that Job is going to get the ultimate expression of sincerity, but from him.

The meaning of the first line is that Elihu's righteousness is exposed by his words. In the second line Elihu is giving Job assurance of his brilliance.

### **Verse 4**

He, like Job, is a human being. Both share in God's spirit, which gives life. Verbally, at least, he humbly acknowledges that he has a special endowment from God.

He is inspired by God to speak; thus his words are not only sincere, they are of special value.

### **Verse 5**

"Words," means to set in order, that is, get ready to answer "my" charges, "take your stand." Prepare has no expressed object, but the object may be "words" or "case" or "battle" as is generally the case.

### **Verse 6**

In relation to God Elihu, like Job, is human. Elihu's advantage over Job is not in this respect. He is only a mortal whom Job need not fear. Elihu was formed from clay, like Job.

### **Verse 7**

Elihu here alludes to Job's charges that God intimidated with violence. With clever irony, Elihu assures Job that he need not make this same charge now, because his opponent is also a man.

He challenges Job's claim that he suffers because God counts him an enemy. (Verses 8-12)

### **Verse 8**

God is too great to be guilty of the behavior alluded to in Job's charges. He has never persecuted a righteous man.

At this point Elihu gets down to his self-appointed task of effectually responding to Job. After finishing his much-advertised brilliance and competence, Elihu rebukes Job.

### **Verse 9**

Job has not claimed that he is sinless. Though Elihu's quotation is essentially correct, the twist he places on them distorts the essence of Job's words. Job has consistently claimed that he had never committed sins grave enough to merit the afflictions which he is experiencing.

### **Verse 10**

The word rendered "occasions" means opportunities for, expressing hostility as in Judges 14:4.

### **Verse 11**

Elihu is here quoting Job's words from 13:27. God watches his every move and hinders him.

### **Verse 12**

Elihu denies the justness of Job's charges. God is above arbitrary actions such as those that Job has affirmed. But Job has already presented God's power in some of the most magnificent hymns in Scripture. Job has already declared that man cannot argue with God because He "is greater than man," so Elihu's point is not well taken under any circumstances.

God has answered Job in two ways—to discipline him. (Verses 13-22)

1. In dreams, to draw him from the fate of an evil course. (Verses 13-18)

### **Verse 13**

Elihu asks Job, “Why are you contentious against Him” because He does not answer? Job’s complaint that God gives no answer is appropriate for any and all men who ask and receive no answer. All contests with God are futile.

### **Verse 14**

Perhaps the verse implies that God reveals Himself in more than one way, and if man does not hear God speak in one place, perhaps He will in another.

### **Verse 15**

Elihu expresses the classical Near Eastern view of dreams that is, that they may be a vehicle of Divine revelation. His specific reference here is to dreams that are warnings about and deterrents from ungodly behavior.

### **Verse 16**

When God is the subject, the phrase often means revelation. By certain types of dreams, God awakens men to repentance from the error of their ways.

### **Verse 17**

“Turn man aside” means to remove man from his evil purpose, that is, warning dreams often cause man to abandon his plans for evil.

The second line literally reads “pride from man he covers,” which literally means, “hide pride from man.” The sense seems to be that God’s warning dreams are also to humble man.

### **Verse 18**

God’s purpose is beneficent, that is, to save man from a worse fate. Through affliction God has spoken to bring repentance. (Verses 19-30)

### **Verse 19**

Job's afflictions were to humble him, instead by his rebelliousness he reveals his profound pride, which is at the heart of all sin. He has agony (conflict or strife, continual strive) in his bones. Elihu is saying that God speaks in the discipline of suffering, in the torment of pain.

### **Verse 20**

"Life" clearly means appetite. "Soul" also means appetite in the second line.

### **Verse 21**

His sickness destroys his appetite. The lack of food causes his body to waste away, and his bones stick out.

### **Verse 22**

The allusion is perhaps to the destroying angels, (2 Samuel 24:16; 2 Kings 19:35). The parallelism between "pit" and "killers," indicates that the reference is to the abode of the dead.

A messenger (angel) may interpret to man what is right, that he be led to pray and to confess his guilt. (Verses 23-28)

### **Verse 23**

Mediation by an angel might interpret God's providential meaning of his sickness.

Perhaps the concept is involved in Job's request for a mediator, a witness-interpreter, and redeemer.

This verse presents the concept of a personal God. The purpose of the angelic visit is not to justify the sick, but to call to repentance.

### **Verse 24**

No man could give a ransom for himself. Though the nature of the ransom is not specified, it is clearly vicarious and is the expression of His graciousness. The answer to man's perennial problem lies outside of man's capacity.

### **Verse 25**

Elihu here describes the recovery of the afflicted person. “Fresher than a child” means that which is “soft” or “tender.” A similar statement is made of Naaman the prophet after his recovery. (1 Kings 5:14)

### **Verse 26**

After restoration, the man is admitted into the presence of God. Prayer is the seeking of God’s presence.

The joy bursts forth because, “He restores to His righteousness,” that is, to God’s act of acquittal. The restoration to righteousness means victory or salvation in a larger sense than “saving his soul.”

### **Verse 27**

Public expression of his gratitude for being restored is clearly the thought back of this verse. He sings before men and acknowledges his sin. The healed sinner is expressing his gratitude through public thanksgiving and confession.

### **Verse 28**

He has been redeemed from death. Thus darkness has been removed by the glorious light of His presence.

“Shall behold” is used for looking with satisfaction on someone or something where enemies “gloat over.” This God does to save man from destruction. (Verses 29-33)

### **Verse 29**

Elihu repeats that this is the way God relates to man. Job does not respond, and thus we are left to infer that he was reduced to silence. Elihu, like Job’s three friends, fails to come to grips with Job’s problem.

### **Verse 30**

If a man repents, he is restored from the pangs of death. “That he may be enlightened” means the same as to look upon with great satisfaction.

### Verse 31

Elihu once more demands attention. I sat through prolonged debate in silence, now you listen to me.

### Verse 32

After telling Job to be silent, he now asks that if he has anything to say, that he speak up.

But Elihu thinks that his speech is unanswerable, thus not expecting any Jobian response.

### Verse 33

Elihu must believe that his words are final, even if fatal, to Job's need. If you want wisdom, come to me, neither your friends, nor God.

## THE SOURCE OF JUSTICE

### CHAPTER (34:1-37)

**Job is “walking with wicked men” when he attributes injustice to God.**

#### Verses 1-9

##### Verse 1

Elihu now turns to defend God from the charges of Job.

Elihu's second discourse divides into four divisions.

1. Job is an impious man. (Verses 2-9)
2. Response to Job's charges against God. (Verses 10-15)
3. Defense of omniscience and impartiality of God. (Verses 16-30)
4. Exposes Job's rebellion against God. (Verses 31-37)

##### Verse 2

Once more he calls on his audience to pay attention. He addresses the bystanders and appeals to their sense of righteousness for support.

### **Verse 3**

The ear is the faculty of man's reason. Hearing is more than listening. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, we often find the word rendered "disobedience" to be "to not hear."

### **Verse 4**

We must determine whether Job has made a just charge against God.

### **Verse 5**

Elihu in part quotes Job's words and in part summarizes them. He proceeds to rip Job's words to shreds.

### **Verse 6**

Job has repeatedly claimed that though he is innocent, he is made to appear impious. Should I lie, that is, should I confess guilt when I am innocent?"

Job's challenge of God's justice stems from Job's sinfulness, not God's unrighteousness or partiality.

Elihu avoids the crude over simplification of Job's friends by rejecting the thesis that Job's sufferings are sure proof of his evil heart, and that rewards are the infallible results of repentance.

