

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

JOB

BOB WINTON



**GOSPEL
BROADCASTING
NETWORK**

This material is the intellectual property of The Gospel Broadcasting Network. It is not to be altered, posted online, or printed without written permission. Questions about use can be sent to info@gbntv.org.

© 2002, Revised 2008, 2015, 2022.

Preface and Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs and Henry Simmons. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, Ray Hawk and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people. "Outlined" does not imply skimpy—these are full-length books.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen by preachers. How sad!

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches.

Bob Winton

December 23, 2021

bwint38@hotmail.com

(931) 728-7610 * (931) 639-0317

TABLE OF CONTENTS—JOB

CHAPTER	PAGE		CHAPTER	PAGE
Introduction	4		23	175
1	15		24	181
2	27		25	191
3	32		26	197
4	39		27	202
5	45		28	208
6	51		29	215
7	56		30	221
8	63		31	228
9	67		32	238
10	76		33	243
11	82		34	251
12	85		35	260
13	93		36	263
14	102		37	270
15	111		38	275
16	120		39	291
17	125		40	299
18	131		41	307
19	141		42	315
20	148		Where Are the Dead?	321
21	155		Our Physical Body	332
22	166		Bibliography	336

INTRODUCTION TO JOB

A. The Book of Job—a Literary Masterpiece and Inspired Production .

1. Tributes paid to the Book of Job as a Masterpiece by great scholars:
 - a. “Tomorrow, if all literature was to be destroyed and it was left to me to retain one work only, I should save Job” (Victor Hugo).
 - b. “The Book of Job, taken as a mere work of literary genius, is one of the most wonderful productions of any age or of any language” (Daniel Webster).
 - c. “...One of the Grandest things ever written” (Thomas Carlyle).
 - d. “The Book of Job rises like a pyramid in the history of literature, without a predecessor and without a rival” (Philip Schaff).
 - e. “Magnificent and sublime as no other book” (Martin Luther).
 - f. “Unexcelled in literature” (George More).
 - g. “It contains three canons of greatness: dimension of height—brings one nearer to the eternal stars of light; possesses dimension of breadth—universal qualities joining the whole world as kin; depth—goes into the soul of man” (Reichert, Jewish scholar).
2. As excellent as these accolades are, it also bears the marks of inspiration.
 - a. Job 19:25: "For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth." No uninspired person could have made this accurate prediction.
 - b. Job 26:7: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing." No one of that ancient time could know these scientific facts apart from inspiration.
 - c. Job 38 offers many questions and comments which could not have been known by natural means during that scientifically-unenlightened age.
 - d. The book of Job is truly grand, but it is not superior to any other inspired part of the Bible. Judged merely on the merit of its literary quality, it is superb; but in view of its obvious inspiration, it is vastly superior to any human literary production.

B. Job is Historically Correct.

1. Critics of the Bible, in order to live up to their basic tenets, must deny the historicity of Job and subvert the Book of Job into a parabolic presentation. They assert that the conversations between God and Satan are unreasonable and unbelievable. Unwilling to accept any part of the Bible in the light of its claims (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21), they reject it in its entirety as inspired, and try to account for it on some human basis. However, their view cannot account for the evidence of inspiration found in the Book of Job and in other parts of the Bible.
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
 - b. 2 Peter 1:19-21: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”
 2. Other inspired writers speak of Job as a real person, thus the historicity of Job and the inspiration of his book are implied.
 - a. Ezekiel 14:14: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *but*
-

their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD." According to Ezekiel, Job was as real a person as were Noah and Daniel. If the prophet's statement here is rejected, how can we know that anything else he wrote is to be accepted?