### **Verse 7**

Job had spoken of God scoffing at the sufferings of the innocent, Zophar of Job's scoffing at traditional doctrinal understanding and Eliphaz at the innocent scoffing at the misfortunes of the impious.

Elihu charges that Job is an irreligious man who is a public menace. As with Job's three friends, mercy, grace, love, compassion are not words which Elihu understands.

### **Verse 8**

By expressing his views, Job finds himself in the company of the ungodly.

### **Verse 9**

Elihu correctly attributes to Job the view that piety is not for profit.

This fundamental assumption is part of the American Dream, that is, piety is to be rewarded by prosperity. As America enters her third century, one of the conditions of spiritual survival will be how production, prosperity, piety, and poverty are correlated, with a biblical world-life viewpoint, as opposed to a humanistic-naturalistic-pragmatic survival-security perspective. Job is our contemporary.

God will do no wickedness nor injustice, but imparts to every man according to his deeds. (Verses 10-15)

#### **Verse 10**

True wise men, that is, literally “men of heart,” you know that God can do no evil. Job is merely in error; he has committed blasphemy.

#### **Verse 11**

Whether the man is good or evil, his reward will follow from his character. Elihu, like Job’s three friends, is persuaded that God is not unjust.

In the case of Job, God permitted satanic injustice as an expression of His confidence in his servant Job. God was prepared to stake His cosmic honor on Job’s integrity.

#### **Verse 12**

Elihu repeats what he has already declared in verse 10.

#### **Verse 13**

Elihu deduces from the fact that God is the all-powerful Creator that He can do no wrong.

But Job has already acknowledged that God is answerable to no one, but he erroneously derived from this premise that God was responsible for all the injustice in the world.

#### **Verse 14**

If God only thought of Himself and not of all His creatures, that is, all of creation, with benevolent mercy, then no one would survive. All flesh would perish from the earth.



God gave life to all creatures and when and if He withdraws His Spirit, we die. We are all alike, dependent on an impartial God.

### **Verse 15**

God is a loving merciful Lord, not a capricious tyrant.

We can never gain an adequate perspective on evil until we know God and His cosmic purpose, which is to fulfill His promises in Christ. The removal of evil is part of the biblical understanding of redemption.

### **Verse 16**

If God is truly all powerful, then no one can influence His decisions.

When He observes unrighteousness, He punishes. But the dilemma remains, why some victims and some victors?

### **Verse 17**

Cosmic control, that is, Divine government does not guarantee justice. This is precisely Job's point. Elihu is saying that God can condemn kings and nobles and that this power makes Him righteous. But this is a bold assertion, not a balanced argument.

### **Verse 18**

Elihu's argument is crushed against the rocks of reality.

### **Verse 19**

Since all are derived from God's creative power, He is impartial to both the rich and the poor. Impartiality does not mean that we are all equal in ability or capacity to produce.

It should be empirically evident that we are not all equal in the sense of creative intelligence, abilities, etc. This central error is the basis of much "human rights" discussion.

Rights entail responsibilities just like freedom does. Contemporary man has chosen "security" over "freedom."

### **Verse 20**

Proof of God's impartiality is His swift removal, that is, "at midnight," of the mighty. Unexpectedly God visits all. The people are "all violently agitated" or taken away "by no human hand."

This emphasizes the effortlessness of God's removal of the unjust from the world.

### **Verse 21**

God's decisions are made with full awareness of all details. When disaster falls, it is evidence of wickedness. Job's thesis is that God knows everything; therefore, He knows that he is innocent.

### **Verse 22**

No human thought or act is concealed from God.

### **Verse 23**

Job has lamented that he could not bring God to a law court even though God would be both adversary and judge. Elihu declares that God does not need to go through a legal process to establish guilt. God can summon man any time He chooses.

### **Verse 24**

God does not need to (consider, investigate, search, inquiry, and inquisition) the human situation in order to know what is going on. Elihu says there is no need for the inquiry which Job has requested.

### **Verse 25**

God knows their works and "overthrows them in the night." Punishment comes with swift certainty to the tyrannical oppressors.

### **Verse 26**

The meaning of this verse is that God judges the wicked in public.

### **Verse 27**

Whoever turns from God is punished regardless of who he is.

### **Verse 28**

If He is all-knowing, their cries could bring Him no knowledge which He did not already possess. The grammar does not necessarily imply that their cries “caused” God’s response, but could also be understood as “consequential.”

### **Verse 29**

No man has a right to condemn God, even if He is silent in the presence of injustice. Job’s fundamental question is not why does not God punish the wicked?” but rather, “why do the innocent suffer?”

God is watching over all His creation with unceasing vigilance, though He does often in fact hide His face from our view.

God’s visibility returns when He speaks. He has spoken with finality in Job’s Redeemer, our Lord. His silence becomes our ultimate vindication, when His silence is broken by resurrection.

### **Verse 30**

The last line reads “from snares of the people,” and means God intervenes to remove any and every unrighteous ruler. But the verse does not relate either the method of removal, or the length of time involved in the process of removal. Israel’s history is full of such examples.

Job is rebellious in multiplying wicked words against God. (Verses 31-37)

### **Verse 31**

If one confesses to God, He does not need Job’s permission before forgiving. “I am not evil, but have been led astray.” “I will not offend” suggests a declaration of innocence, rather than confession.”

### **Verse 32**

The verse is a beautiful promise of obedience and a clear confession of sin. He is pleading for God’s merciful presence.

### **Verse 33**

“According to your judgment” implies that God is free to pardon; He does not need Job’s permission.

Elihu is suggesting that if Job does not like the way God rules the universe does he want to run the cosmos?

#### **Verse 34**

With such cogent arguments, how could anyone reply to Elihu. All wise men will condemn Job for arguing with God.

#### **Verse 35**

When Job complains against God, he manifests his lack of wisdom and understanding.

#### **Verse 36**

Elihu would have pressed Job to the end of his rope. He wishes that Job would change his attitude toward God, because he responds like all wicked men do.

#### **Verse 37**

Elihu, like Eliphaz charges Job with secret sin. He merely intensifies his rebellion against God.

Clapping is a gesture of open mockery. Job is castigated for his contempt toward God and Elihu's impeccable arguments.

### **CHAPTER 35:1-16 THE ACTS OF GOD AND THE ACTS OF MAN**

#### **Job has said he has seen no profit in righteousness. (Verses 1-3)**

##### **Verse 1**

Elihu proceeds to respond to Job's assertion that piety in no way affects God, but that both sin and piety affects only man.

This speech is composed of two parts.

1. Elihu seeks to refute Job's claim that the pious person is not rewarded by prosperity. (Verses 2-8)
2. When the cry of the afflicted is not heard by God, they have not responded to the lesson intended by the discipline of suffering. (Verses 9-16)

Elihu first defines the position of Job, then points to the greatness of God, who can neither be positively or negatively affected by anything man does. Man alone is affected by his own behavior.

### **Verse 2**

Elihu is quoting Job's claim that he is in the right, or righteous. But Job has never claimed that he is more righteous than God; rather he has consistently asserted that he is innocent in the presence of God.

### **Verse 3**

Job has never denied that he has sinned, but not serious enough to deserve the unbearable suffering which has fallen upon him. Elihu could not admit that Job had correctly evaluated his spiritual condition, as that would impugn the justice of God. Job often seems to imply that it would not make any difference whether he had sinned or not, since justice seems to be abortive in the universe. Man's actions, good or bad, do not help nor hurt God; they do affect men. 4-8

### **Verse 4**

Elihu here addresses all who have sympathy for Job's position. The personal pronoun "I" is emphatic, which agrees completely with Elihu's consistent arrogance.

### **Verse 5**

Job has always maintained that God controlled the heavens. But here the thought is that God is so far removed from us that He is beyond man's reach. God is neither benefited by our righteousness nor harmed by our sin.