- b. James 5:11: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." The inspired writer James declares the historicity of Job and his sufferings—that is the very point of his argument. If we reject this statement, how can we consistently accept anything else James wrote?
3. Internal evidence in the Book of Job offers strong evidence that Job was a real person.
 - a. His name is specifically given.
 - b. The book begins just as other Bible narratives, that are unquestionably historical, begin:
 - 1) 1 Samuel 1:1: "Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name *was* Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite."
 - 2) Job 1:1: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil."
 - 3) Luke 1:5: "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth."
 - c. His homeland is identified by name—the land of Uz.
 - d. Archaeologists have unearthed evidence that the names of Job and Bildad were in use about 2000 B.C., lending credence to the historicity of Job and his friends.
 - e. The presence in the book of references to the number and names of some of his children, the listing of his great possessions, details about his friends, and his spiritual devoutness, all indicate strongly that the book is to be taken as historical.
 4. Job lived in the "land of Uz." Jeremiah speaks of this territory: "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked." See Barnes for the following information" (Lam. 4:21).
 - a. At first view, perhaps, this passage would indicate that the land of Uz was a part of Edom, yet it more properly indicates that the land of Uz was not a part of that land, but that the Edomites or Idumeans had gained possession of a country which did not originally belong to them. Thus, the prophet speaks of the "daughter of Edom," not as dwelling in her own country properly, but as dwelling "in the land of Uz" - in a foreign country, of which she had somehow obtained possession. The country of Edom, properly, was Mount Seir and the vicinity, south of the Dead Sea; but it is known that the Edomites subsequently extended their boundaries, and that at one period Bozrah, on the east of the Dead Sea, in the country of Moab, was their capital; see the Analysis of Isa 34, and the notes at Isa 34:6. It is highly probable that Jeremiah refers to the period when the Idumeans, having secured these conquests, and made this foreign city their capital, is represented as dwelling there. If so, according to this passage in Lamentations, we should naturally look for the land of Uz somewhere in the countries to which the conquests of the Edomites extended - and these conquests were chiefly to the east of their own land. A similar conclusion will be derived from the other place where the name occurs in Jeremiah. It is in Jer 25:20 ff. "And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Askelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, and Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon," etc. Two things are apparent here. One is, that the country of Uz was distinct from the land of Edom, since they are mentioned as separate nations; the other is, that it was a country of some considerable extent, since it is mentioned as being under several "kings." There is, indeed, in this reference to it no allusion to its situation; but it is

mentioned as being well known in the time of Jeremiah.

- b. The same thing is evident from the manner in which the residence of Job is spoken of in Job 1:8. He is there said to have been the "greatest of all the men of the east." This implies that his residence was in the land which was known familiarly as the country of the East. It is true, indeed, that we have not yet determined where the poem was composed, and of course do not know precisely what the author would understand by this phrase, but the expression has a common signification in the Scriptures, as denoting the country east of Palestine. The land of Idumea, however, was directly south; and we are, therefore, naturally led to look to some other place as the land of Uz; compare the notes at Job 1:3. The expression "the East," as used in the Bible, would in no instance naturally lead us to look to Idumea.
- c. The monuments and memorials of Job still preserved or referred to in the East, may be adduced as some slight evidence of the fact that such a man as Job lived, and as an indication of the region in which he resided. It is true that they depend on mere tradition; but monuments are not erected to the memory of any who are not supposed to have had an existence, and traditions usually have some basis in reality. Arabian writers always make mention of Job as a real person, and his pretended grave is shown in the East to this day. It is shown indeed in six different places: but this is no evidence that all that is said of the existence of such a man is fabulous, any more than the fact that seven cities contended for the honor of the birth of Homer is an evidence that there was no such man. The most celebrated tomb of this kind is that of the Trachonitis, toward the springs of the Jordan. It is situated between the cities still bearing the names of Teman, Shuah, and Naama - (Wemyss); though there is every reason to believe that these names have been given rather with reference to the fact that that was supposed to be his residence, than that they were the names of the places referred to in the book of Job. One of these tombs was shown to Niebuhr. He says (Reisebeschreib, i. 466, "Two or three hours east of Saada is a great mosque, in which, according to the opinion of the Arabs who reside there, the sufferer Job lies buried." "On the eastern limits of Arabia, they showed me the grave of Job, close to the Euphrates, and near the Helleh, one hour south from Babylon." is of importance to remark here only that all of these tombs are outside the limits of Idumea. Among the Arabians there are numerous traditions respecting Job, many of them indeed stories that are entirely ridiculous, but all showing the firm belief prevalent in Arabia that there was such a man.
- d. The present belief of the Arabians may be referred to as corroborating the results to which we have approximated in this inquiry, that the residence of Job was not in Idumea, but was in some part of Arabia Deserta, lying between Palestine and the Euphrates. Eli Smith stated to me (November, 1840) that there was still a place in the Houran called by the Arabians, Uz; and that there is a tradition among them that that was the residence of Job. It is northeast of Bozrah. Bozrah was once the capital of Idumea (notes on Isa 34:6), though it was situated without the limits of their natural territory. If this tradition is well founded, then Job was not probably an Idumean. There is nothing that renders the tradition improbable, and the course of the investigation conducts us, with a high degree of probability, to the conclusion that this was the residence of Job.

C. The Setting, the Author, and the Date of the Book of Job.

1. Information given in the book clearly indicates that Job lived during the Patriarchal Age (which extended from the Creation to the giving of the Law of Moses). That information includes:
 - a. The fact that there is no allusion to the Law of Moses in the book.
 - b. Job operated in the role of priest in offering sacrifices for his family (Job 1:5). Under the Mosaic Law, only those men especially qualified as priests were given this prerogative.
 - c. "The use of the term *kesitah*, translated 'piece of money' (42:11), is elsewhere used only of patriarchal times (cf. Genesis 33:19; Joshua 24:32)" (Jackson, p.10). This implies the events related took place
-

during the Patriarchal Age.

- d. Job's long life demands that he be placed among the long-living patriarchs. Job lived one hundred and forty years beyond the events reported in the text. That would place his life-time in the two-hundred-years-range. Abraham lived for one hundred and seventy-five years, Isaac lived for one hundred and eighty years, and Jacob lived for one hundred and forty-seven. A few generations later, David was said to be an old man at the age of seventy (1 Kings 1:1; 2:11; 2 Sam. 5:4).
 2. From the representations in the book itself, it is clear that he lived before the departure from Egypt. This is evident from the fact that there is no direct allusion either to that remarkable event, or to the series of wonders which accompanied it, or to the journey to the land of Canaan. This silence is unaccountable on any other supposition than that he lived before it occurred, for two reasons. One is, that it would have furnished the most striking illustration occurring in history, of the interposition by God in delivering his friends and in destroying the wicked, and was such an illustration as Job and his friends could not have failed to refer to, in defense of their opinions, if it were known to them; and the other is, that this event was the great storehouse of argument and illustration for all the sacred writers, after it occurred. The deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the divine interposition in conducting the nation to the promised land, is constantly referred to by the sacred writers. They derive from those events their most magnificent descriptions of the power and majesty of Yahweh. They refer to them as illustrating his character and government. They appeal to them in proof that he was the friend and protector of his people, and that he would destroy his foes. They draw from them their most sublime and beautiful poetic images, and are never weary with calling the attention of the people to their obligation to serve God, on account of his merciful and wonderful interposition. The very point of the argument in this book is one that would be better illustrated by that deliverance, than by any other event which ever occurred in history; and as this must have been known to the inhabitants of the country where Job lived, it is inexplicable that there is no allusion to these transactions, if they had already occurred.[Barnes].
 3. The book was not necessarily written at the very time the events took place. In other words, some person could have recorded the events at some later time, if he was in possession of the facts of the story. Moses wrote about the creation many centuries after the event. Moses also recorded the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph long after these men had died. It may be the case that Job's story was written long after this grand old patriarch had passed from earthly scenes.
 - a. The date the book was written has been placed by liberal writers after the Babylonian Captivity, and by some conservative scholars at about the time of Solomon. If the liberal critics can succeed in placing the writing of Job after the exile, they think they can weaken the contents. "Attempts to put the authorship of Job in post-exilic times, or even down to as late as the 2nd century B.C. have been dealt a decisive blow by the discovery of fragments of Job written in paleo-Heb. Script among the Dead Sea materials" (*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Merrill C. Tenney, ED., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, Vol. III, p.602; quoted by Jackson, p.11).
 - b. The writing of the Book of Job was prior to the Babylonian Exile, but its precise time cannot be determined.
 4. Since the time of the writing of the book has not been identified, it is likewise impossible to identify the writer. But that does not damage its inspiration. The subject of the book gives the name of the book, but does not necessarily identify the author; the title of the book does not require that Job be the author. It is unlikely that Job is the author, for that would place him in the embarrassing situation of describing his own spiritual greatness (cf. Job 1:8). The Jewish Talmud asserts that Moses wrote the Book of Job. It is enough for us to know that other Bible writers, who are clearly inspired, quote from the Book of Job, putting the stamp of divine approval on the message of Job.
 - a. Job 5:13: "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried
-

headlong." This is quoted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. **For it is written**, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness."