### **Verse 6**

Eliphaz had set forth this same argument in 22:2ff.

### **Verse 7**

God's self-interest is not the basis of His decisions in distributing His justice.

### **Verse 8**

Eliphaz had said that a man's righteousness only profited himself. Praise will keep men from God. (Verses 9-13)

### **Verse 9**

Job has expressed his attitude toward the magnitude of human misery and injustice in 24:2-17 and there noted that God does not respond to the social injustice caused by unrighteous men in 24:12.

Job had already raised the question, “If God’s rule is righteous, why the cry of the oppressed?” The “arm” is an image or instrument of oppression.

### **Verse 10**

A righteous God gives “songs in the night” even to the oppressed. In the birth record of Job’s Redeemer, we are given Mary’s song, Zechariah’s song, the angel’s song, and Simeon’s song. Each of these was songs from a weary world, as were those of Moses and Hannah in the Old Testament. The word in Hebrew *zemirot* is usually rendered “songs” but can mean “strength.”

### **Verse 11**

God teaches us continually because man has a higher intelligence and wisdom than animals. He communicates to man with continuous instruction. Elihu instructs Job to learn from the animal world how to respond to God.

### **Verse 12**

The verse harks back to verse nine but also connects with what follows, so the verse should not be transferred to follow verse nine. Elihu often goes back to something already said.

It is not clear whether the verse is discussing the “reason” for their cry or the “reason” for not being heard. But in Elihu’s view, if one is not heard, one is in fact evil. Suffering is for discipline, but evil men do not recognize it.

### **Verse 13**

That God requires pious petitions before His righteousness will prevail on earth but reveals the theological perspective of loquacious Elihu.

Job has approached God in the wrong spirit. (Verses 14-16)

## Verse 14

If God does not listen to those who do not turn to Him, how much less would He listen to Job who relentlessly pursues Him with his complaints? Often men cry out against their oppressors; but Job cries out against God.

Job has argued his case like a lawyer, and Elihu declares that the outcome all depends on the judge.

## Verse 15

Job has asserted that the wicked go unpunished. Perhaps Elihu is referring to this Jobian claim. God does not regard arrogance as folly.

## Verse 16

The verse is addressed to the bystanders, not Job.

## **GOD-PERSON, PROMISE, AND PEOPLE**

### **CHAPTER 36:1-33**

**God deals with men according to their deeds, the penitent He restores, others perish. (Verses 1-16)**

## Verse 1

Elihu begins his fourth and most impressive speech. He will pour out his wisdom on Job concerning God's greatness and the mystery of His unfathomableness. If Job only knew God, he would bow in submissive awe. This speech anticipates Yahweh's speeches in Chapters 38-41 in describing the marvels of His creation.

The speech is divided into two fundamental issues.

1. The Divine discipline of suffering, (Verses 2-25), which deals with the cause and purpose of suffering, (Verses 2-15), and the application of these points to Job personally. (Verses 16-25)
2. The work and wisdom of God, (Verses 36:26—37:24), God's work in nature, (Verses 36:26—37:13); and the magnificent transcendence of God. (Verses 14-24)

## **Verse 2**

This would reinforce Elihu's judgment that his wisdom is God's wisdom.

## **Verse 3**

Elihu is thus God's infallible interpreter; so Job, you fail to listen at your own peril.

## **Verse 4**

Elihu is a total stranger to modesty. He repeatedly asserts his own genius.

## **Verse 5**

God is all powerful as has been asserted previously by both Job and Elihu. There is no object in the text for "despise" and thus it must be supplied.

"God is great in might and He does not despise the pure in heart."

## **Verse 6**

Earlier Job had asked why the wicked are allowed to live. Elihu replies to his query that God does not allow them to live, thus contradicting Job's allegations. God punishes the unrighteous and rights the wrongs which have been inflicted upon the poor.

## **Verse 7**

God does not "withdraw His eyes" from the righteous in watchful concern and compassion.

It is the righteous who are both protected and exalted to the seats of powerful rulers.

## **Verse 8**

"If they" refers to the righteous from verse seven, when the righteous are allowed to suffer, it is for the express purpose of purification and refinement.

Even Elihu would not adjudge all kings as righteous; he surely means those who are basically good, though not sinless.

Here Elihu makes his sole creative contribution to the issue under scrutiny. Affliction is for disciplinary purposes only.



### **Verse 9**

The purpose of affliction is to humble the sinner in order to destroy the power of pride, the center of sin.

Exaltation brings pride, but humiliation brings repentance.

### **Verse 10**

God opens “their ear” (*oznam*); here it stands for their entire mind set. The word (*musar*) means discipline and is often connected with affliction. When the evil man hears God, he returns, or repents of his rebellion.

### **Verse 11**

Once more the thesis is presented that repentance will gain the restoration of prosperity.

Their lives will be completed in prosperity, if they will but repent. Unmistakeably this word admits of material pleasure and not some form of mystical bliss like the medieval supreme encounter with God.

### **Verse 12**

If they will not learn from God’s discipline, they must perish. Doom is the reward of the ungodly. The image suggests crossing over into death.

### **Verse 13**

The impious of heart nourish or keep their anger. “Lay up anger” means to nourish or keep anger, rather than contemplating about the justice of the punishment.

### **Verse 14**

“They die an early and shameful death” refers to male prostitutes, or holy males.

### **Verse 15**

The essence of Elihu’s first speech (Verses 33:16-30), is that if one accepts affliction as discipline for righteousness, then one may be saved. Discipline can deliver the impious; thus, therapy ends in thanksgiving.

### **Verse 16**

Elihu charges that Job's earlier prosperity generated his corruption and injustice, which brought God's judging misfortunes upon him. Job's great wealth has drawn him away from God. Perhaps it is true that it is difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom, but it is not impossible.

Job returns and God blesses him in a beautiful and marvelous way. Job has had the wrong spirit toward his sufferings. (Verses 17-21)

### **Verse 17**

Job's own attitude toward justice is continually condemning him.

### **Verse 18**

Elihu warns Job, do not let wrath "entice your evil."

The entire issue is concerned with God's judgment on Job's unrighteousness, so surely the wrath is God's and not Job's wrath. Do not let the abundance of the reward or ransom pervert you.

### **Verse 19**

"Wealth and bribery cannot influence the Divine Judge." The essential meaning of the verse is Job's wealth could not save him. The verse, like the previous one, is a warning against corruption.

### **Verse 20**

The meaning of this verse is that it is condemning the letting of kinship influence his judgments.

Night is the symbol of sudden catastrophe. People, symbol for many, a group, or a clan, are cut off without warning.

### **Verse 21**

Stop rebelling against God because of His chastening hand. Because of your rebellion, you were chosen for testing.

Job is being rebuked for choosing rebellion; he certainly did not choose affliction.

Elihu's major assertion is that suffering is for warning and discipline, in order to turn the sufferer from evil.

God knows what He is doing—His work should be magnified. (Verses 22-33)

#### **Verse 22**

The purpose of Job's suffering is here considered by Elihu. God is Job's teacher. The content of the instruction is disciplinary suffering, if Job could only understand.

#### **Verse 23**

Since God is the Almighty, no one can dictate to Him appropriate decisions; therefore, Job should stop criticizing God for his misfortunes. Instead, he should attempt to come to an understanding of what his teacher is saying to him.

#### **Verse 24**

Others have sung of God's great handiwork, while you are complaining about it. Praise is at the heart of true righteousness.

If you are righteous, praise will break forth from your lips.

#### **Verse 25**

All other men have looked upon creation in awe and deep satisfaction. But, not you, Job.

#### **Verse 26**

God's greatness is here set forth in imagery revealing His control of the universe. He is not bound by time; His years are innumerable.

#### **Verse 27**

"Draws up" basically means diminish or deduct.