- b. Romans 11:35: "Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" This is derived from Job 35:7: "If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?"

D. The Nature of the Book of Job.

1. The Book of Job teaches the sovereignty of the Almighty. Despite what feeble man may seem to get away with on earth, God will have the final word.
2. The Book of Job teaches the lesson that God is worthy of man's praise and service. Compare: "I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies" (Ps. 18:3).
 - a. Satan asserts to the Almighty that Job only served God for the material wealth he derived from that service: "Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1:9-11). This is tantamount to saying that God is not worthy of man's service by his own goodness, that he has to buy man's loyalty by giving him material bounties.
 - b. God allowed the devil to have control over Job's material possessions and his children; he stole from the great patriarch his wealth and destroyed his ten children. If Satan's argument had any validity, Job would have turned from God with hatred and cursing; he did not do so! "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:20-22). By first-hand knowledge, Job knew that God was worthy of serving, with or without any material prosperity that God might give, withhold, or take away.
 - c. The case of Job demonstrates to man that God is worthy of man's praise and service—on the basis of the Almighty's true nature and goodness. When Job continued to serve and glorify God despite the tragic loss of his material possessions, his ten children, and the terrible affliction brought upon the patriarch, Jehovah proved to all humanity that he is worthy of being served on the basis of whom he is.
3. The Book of Job sheds light on the question of human suffering.
 - a. Job does not address the subject of the origin of suffering. We are told that the devil was the one who brought Job's great sufferings upon him.
 - b. The "...book of Job is an eloquent commentary on man's *inability to subject the painful experiences of human existence to a meaningful analysis*. God's workings are far beyond the limits of man's finite mind" (Jackson, p.14). Man must learn to trust God, regardless of our outward circumstances.
 - c. The book of Job teaches that man's sufferings do not always come upon him because of personal guilt. The New Testament elaborates on this truth:
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:5-13: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of

him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

- d. The book teaches that some suffering is a compliment to one's spirituality. God permitted Job to suffer to prove his real worth. "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).
 - e. There are certain definite benefits to be derived from suffering.
 - 1) Our suffering gives others the opportunity to offer their help, thus to improve their own standing before God. It is more blessed to give than to receive (cf. Acts 20:35).
 - 2) Our suffering gives God an opportunity to bless us.
 - 3) Our suffering engenders greater humility within us, thus making us stronger spiritually (2 Cor. 12:7-10; Heb. 12:5-11).
 - 4) Our suffering can make us stronger: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:7-10).
 - 5) Our suffering can make us purer: "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).
4. The Book of Job teaches a great lesson on the subject of patience.
- a. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11).
 - b. Everyone who is familiar with the Old Testament will know the story of Job. His experiences are so widely known that his patience has become a proverb—"The patience of Job." He has become the world's best example of patient endurance in the face of many immense losses and affliction. Job came to see that the agonizing trials he encountered could greatly enhance his spiritual stature: "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). As the refiner's furnace burns away the impurities and leaves behind the pure gold, so the fiery trials of Job's hardships would burn away his spiritual imperfections. He lived up to the demands of the time, and his story has been preserved for the benefit of all succeeding generations.
 - 1) Job 1:21-22: "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."
 - 2) Job 2:9-10: "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die."
-

- But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."
- 3) Job 16:19: "Also now, behold, my witness *is* in heaven, and my record *is* on high."
 - 4) Job 19:27: "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me."
 - 5) If one should doubt the harshness of Job's trials, let him read the book of Job, and see the tragic loss of his livestock, his children, and his health; add to this the lack of support from his wife; and then his friends tried to find fault with him.
 - 6) Job could not see the outcome of his trials while he was in the midst of his suffering. From our viewpoint, having the full story of his experiences before us, we know the outcome—that his troubles soon passed and he was well-blessed at the proper time. We, therefore, are able to see the **end** [the aim, the purpose, the design] God had in Job's afflictions. Through his many trials, Joseph could not see the ultimate purposes Jehovah had in store for him, but when all the whole story was revealed, he could then see what God's purposes had been in the ordeals through which he had been led. Both Job and Joseph learned that God's purposes were for their good, not for their hurt. So it is with all chastening directed toward his people—it is for their good and for the good of others.
 - 7) Job 42:10-13: "And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters."
- c. When God completes his purposes in the lives of men and women who serve him, though their lives might have hardships and troubles, yet his aim is to show great mercy and compassion. In the case of some, that result is experienced even in this life; in all cases, the glory and grandeur of heaven is bestowed upon the faithful. God is full of pity [compassionate; tender-hearted]; he is full of mercy. It is hard for us to perceive the purpose God may have for us; the difficulties and hardships we must endure in the short-run may becloud to us his ultimate aim. It is exceedingly important that we come to know God's word, to obtain as much wisdom as possible, and to trust God to do what is right. If our lives are ordered by his word, the outcome is predictable, despite the short-term problems—we will be blessed, especially in eternity, with far more than we could ever dream! We must love him, trust him, serve him—and all will be well!
 - d. The Greek term for "patience" is *hupomeno* [*hupo*—under; *meno*—to abide]. One who is patient in this sense is one who is able to persevere even under a great weight of tribulation. This kind of patience is the kind of endurance that perseveres, not merely with dogged resignation, but with confident hope, even though we do not fully comprehend the situation perfectly; we place our full trust in God, and rest with the confidence that he will provide the proper resolution, in time and/or in eternity. Such a one does not blame God for his hardships, but has confidence that all will be well.
5. The Book of Job provides information about the coming of the Messiah.
 - a. Job speaks of his need for a mediator, someone who is greater than his erstwhile friends.
 - 1) Job 9:33: "There is no umpire betwixt us, That might lay his hand upon us both" (ASV).
 - 2) Job 33:23: "If there be with him an angel, An interpreter, one among a thousand, To show unto man what is right for him" (ASV).
-

- 3) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
- b. Job speaks of a redeemer.
 - 1) Job 19:25: "For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth."
 - 2) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
- c. The Redeemer contemplated by Job also was one who suffered immensely. He was predicted to be a man of sorrows and one who was acquainted with grief (Isa. 53). The most righteous person ever to dwell on earth also suffered more than anyone else was ever called on to endure—Jesus Christ.
 - 1) Romans 3:24-26: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
 - 2) Hebrews 2:9-10: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."
 - 3) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 4) Hebrews 7:25-27: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."
 - 5) 1 John 2:1-3: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments."

E. Outline of the Book of Job.

1. The Prologue: Job 1-2.
 - a. Introduction to Job the man: 1:1-5.
 - b. The first council in heaven: 1:6-12.
 - c. Job's first test: 1:13-19
 - d. The victory of Job: 1:20-22.
 - e. The second council in heaven: 2:1-6.
 - f. Job's second test: 2:7-10.
 - g. The three friends of Job come to comfort him: 2:11-13.
 2. Job's Lament: Job 3:1-26.
 - a. He rues the day of his birth: 3:1-10.
 - b. Why did he not die? 3:11-19.
-