The image is that God controls the cosmic water system and filters vast amounts of water from a "flood" or giant reservoirs.

God is Lord of the rain, which is necessary for life and growth.

**Verse 28**

The rain falls upon the just and the unjust. God is impartial, as even the rain demonstrates.

**Verse 29**

Who can understand the wonders of a thunder storm, diffusion of clouds, thunderings, all forming a canopy or pavilion of God.

**Verse 30**

God spreads his light, that is, the lightning. God uncovers or reveals the bottom or roots of the sea by His Lordship. He is Lord of both the skies and the seas.

**Verse 31**

By the thunderstorms and seas He judges everyone, that is, blesses them. The imagery is polarized into judgment and blessing.

**Verse 32**

God places His hands into lightning and directs it to its target. This imagery must not be identified with that of the Near Eastern gods hurling lightning bolts.

God is here presented as Lord over nature. If He can providentially control the universe, then He is capable of watching over Job.

**Verse 33**

“The flock has warned its shepherd, the flock which sniffs the storm.” This phrase emphasizes Elihu’s thesis that God providentially guards all of nature, why not Job, too?

## **THE CREATOR AND THE CREATION**

### **CHAPTER 37:1-24**

#### **The marvelous activity of God in nature. Verses 1-13**

##### **Verse 1**

In his final speech, Elihu describes his own feelings, and Job is not addressed until verse 14. Elihu's heart leaps with terror at God's thunderstorms.

##### **Verse 2**

Elihu intones a hymn in praise of God who reveals Himself in the winter rains which bring fertility to the earth, and God's gracious presence to men.

##### **Verse 3**

God's sovereignty is expressed in that He sends thunder and lightning throughout the universe. The reverence of "it" is to lightning and the verb has a root meaning of "loosen," that is, send in the sense of letting it go to the corners (literally, the wings) of the earth.

##### **Verse 4**

"It" is the lightning in verse 3. God's voice roars, He does not restrain the lightning when His voice is heard.

Even though God speaks in the thunder and lightning, He does not restrain everything in the universe merely because He speaks. Job needs to learn this fact, according to Elihu.

##### **Verse 5**

Elihu's words echo both Job and Eliphaz. Elihu makes transition to another dimension of God's wonderful creation—snow and frost. God is presented as lord of the winter, as He is the lord of the spring and summer in the previous verses.

##### **Verse 6**

"Downpour of rains" emphasizes the intensity of the rain which would refer to the heavy rain of the Syrian Palestinian winter.

### **Verse 7**

The meaning is that when it rains men must cease from their agricultural labors while the rain and snow prevail.

### **Verse 8**

The imagery is concerned with the hibernations of animals for the winter. The noun “coverts” which could be better be understood as “lair.” The verb means “to lie in wait.” The word translated “dens” is used of God’s dwelling place, of man’s home, and of the lairs of wild beasts.

### **Verse 9**

“Cometh” probably means to scatter or disperse. It might be a term for storehouse. The north yields its “cold.”

### **Verse 10**

Elihu employs poetic imagery to express that ice and frost are the results of the cold-blast of God’s breath. “Straightened” is derived from the word meaning, “become a solid mass,” that is, frozen solid.

### **Verse 11**

The clouds are loaded or burdened with moisture. Instead of lightning this may refer only to “light” as in the Hebrew text, that is, to the sun, thus deriving the meaning that the sunlight dispels the clouds with their moisture.

The emphasis is on the manifestation of God’s power and controls of nature.

### **Verse 12**

Elihu here explains that all of nature obeys the will of God and fulfills His purposes.

The meaning of the entire verse centers on God’s control; though lightning appears to act capriciously, it is carrying out His Divine directions.

### **Verse 13**

Elihu asserts in conclusion to this section of his that God’s control of nature sometimes results in judgment, sometimes in blessing.

Both wrath and mercy result from God's control of nature; the same also applies to history. God's universe is balanced between His correction or discipline and His covenant love.

Man should realize his insignificant position and fear God. (Verses 14-24)

#### **Verse 14**

Elihu turns from his hymn of praise to directly addressing Job once again. Can Job be brought submissively to God? This will be Elihu's last effort.

The ensuing questions are raised in hopes of exposing Job's ignorance of how God works in His creation.

#### **Verse 15**

Elihu asks Job, "Do you know how God puts upon them," that is, lays charge upon them, probably the clouds?

Lightning is no longer a mystery; it is the direct activity of God not the inanimate "Laws of Nature."

#### **Verse 16**

God's precision in the balancing of the clouds is a wonderful testimony of His control of nature.

#### **Verse 17**

Elihu ironically emphasizes the smallness of man. During the sirocco, that is, hot east or south winds, clothes feel dry and hot.

All the birds, animals, and men hide from the scorching heat, and wait for the clouds bearing the promise of cooling rain. Elsewhere the sirocco is called east wind.

#### **Verse 18**

The shimmering heat of the day was compared with burnished copper. "Strong" means hard or solid mass.

#### **Verse 19**

Job, what will you say in face of all these awesome facts?

With biting sarcasm, Elihu challenges him to get his "case" ready, doubtless in reference to Job's desire to encounter God in a court of law.

### **Verse 20**

Elihu finds it quite incredible that insignificant Job would think of confronting an incomprehensibly great God. Anyone so foolish is merely asking to be destroyed, that is, "swallowed up." Only an arrogant madman would conceive of such a thing.

### **Verse 21**

Elihu returns to natural phenomena. Man cannot even look at the sun when the wind has drawn away the clouds. How would you imagine that you could possibly look upon the Creator in all glory?

### **Verse 22**

This verse refers to the Aurora Borealis. The mysterious blazing golden beams suggest the presence of God.

### **Verse 23**

Elihu reasserts his conviction that God cannot perpetrate injustice, either directly or indirectly. God will not violate, afflict, or oppress. We cannot understand God, but He has abundant righteousness and in His righteousness He is too inflexible to violate justice. Job completely misunderstands; he has no case against his Creator. If he would but acknowledge it, he could be healed and restored to prosperity.

### **Verse 24**

Even the wisest of men cannot see God. Men stand in awe before God because of His greatness and goodness. But all men are beneath God's notice, even the wisest. This conclusion seems to be at variance with Elihu's claim throughout his speeches. If God does not notice anyone, great or small what does He have to do with punishment of the wicked, or the prosperity of the pious?

With these words, Elihu disappears from the drama as abruptly as he first appeared.



## THE SHATTERING OF SILENCE

### THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND THE PENITENCE OF JOB

#### CHAPTERS 38:1—42:2-6

### INTEGRITY, CERTAINTY, AND KNOWLEDGE

#### CHAPTERS 38:1—40:2

God questions Job about the marvels of the universe. (Verses 1-41)

#### Verse 1

Yahweh now confronts Job directly.

Job has nowhere denounced God, as Satan predicted. The suffering of Job requires Yahweh's intervention.

God declares that Job, as is every saved sinner, is redeemed by grace. The common assumption between Job and his three consolers was that he was alienated from God, and his suffering was concrete proof of this.

The speeches of Yahweh are a direct challenge to that thesis. Job can have the presence of God in the midst of suffering. Job is humbled by God.

If Job is incapable of the simplest answers, how could he hope to debate Yahweh, Creator of the universe?

The most striking factor in Yahweh's speeches is that Job's personal problem is completely ignored. Nothing is said about his guilt or innocence, or the cause and meaning of his suffering.

The theophany, that is, seeing God, is the solution to the Jobian drama. Ultimately, Jesus, Job's Redeemer, is the great explanation of God's person and purpose. God's answer came from one of the most unexpected places—The Whirlwind.

Yahweh ignores Elihu and zeros in on the main figure of the drama, the searching sufferer.