-
- c. His longing for death: 3:20-26.
 3. The First Cycle of Speeches: Job 4:1—14:22.
 - a. Eliphaz's first speech: 4:1—5:27.
 - b. Job's response to Eliphaz: 6:1—7:21.
 - c. Bildad's first speech: 8:1-21.
 - d. Job's response to Bildad: 9:1—10:22.
 - e. Zophar's first speech: 11:1-20.
 - f. Job's response to Zophar: 12:1—14:22
 4. The Second cycle of Speeches: Job 15:1—21:34.
 - a. Eliphaz's second speech: 15:1-35.
 - b. Job's response to Eliphaz: 16:1—17:16.
 - c. Bildad's second speech: 18:1-21.
 - d. Job's response to Bildad: 19:1-29.
 - e. Zophar's second speech: 20:1-29.
 - f. Job's response to Zophar: 21:1-34.
 5. The Third Cycle of Speeches: Job 22:1—27:23.
 - a. Eliphaz's third speech: 22:1-30.
 - b. Job's response: 23:1—24:25.
 - c. Bildad's third speech: 25:1-30.
 - d. Job's response: 26:1—27:23.
 6. The Hymn of Wisdom: Job 28:1-28.
 - a. More elusive than gems in the mind: 28:1-12.
 - b. More precious than rubies and gold: 28:13-19.
 - c. Only God knows the way of wisdom: 28:20-28.
 7. Job's final Summary: Job 29:1—31:40.
 - a. Remembrance of happier days: 29:1-25.
 - b. The present suffering: 30:1-31.
 - c. Oath of clearance: 31:1-40.
 8. Speeches of Elihu: Job 31:1—37:24.
 - a. Introduction of Elihu: 31:1—32:22.
 - b. The discipline of God: 33:1-33.
 - c. The righteousness of God: 34:1-37.
 - d. Man's barriers against God: 35:1-16.
 - e. The compassion and might of God: 36:23—37:24
 9. The Voice from the Whirlwind: Job 38:1—40:2.
 - a. God challenges Job: 38:1-3.
 - b. Creation of the world: 38:4-15.
 - c. Mysteries of land and sky: 38:16-38.
 - d. Renewed challenge to Job: 40:1-2.
 - e. Submission of Job: 40:3-5.
-

- f. Jehovah speaks again: 40:6—41:34.
 - g. Repentance of Job: 42:1-6.
 - 10. Epilogue: Job 41:7—42:17.
 - a. Job's intercession for the comforters: 42:7-9.
 - b. Job's restoration: 42:10-17.
-

JOB 1

A. Job 1:1-5: The Man Job is Introduced to the Readers.

1. Verses 1-3: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east."
 - a. The story that is about to be unfolded is not a fable or any other kind of fiction, but is an honest report of the experiences of a real person. The man's name was "Job." Other passages of the Bible speak of Job, thus confirming the book of Job and its details.
 - 1) Ezekiel 14:14: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *but* their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD."
 - 2) James 5:11: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."
 - b. The man's place of residence is given as the "land of Uz." Uz was within reasonable traveling distance to the homes of his friends—Eliphaz the Temanite (2:11), Bildad the Shuhite (2:11), Zophar the Naamathite (2:11), and Elihu the Buzite (32:2). Uz was also situated in such a place that it was accessible to the Sabaeans (1:15) and the Chaldeans (1:17). It was also exposed to the ravages of the great Arabian Desert (1:19).
 - 1) Jeremiah 25:20: "And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod." This suggests that Uz was a kingdom of some importance during the time of Jeremiah.
 - 2) Lamentations 4:21: "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked." Uz had some kind of connection with Edom, which was located in Palestine. Therefore, Edom and Uz were not separated by any great distance. We remember Barnes' comment: "...it more properly indicates that the land of Uz was not a part of that land, but that the Edomites or Idumeans had gained possession of a country which did not originally belong to them. Thus, the prophet speaks of the 'daughter of Edom,' not as dwelling in her own country properly, but as dwelling 'in the land of Uz' - in a foreign country, of which she had somehow obtained possession."
 - 3) Since Job had vast herds and flocks, the land of Uz was well able to support great numbers of livestock; it was also well-suited for agriculture.
 - a) Job 1:3: "His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east."
 - b) Job 1:14: "And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them."
 - c) Job 42:12: "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses."
 - 4) The area east of Jordan in Palestine, might fit the above-mentioned requisites. Other scholars locate Uz west of the Lower Euphrates, on the borders of Chaldea and Arabia. See the comments from Barnes under the introduction for detailed information regarding the location of the Land of Uz.