## **Verse 2**

The “this” is a plain reference to Job, not Elihu. The counsel referred to is to the purposes of God, not to the dialogical discussion between Job and his friends.

No one lacking so much knowledge regarding the intricacies of the universe should ever challenge God to a debate. Elihu had earlier charged Job with speaking out of a reservoir of ignorance.

Job has denied that the universe has a moral order. All human efforts to search out all the interrelatedness in the universe is doomed to failure.

## **Verse 3**

Girding the loins is a figurative expression of preparation for a difficult undertaking. Job had demanded the opportunity to debate with God. But God will not submit to questioning. Instead of making specific charges, as Job has requested that He do, God confronts him with unanswerable questions regarding His providential control of the cosmos.

God’s design for such interrogation is to bring Job to the awareness of the vastness of his ignorance, Job had claimed earlier that all God would need to do was to call him; and he would answer.

This reveals supreme ignorance conceived by pride, which can deliver only darkness. God is only doing what Job asked Him to do.

How can he impugn God’s wisdom and justice when he knows so little?

This is not an arrogant cosmic bully interrogating Job; this is His Redeemer preparing him for deliverance.

God always extends His merciful forgiveness, but the contingency is that we accept it.

## **Verse 4**

God hurls a series of questions toward Job in order to expose his vast and presumptuous ignorance.

There cannot be two omniscient persons in the same universe; so, is it Yahweh or Job?

Most knowledge never changes anything. Most new ideas are worthless because they do not expose the intricate inter-workings of nature, history, or society. Both assume that knowledge means salvation.

Knowledge is not to be confused with wisdom, which is an integrating force.

### **Verse 5**

“Who sets its measure(s) if you know? Who stretches over it the line?” Who does that, Job, answer Me, if you know!

Measurement means finitude or limitation and imprecision, though accurate to an amazing degree.

### **Verse 6**

Job, who designed and built the universe?

The stone referred to here may be either the initial foundation stone, or the final capstone. These two stones were used for measurement in ancient building procedures.

### **Verse 7**

When the foundation of the Second Temple was laid, Israel sang. Joyful singing was present when the universe was created.

In pagan mythology, that is, the astrocults, the stars were gods. In contrast, Yahweh was Creator and Lord of the stars, which were subservient to Him and sang His praises.

### **Verse 8**

Now the origin of the sea is presented.

Two images are employed in this verse:

1. The sea is an unruly infant bursting forth from the womb; and
2. A flood needing to be controlled.

God was both its origin and orderer. Did you shut the sea within doors?"  
Implying, Job, did you do it, or did I do it?

### **Verse 9**

Birth imagery continues in this verse; as an infant is wrapped in swaddling clothes, so the sea is wrapped in clouds.

### **Verse 10**

God "set bounds" for the sea and locked it into its boundaries.

"And I traced out its limits, and set bars and two doors." In all probability, the allusion is to the cliffs and rocky shores which mark the coast of the sea.

### **Verse 11**

This verse clearly describes God's control of the sea.

### **Verse 12**

The succession of light and dark must be controlled if the creation is to be ordered. Job, did you ever control the light in the universe? Did you ever ask the dawn its responsibilities?

### **Verse 13**

Yahweh depicts night as a garment covering the earth, which the dawn takes hold by the fingers and shakes.

The wicked who work in the cover of darkness are shaken out of their protection. The garment so essential for protection from the chill of the night here becomes an image of protection for the wicked. Job, can you do that?

### **Verse 14**

"It changes" refers to the feminine noun earth. Darkness removes all but the shadowed shapes of the landscape.

The morning sun returns the beautiful contours to the shapeless surface of the earth. The sun's rays give shape to creation's contours, as clay receives the impress of the seal.

Then the imagery refers to the return of the rich hues to the earth as the creation is bathed in beams of sunlight.

### **Verse 15**

Yahweh repeats what we have already been told, that the light of the wicked is darkness. Light banishes darkness from its kingdom; they are forever incompatible.

The “upraised arm” is probably a metaphor signifying powerful wickedness, which Yahweh shatters.

### **Verse 16**

Job shows little knowledge regarding the origins of things visible. Now he is challenged to expose his knowledge concerning the range and extent of things visible.

The word rendered “recesses” denotes what is to be sought for or searched out.

### **Verse 17**

The gates of Sheol hold back the deep darkness.

### **Verse 18**

The plural probably implies the vastness or expansiveness of the earth. If you do not understand creation, Job, how can you pretend to know the Creator?

### **Verse 19**

Yahweh separated light and darkness on the first day of creation and thus they have separate locations on the universe.

### **Verse 20**

The pronouns are both singular, but they must refer to light and dark.

### **Verse 21**

Yahweh’s irony and sarcasm increase—“doubtless.” You know because you must have been born before creation, if you understand all the intricate balances within nature’s systems.

### **Verse 22**

For the use of hail as God's weapon let me read you Isaiah 30:30. Yahweh has treasuries full of snow and hail.

### **Verse 23**

The imagery continues. God has reserves of snow and hail. Do you, Job?

### **Verse 24**

"Light" and "east wind," likely means "parching heat," for the latter.

### **Verse 25**

The time of the rain was more important than the channel, trench, conduits—through which it came. The word rendered water flood—flood waters—is a common Old Testament root for washing and overflowing of streams.

### **Verse 26**

God's providence extends to every factor of creation, not just man and his social relationships.

Yahweh does not condemn Job for what he could not possibly know; He condemns for his narrow perspective.

If he could see the universe as Yahweh sees it, then he would not complain, but of course, that is impossible.

### **Verse 27**

God makes the "desolate and waste ground" productive and makes "young grass to grow."

The personification of the ground suggests God's relationship to and control over the productive power of the earth.

### **Verse 28**

Can man cause rain? Can Job explain the nature of rain?

### **Verse 29**

What is the origin and nature of ice?

### **Verse 30**

The text says, “They hide themselves—are hidden,” “hardens,” that is, freezes. Freezing water begins with surface layer or crust.

### **Verse 31**

“Job, can you chain or bind the cluster of the Pleiades or loose the belt, (bonds) of Orion?”

### **Verse 32**

The Hebrew word *mazzarot* appears untranslated in the A. V. Perhaps it is related to *mazzalot*, (constellations) in 2 Kings 23:5. If so, it refers to the southern constellations of the zodiac.

### **Verse 33**

The ordinances (statutes) are the laws that govern the movements of the entire universe, but here the sun, moon, and stars in the earth’s galaxy.

### **Verse 34**

The image underlying the question is that of God commanding the clouds to release their captive rain. Job, can you interfere with the laws of climatology?

### **Verse 35**

Job, can you direct and control lightning? Will lightning obey you, as it obeys Me? It even reports to Yahweh its accomplishments. Lightning is God’s servant, not man’s.

### **Verse 36**

Yahweh is asking Job whether or not he can understand the workings of His wonderful creation.

### **Verse 37**

Who but Yahweh knows the exact number of clouds necessary at any given time? Who but God knows the precise balance of rain to provide the earth?

### **Verse 38**

When it rains, the dust forms a mass or whole once more. The whole earth is related to His purpose.

### **Verse 39**

The second part of the speech begins in this verse. Eight creatures are described in increasing details.

Yahweh calls forth a number of birds and animals and asks Job if he knows the secrets of their habitat and behavior. He begins with the king of the beasts, the lion. Who provides the lion with its prey? It does not require man to obtain its prey. Could man even do it if challenged? God cares for lions and their young.

### **Verse 40**

God provides them with food, even while they are waiting in the “lair.”

### **Verse 41**

After the king of the beasts, the scavenger raven is brought to Job’s attention. The raven is destructive; it picks out the eyes of its victims.

Job, surely this is an example of injustice, at least, to those animals that make up the raven’s prey.