- c. Job is described by the text as being “perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.” Such terminology does not bespeak of sinless perfection, but of spiritual maturity.
- 1) Job 7:20: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?"
 - 2) Job 13:26: "For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth."
 - 3) Job 14:16: "For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?"
 - 4) Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man."
 - 5) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 6) Philippians 3:15: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."
 - 7) During his generation, there was none like Job: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" (Job 1:8). This implies that he must have lived in a different generation from Abraham.
- d. We are also told of his seven sons and three daughters. Having a sizeable family was especially valued by the ancient world, although it is viewed negatively by our modern world. Some nations penalize couples who have more than the maximum number of children allowed. Millions of women abort their unborn children before they can be born. "Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward. As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth. Happy *is* the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate" (Ps. 127:3-5).
- e. Job was greatest man of the east—his wealth was the greatest of all of his generation.
- 1) His possessions are listed as including seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses. Female donkeys were more valuable than the male, for they produced milk. *Pulpit Commentary* cites a reference to a certain prominent Egyptian who had one thousand cattle and oxen, nine-hundred and seventy-four sheep, more than two thousand goats, and seven-hundred and sixty asses.
 - 2) Job also had a very great household—a large number of servants. Abraham had three hundred and eighteen trained servants (Gen. 14:14). A large number of servants would be required to tend to the livestock, to act as guards, and to grow food; more servants would be needed to prepare the food and do other domestic chores.
 - 3) The greatness of Abraham is also delineated in the Scriptures. Would we be willing to say that Job was greater than Abraham or that Abraham was greater than Job? Such a problem is unnecessary. We cannot know that they lived at the same time. Also, Job’s territory is said to be “in the east,” which is used in the Old Testament in reference to areas toward the east or northeast of Canaan. Abraham lived most of his life in Canaan. Whatever the relative size and amount of their material possessions, they were both rich men. Job is known for his great patience in trials and Abraham is known for his great faith. They were both great in God’ sight.
- f. From this we learn again the important lesson that rich men can also be spiritual giants. One does not have to be poor to be pleasing to God. It is usually the case that rich people have little regard for the gospel and the poverty-stricken often are interested in the gospel truths.
-

- 1) Abraham was a rich man (Gen. 13:2) and was well-pleasing to God. Philemon and Cornelius were men of no little wealth—they also were acceptable to the Lord. On the other hand, the rich young ruler was not pleasing, since he was unwilling to put the Lord ahead of his money (Matt. 19:23-25). We are told that the common people heard the Lord gladly (Mar. 12:37), and that the gospel is more palatable to the average people (1 Cor. 1:18-31).
 - 2) The difference is determined by the attitude toward money and other material items.
 - a) Proverbs 30:8-9: "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."
 - b) Mark 10:23-25: "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."
 - c) 1 Timothy 6:6-10: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
 - d) 1 Timothy 6:17-19: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."
 2. Verses 4-5: "And his sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings *according* to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."
 - a. What is reported here is consistent with the Patriarchal Age, not of the Mosaic Age. The head of the family (the father) offered sacrifices for his family during the starlight age of the patriarchs; under the Mosaic Law, only the priests were authorized to offer sacrifices. This is one of the evidences that indicates Job lived during the Patriarchal Age. His great age at death (he lived 140 years more after the events of the book occurred) places him squarely within the time-frame of Abraham, not with Moses. By the time the Law was given, the age to which men lived was considerably shorter than before. David only lived to be seventy (2 Sam. 5:4; 1 Kings 2:10-11), but Isaac lived to be 180 (Gen. 35:28).
 - b. The sons of Job held regular feasts, apparently taking turns serving as hosts. The sisters were invited to these festivities. The family was closely-knit. The entire picture presented was of a strong, healthy family, tied together by love and fellowship. There was no cloud on the horizon, as far as they could tell, but events were soon to unfold that would severely affect them all.
 - c. Job was gravely concerned about the spiritual welfare of his children. He knew of no sin of which any of them was guilty, but he knew human nature—that there is within each accountable person the possibility of sinning against God. Therefore, Job offered sacrifices in their behalf. He reasoned that it might be the case that his sons had cursed God in their hearts, and he wanted to intercede with God
-

for them. We are told that this was a continual practice of the great man. “Job sent and sanctified them....” It appears from this that he sent for the children and set them apart unto God through the sacrifices he offered on their behalf. Job took care of his family’s spiritual needs, just as he provided for their physical necessities. The situation with his family was the best it could be.