They have no particular home; they “wander” wherever there is food available. In nature, every living creature has its natural enemies.

This, too, is part of God’s providential direction of His creation. Will Job learn any lessons from these eight examples from the realm of birds and beasts?

## **CHAPTER 39**

And of the animal world. (Chapters 39:1—40:2)

### **Verse 1**

Job, what do you know about ibex or mountain goats and the laws of birth?

This species of wild goat is still found near Khirbet Qumran and En Gedi.



The inaccessible cliffs are their habitat, but God's providence guards them even there.

Hind is a species of deer that survived in the woodlands of Palestine, before they were denuded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Job, what do you know about the existence of the hind?

### **Verse 2**

The first line is concerned with pregnancy and the second with birth. Job, do you or can you "count the months" before the delivery of the young?

### **Verse 3**

The line suggests the ease with which they deliver their young.

### **Verse 4**

This verse emphasizes the rapid maturity and parental care of the ibex. The ease with which they deliver is matched by the quickness with which they develop and become independent.

### **Verse 5**

God guards the wild donkey, who roams the steppes. Though he freely surveys the desert, his freedom has been given bounds by God. Even this seemingly untamable creature is under God's sovereignty.

The wild donkey is so mobile that only the fastest horses can equal its speed.

### **Verse 6**

The steppes and the salt land are the extreme ends of the fertile ground.

He lives there in order to be free of man, who lives on or near the fertile land.

### **Verse 7**

The wild donkey, literally "laughs at" the restrictions of the city. The freedom of the desert is to his liking. There he fends for himself. Freedom from oppression is derived from the labor of beasts. His yearning for freedom causes him to avoid any place inhabited by man. Man always enslaves him, if he can.

### **Verse 8**

The wild donkey pays the price of its freedom. It refuses to be subservient to man. It is often hungry because of sparse food supply in the desert.

He must search for his food. But he knows where to search. Who informed you of this Job?

### **Verse 9**

In previous verses a contrast was made between the domesticated and wild donkey; here the comparison is between wild and tame buffalo. Hunting this dangerous beast was a sport of royalty.

### **Verse 10**

The tame ox was used for plowing, but could man plow with a wild ox?

The second line pictures harrowing, as opposed to plowing, as the ox was led in the former labor, and man followed the animals in the latter.

### **Verse 11**

Yet, because of the ox's strength, would you allow him to go unguided to the field? He is strong, but man has the plan which can be fulfilled only by thoughtful preparation; this same kind of purposefulness and thoughtful preparation God has given to every dimension of the universe.

The ox might be harnessed by mind but without intentional guidance, the ox is unreliable.

### **Verse 12**

The ox has strength but not much intelligence. He could not bring the harvest in from the fields and prepare it for storage, could he?

### **Verse 13**

The ostrich is cruel to its young, yet is faster than the fleetest horse.

The stork, which is known for its affection for the young, is a contrast between a bird with affection and one which lacks parental concern.

But the comparison may be between the stork's capacity to fly with its wings and the ostrich with beautiful plumage but cannot fly.

#### **Verse 14**

The ostrich places its eggs in the sand. During the day the heat of the sun keeps them warm, but at night the ostrich must sit on them.

Generally, the hen ostrich hatches only one-third of her eggs. She feeds the other two-thirds to her young at various stages of development.

#### **Verse 15**

The eggs are often covered with sand; some might lie unprotected on top of the ground. Though the ostrich egg shells are very hard, there would naturally be some danger of being crushed by jackals and other predators, including man.

#### **Verse 16**

The hen often acts unconcerned, that is, "with no fear."

#### **Verse 17**

This judgment of the ostrich's intelligence is reinforced by an Arabian proverbial says— "more stupid than the ostrich." Both its ignorance and cruelty are proverbial. But in spite of its lack of intelligence, God providentially cares for it.

#### **Verse 18**

The acme of speed is the ostrich. They have been clocked up to 26 miles per hour.

#### **Verse 19**

The horse quivers its neck (when it is roused), and this in turn makes the mane stand erect. We must retain the image of the cultural function of each of the animals in the Near East if the parallelism is to be understood.

The donkey was the beast of burden, the ox was used for plowing, and donkeys or mules were riding animals. The horse was reserved for hunting and warfare, first to draw chariots; later it became a cavalry mount.

### **Verse 20**

The snorting of the horse means he is prepared for the charge in battle.

### **Verse 21**

The mighty war horse digs (much stronger than paws) violently the ground.

### **Verse 22**

This verse makes it crystal clear that the imagery is that of a war horse, rather than a horse in general. Men are afraid of attack in war, but the horse “mocks fear.”

### **Verse 23**

The battle is about to begin. The arrows are rattling in the quiver. The bright javelin or perhaps sword reflects the flashing sun, that is, “flame of.”

### **Verse 24**

The two nouns in line one suggest excitement rather than hostility or anger.

The excited horse literally “swallows ground,” that is, races unchecked.

“Be firm,” that is, the horse “cannot stand still.”

### **Verse 25**

The horse hears the trumpet signal for battle.

The cry of satisfaction goes forth as soon as he hears the trumpet. He smells the battle, even at a distance.

### **Verse 26**

This verse alludes to the southward migration of birds in late fall or early winter. Job, you know that it is not your wisdom that performs all these wonders.

### **Verse 27**

In the Old Testament, the word *naser* designates both eagles and vultures. Either would fit in the context. Eagles often, vultures always, build their nests in accessible locations. Job, did you provide these birds with their instincts?

### **Verse 28**

Here the great heights of the mountains are vigorously described. Who told these birds to build their nests as such high elevations?

### **Verse 29**

The imagery signifies the sharp-sightedness of the eagle. The Scriptures also bear witness to the swiftness of the eagle in attacking its prey.

### **Verse 30**

The action of the eagle would then be that of picking at bloody flesh, which is more appropriate for the eagle than “sucking.”

## **CHAPTER 40**

### **Verse 1**

Yahweh calls on Job to respond to His speech. Job confesses that he is reduced to silence.

### **Verse 2**

Either Job must sustain his competence to criticize Yahweh by answering all the queries from the first part of the speech of God, or forfeit his right to criticize. Job learns of his limitations. (Verses 3-5)

### **Verse 3**

Job breaks his silence by confession.

### **Verse 4**

He acknowledges that Yahweh’s challenges are beyond his ability and that he is contemptible. The hand over the mouth was a Near Eastern gesture of awed silence. Job is no longer hostile, but humble. When Yahweh broke his silence, He also broke Job’s pride.

### **Verse 5**

Job poured his rhetorical wisdom, but now he sits in speechless wonder before the mystery of Yahweh’s providential might. The mystery of creation now silences this small scoffer.

Job is not qualified to answer. (Verses 6-14)

### Verse 6

Then out of the violent whirlwind comes the victorious word which assures Job that the source of the cosmos has vindicated him. Neither Satan nor his friends have captured Yahweh's servant Job.

Job is pious because his God is righteous, and thus answer's Satan's original queries.

### Verse 7

After Job's submissive confession, Yahweh's second speech is delivered.

This final word divides into three parts.

1. Job is invited to stand in God's presence. (Verses 7-14)
2. Yahweh's description of Behemoth. (Verses 15-24)
3. The description of Leviathan. (Chapter 41:1-34)

Yahweh challenges Job to assume control over the universe. If his criticism is valid, then he ought to know how to govern the creation.

Job, do you have the power, wisdom, knowledge, and moral integrity to be in charge of the universe?

Modern man, do you who have violated the dominion mandate in your personal lives, cities, and have raped the earth, have the audacity to claim that you could express a superior providential control over all the systems of creation?

Can you, Job, our contemporary, administer Divine justice? Job had accused Yahweh of twisting justice.

Job has brought a lawsuit against God. Is God, or is Job guilty? One must be just, the other unjust, if Job's assumptions about a lawsuit are correct.

Job's lethal error is that no such relationship can exist between Creator and creature.

### **Verse 8**

Job had denied Divine justice in his own case and the world at large. Job has rendered ineffectual God's judgment in defending his own integrity.

Job had confronted God as to His moral right to govern creation.

### **Verse 9**

Even if Job has the integrity and wisdom, does he have the power to rule the world? Such dominion requires not only skill but resources of inexhaustible power. His criticism is idle chatter, until he can show that he possesses these attributes.

The arm is a symbol of power, both human and Divine.

### **Verse 10**

Adorn yourself with the symbols of power. Clothe yourself in glory and splendor. These symbols are the attributes of God. Show us your credentials, if you are God!

### **Verse 11**

Make your power visible, not merely verbal. If moral government requires swift retaliation on the wicked, retaliate Job. He declines the invitation for the obvious reason.

### **Verse 12**

"Bring him low," that is humble, is a synonym of "abase him." Pride is broken after God has spoken. Judge the wicked immediately, Job, if you have the power.

### **Verse 13**

Obliterate the wicked. Remove them from the sight of men. "Bind their faces in the hidden places," means to hide the wicked persons in literally, "the grave."

### **Verse 14**

When you can obliterate the unrighteous in the grave, then you can govern the universe. Job you must have power commensurate with purpose or design of creation, if you are to rule. Do you possess the credentials?

Yahweh grants that if Job can govern the vast complex creation he has the right to criticize, but only under the above conditions. If he can do what he has charged that Yahweh has neglected to do, then he could save himself from suffering and death.

Jehovah relates more marvels of His creation. (Verses 15—41:34)

### **Verse 15**

All of the previous animals and birds which appeared in the first speech are Palestinian.

Behemoth has been identified as the hippopotamus, whose habitat is the Nile Valley. Behemoth is probably a loan word from the Egyptian for “water horse.”

The powerful giant is a creature like Job. In many ways he is more powerful than Job, but he does not criticize Yahweh for His unjust governing of the universe.

### **Verse 16**

This description clearly stresses the sexual vigor of this enormous beast. For both man and beast, the loins were image of strength of potency. The muscles of the belly are particularly strong in the hippopotamus.

### **Verse 17**

The tail of this animal is very small, hardly appropriate for the express purpose of this image.

### **Verse 18**

His bones or limbs are like tubes or bars.

### **Verse 19**

Perhaps the first line refers to Genesis 1:24 where the first animal created is said to be the (behemoths), that is, cattle or beast.

Perhaps the sword refers to his chisel-edged tusks which the hippopotamus uses to attack its enemies.



### Verse 20

But the habitat of the Behemoth is marshland and water, not mountains. Perhaps the reference is to the vegetables produced in the mountain areas, which is the understanding of the R. S. V. In the upper valley of the Nile, vegetation is abundant on the hillsides.

### Verse 21

The animal rests under the water lily. The Egyptian specie is stronger and taller than the one found in Syria. Perhaps this is the thorny shrub which flourishes in Syria to North Africa in the damp hot areas.

### Verse 22

The word wadi more strongly suggests Palestine than Egypt, but the Behemoth has a wide range of movement.

### Verse 23

When the flash flood comes to the wadi, he is in complete control—"trembles not."

### Verse 24

Who can capture the Behemoth when he is on the alert?

Herodotus, II, 70 A.D., mentions a process of controlling crocodiles by covering their eyes with mud. The word (*moquesim*) rendered pierce in the A. V. usually means snare or trap.

## Now understanding. Chapter 41:1-34

### Verse 1

The belligerence of the Leviathan, or crocodile, is described. His thick hide cannot be penetrated by a fish hook. Can anyone take him captive?

The crocodile cannot be captured by a "fish hook" the word is found only here and in Isaiah 19:9; and Habakkuk 1:14.

The crocodile has an immobile tongue attached to the lower jaw, and the imagery suggests efforts at capturing the beast with a rope.

## **Verse 2**

Can you place a rope made of reeds through his nose? Both animals and men were held captive or led about with hooks drawn through the nose or jaws.

## **Verse 3**

The leviathan appears here as a human prisoner. Will he plead for mercy as would a human prisoner?

## **Verse 4**

Will he cut a covenant with you? Could you induce him, as a vassal, to enter service forever? “Will you take him as an eternal slave?”

## **Verse 5**

In the East, doves and sparrows are still a favorite live playmate of children. In view of this fact, Yahweh asks Job if he wants to make the Leviathan a playmate.

## **Verse 6**

Fishermen work together, then they divide the catch after it is landed, and this procedure entails bargaining with one another.

Do you want to catch the Leviathan and then bargain with one another over how he is to be divided?

## **Verse 7**

Harpoons and “fish-spears” are instruments for catching fish, neither of which could ensnare the hard skin of the Leviathan.

## **Verse 8**

Before you attempt to take the Leviathan, realize what you are trying to do.

No one lives to tell of his efforts, because there is no vulnerable spot on the Leviathan.

## **Verse 9**

His hope is in vain if he aspires to effectively assail this monster.

Here is a warning—do not attempt to capture the Leviathan, because the pursuer will collapse by even looking at him.

### **Verse 10**

Who is cruel or fierce enough to awaken the Leviathan from sleep, that is, “stir him up?” Arousing the Leviathan is sheer folly. It is madness to arouse a monster; it is pure foolishness to criticize Yahweh.

### **Verse 11**

It is more dangerous to criticize Yahweh than to arouse the Leviathan. Since God owns everything, no claims can be made against Him. The emphasis is not on the legal aspects but the inequality of power.

No one can face the Leviathan and survive. Why do you think that you can face the Leviathan and survive?

Why do you think that you can face Me and survive, Job?

You cannot even stand before one of My creatures. Why do you suppose that you can encounter your Creator and come out of the conflict victoriously?

### **Verse 12**

We now begin to encounter a detailed description of the Leviathan.

### **Verse 13**

The imagery here refers to the scales of the crocodile. “The face of his garment” refers to the tough outer layer of protection as opposed to the back.

The second line says literally, “his double bridle,” which is understood to mean “come within his jaws.”

### **Verse 14**

The crocodile’s teeth inspire terror. This formidable enemy has thirty-six sharp teeth in his upper jaw and thirty in his lower jaw.

In our context, Yahweh is saying that Job cannot even encounter this creature let alone the one who inspires awesome terror, God. If the Leviathan is invincible, what about You Yahweh?

### **Verse 15**

Literally his pride refers to the hard scales which cover the crocodile. “Close seal” is rendered in the Hebrew as, stone or flint which gives the thought of hardness of the seals with which the scales are compared.

### **Verse 16**

The scales are so tightly packed that not even air can get between them. That the scales are firm and close is confirmed by the presence of the Hebrew verb *el, enter*, which means nothing can enter between.

### **Verse 17**

This verse reinforces the imagery from verse 16.

### **Verse 18**

The spray from the sneezing of the crocodile flashes in the sunlight. The reddish eyes of the crocodile sparkle “like the eyelids of the dawn.”

### **Verse 19**

When the crocodile arises out of the water, after a sustained period beneath the surface, it propels water in a hot stream from its mouth. The sparkling stream looks like fire in the sunlight.

### **Verse 20**

Smoke or steam hurdle heavenward, as from a boiling pot. Each image is of steam or vapor moving upwards.

### **Verse 21**

The image of the crocodile’s breath is that it “kindles coals, and flame or sparks go forth from his mouth.”

### **Verse 22**

The strength of the crocodile’s neck is very apparent.

“Dismay” refers to the movement of the panic-stricken victims attempting to evade his charge.

### **Verse 23**

Literally the word rendered as “flakes” is “falling parts,” that is the flabby parts of his skin. The folds of his flesh are joined together, firm on him and immovable.

### **Verse 24**

The attitude of the Leviathan is described by the image of a millstone. The bottom or stationary stone received the harder wear.

### **Verse 25**

The Leviathan produces only the sensations and manifestations of fear, but he knows no fear.

### **Verse 26**

No human weapons avail against this mighty armor. He is impervious to human power. Think Job, if he can generate fear, what about Me?

### **Verses 27-30**

No weapon, not even strong metal avails against his defenses. When he lies on the ground, he leaves marks resembling the marks of the “threshing sledge.”

### **Verse 31**

The Leviathan’s motion in the water is described as churning up foam. He churns the water into a “boil.”

### **Verse 32**

The white foam which the Leviathan leaves behind as “he makes a wake to shine, one would think the deep to be gray haired.” The deep is his habitat.

### **Verse 33**

The Leviathan is peerless and fearless, and on earth, there is none his equal.

### **Verse 34**

The Leviathan is the king of the “sons of pride.”

## **MAN IN GOD’S IMAGE VS. GOD IN MAN’S IMAGE**

### **CHAPTER 42:1-6**

#### **Verse 1**

Job responds to Yahweh in complete submission.

## **Verse 2**

Job's complaint had never been against God's power, only His will. Job had lodged his confrontation with God concerning His indifference to moral matters, not His inability to execute justice.

His wisdom and omnipotence have been acknowledged from the very beginning.

Now Job affirms in faith not only God's wisdom and power but also His goodness and graciousness. He cares for all His creation.

God's purpose is not a segment but a circle. In order to understand God's ways with man, we must not absolutize any single degree of the cosmic circle, because ignorance of the meaning of the whole will ensue. There are no "value free" decisions, the assertions of many social and behavioral scientists to the contrary. All decisions entail value presuppositions. Now Job knows this fact of reality.

## **Verse 3**

Job here repeats the complaint previously lodged against him for the express purpose of admitting its validity. God's rebuke here acknowledged to have been justified. Only those in ignorance (darkness) of God's complete purpose would speak out against Him.

## **Verse 4**

Job reminisces on what Yahweh has said to him.

## **Verse 5**

Here is the heart of Job's restoration. In times past, Job knew God only by hearsay, literally "report of ear." Job is now convinced of that which he formally doubted, that is, of God's providential care.

He had asked for assurance that God was on his side and Yahweh has once and for all spoken by The Shattering of Silence. Job's demand has been met.

## **Verse 6**

Repentance removes himself from the center of the world. Job is truly a crucified self. After all the only alternatives are either a "divided self" or a "crucified self."

Job accepts God's evaluation of himself. We are OK only when God says we are OK.

Job does not loath himself, but his condition. Job's habitat has been ashes for some time.

Job arises up out of the bitter ashes of suffering and stands whole again. But this time Yahweh is his organizing center, and neither his family nor prosperity nor their cultural advantages.

To the Christian believer, Job's redeemer, the Christ, is the orderer of all existence.

## **RECONCILIATION AND RENEWAL**

### **CHAPTER 42:7-17**

Eliphaz makes a great burnt-offering and Job intercedes for his friends.

(Verses 7-9)

#### **Verse 7**

Now Yahweh turns to Eliphaz and declares that He is disturbed that they have all along misrepresented Him.

They have distorted the will of God in their counsel to Job. Yet they uttered each word as though it had been directly authorized by Him.

Job himself had accused them of lying in order to defend God. Job is surely vindicated now. God has not only broken His silence; He has condemned Job's adversaries.

The integrity of God's impatient protester has now been rewarded. He has also judged pious hypocrites, even those who pretend to speak for Him.

What a lesson we must all learn!

Twenty-first century man needs as never before to know Job's Creator-Redeemer. God in His mercy has bathed this tormented soul in the healing oils of love and forgiveness.

My servant, so acclaimed in the beginning and in the end, has survived the temptations of suffering and pain. He has indeed been in the "furnace of affliction."

#### **Verse 8**

This is an enormous sacrifice—indicating a grave matter. Vicarious atonement is imperative for wholeness.

Intercessory prayer is a mighty force throughout the Scriptures.

Yahweh tells them to go to Job because literally, “His face I will lift up,” that is, accept. As Job is the offended party, he must intercede.

### **Verse 9**

Note that Elihu is not mentioned, in spite of the extensive materials in the Elihu speeches.

Yahweh forgave them because of Job’s sacrifice and intercessory prayer on their behalf.

But suffering alone is not redemptive, only the suffering of our incarnate Lord and Master can redeem the fallen universe.

## **JOB IS RESTORED TO PROSPERITY AND BLESSED WITH CHILDREN**

### **CHAPTER 42:10-17**

#### **Verse 10**

Job’s prosperity is restored, but not as a reward. Being successful is not proof of being saved. Surely, we have learned this much from Job our contemporary. His fortune has returned.

#### **Verse 11**

His wealth and its prestige attracted his relatives and friends once more. Where were these fair-weather friends when he needed their consolation?

#### **Verse 12**

The numbers are double the amount which Job had before.

#### **Verse 13**

The number of children remained the same. Job’s daughters figure more prominently than his sons, who are not even mentioned by name.

#### **Verse 14**

The name of the first, Yemimah, means turtle dove, which is a symbol of fertility and devotion.

Qeziah is the second and means a variety of cinnamon used as perfume.

The third daughters name is Keron and means powdered paint for the eyelashes and lids.

#### **Verse 15**

The names of Job’s daughters represent the natural, physical, and spiritual qualities engendered by the beautician’s creative touch.



In the cultural context of the ancient Near East, daughters inherited only when there were no sons. Here is an example of women's liberation when there were sons.

#### **Verse 16**

After his affliction, Job lived 140 years, just about double his former years. Job saw four generations, as compared to Joseph's three. Grandchildren are the crowns of life.

#### **Verse 17**

So ends the life of one of God's great servants.

Suffering men can be righteous. Our suffering Savior is ultimate proof of this possibility. Life begins as a problem, continues as a promise, and is the fulfillment of a purpose.

The dawn of God's new day broke over the destructive darkness that all but destroyed Job, our contemporary.

Vindicated Job was no longer enslaved to himself, or his former preoccupation with happiness, or enjoyment of prosperity, family, health, or prestige in the community, for he knows that before he "had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eyes seeth thee."

## **CONCLUSION**

#### **Verse 7**

After the Lord has said all this to Job, he told Eliphaz, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you did not speak the truth about Me, the way my servant Job did.

#### **Verse 8**

Now take seven bulls and seven rams to Job and offer them as a sacrifice for yourselves. Job will pray for you and I will answer his prayer and not disgrace you the way you deserve. You did not speak the truth about Me as he did.

#### **Verse 9**

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar did what the Lord had told them to do, and the Lord answered Job's prayer.

**Verse 10**

Then, after Job had prayed for his three friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

**Verse 11**

All Job's brothers and sisters and former friends came to visit him and feasted with him in his house. They expressed their sympathy and confronted him for all the troubles the Lord had brought on him. Each of them gave him some money and a gold ring.

**Verse 12**

The Lord blessed the last part of Job's life even more than he had blessed the first. Job owned 14,000 sheep, 6000 camels, 2000 head of cattle, and 1000 donkeys.

**Verse 13**

He was the father of seven sons and three daughters.

**Verse 14**

He called the oldest daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the youngest Keren-Happuch.

**Verse 15**

There were no other women in the whole world as beautiful as Job's daughters. Their father gave them a share of the inheritance along with their brothers.

**Verse 16**

Job lived 140 years after this, long enough to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**Verse 17**

And then he died at a very great age.