B. Job 1:6-12: A Council in Heaven.

1. Verses 6: “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.”
 - a. There is much about this gathering that is difficult to understand. Is this a regular meeting? If so, how often did (does) it occur? What was the purpose? How could Satan come into God’s presence? Who are the sons of God? Many of our questions are not answered. It is, of course, fruitless to speculate about unrevealed information: “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law” (Deut. 29:29).
 - b. The sons of God would have to be the angels.
 - 1) 1 Kings 22:19-20: "And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, **and all the host of heaven standing by him** on his right hand and on his left. And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner."
 - 2) Job 38:7: "When the morning stars sang together, and **all the sons of God shouted for joy?**" There were no men in existence when God created the universe, hence it could only have been the angels (called “sons of God” here) who shouted for joy.
2. Verse 7: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”
 - a. God’s question is not to solicit information, for he knew quite well what Satan’s activities had been; he was asking to bring the subject to the point that needed to be made—the greatness of Job. God had asked Adam, “Where art thou?” following the commission of the first sin; God was not asking for information, but to call Adam’s attention to the matter at hand—his transgression of God’s word.
 - b. The devil replied to the question directed to him that he had been on earth, traveling to and fro. He was not merely sight-seeing! He had been about his business, for he is a dedicated servant to his evil work. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).
 - c. There is much about this heavenly gathering that we cannot know. How could Satan be in God’s presence? But how else could he bring his accusation against men before God? Were temptations still being offered to mankind while the devil attended this meeting? The New Testament speaks of Satan having angels who serve him (cf. Mt. 25:41) and earthly agents who do his work (2 Cor. 11:13-15). All the information we need to serve God successfully and to get along in this world has been given to us; it is fruitless to speculate about unrevealed matters. "The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are* revealed *belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29).
3. Verses 8: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”
 - a. God asked Satan if he had *considered* his servant Job: “Have you set your heart on him, given your full attention to his greatness?” Notice the use of this language elsewhere:
 - 1) Isaiah 41:22: "Let them bring *them* forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they *be*, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us

- things for to come."
- 2) Haggai 1:5,7: "Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.... Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways."
 - b. God spoke of Job as his servant—his true and faithful servant. He also spoke of Moses in similar language: "And Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after" (Heb. 3:5). It is a great tribute to be acknowledged by the Lord as his servant.
 - 1) Joshua 1:2: "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Israel."
 - 2) 1 Kings 11:13: "Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."
 - c. God knows all hearts; he knew every person living on the earth in that generation, and could accurately say of Job, that there is no other person on the earth who is like him. The Lord cites this as the reason why the devil should pay close attention to Job. God is inviting Satan to notice that there is no defect in Job, as though he were issuing a challenge to the adversary to discern, if possible, any weakness in him.
 - d. Jehovah described Job as a perfect and an upright man, who fears God and escheweth [avoids] evil. Could a greater tribute be paid to anyone? This is God's assessment of Job; his appraisal is accurate. "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7).
 - e. Comment from Matthew Henry: "How honourably God speaks of Job: He is my servant. Good men are God's servants, and he is pleased to reckon himself honoured in their services, and they are to him for a name and a praise (Jer 13:11) and a crown of glory, Isa 62:3. 'Yonder is my servant Job; there is none like him, none I value like him, of all the princes and potentates of the earth; one such saint as he is worth them all: none like him for uprightness and serious piety; many do well, but he excelleth them all; there is not to be found such great faith, no, not in Israel.' Thus Christ, long after, commended the centurion and the woman of Canaan, who were both of them, like Job, strangers to that commonwealth.... The holiness and happiness of the saints are the shame and torment of the devil and the devil's children" (PC Study Bible).
4. Verses 9-11: "Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."
- a. God implied that Job's piety grew out of his devotion to God and that Job did right because it is good to be devoted to God. But Satan reasoned that men like Job who serve God are blessed with material prosperity; if that material wealth is removed, the man would renounce God. In other words, Satan is asserting, "You have bribed Job to be pious." The acid test of a deed is in the motive behind it. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6). A religious action is meaningless to the soul unless it is motivated by faith which acts out of love; faith comes by learning God's word (Rom. 10:17); love is the willing of good toward another—in the case of love for God, that love seeks to do the will of God from the heart (Rom. 6:17; 1 John 5:3). This was what motivated Job's service to God, not selfishness, as his story reveals.
 - 1) 1 John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - 2) Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
-

- 3) Acts 15:7: “And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.”
- b. Satan’s charge against Job is also a thinly-veiled assault against God. He is implying that Job’s devotion to God had to be purchased by the material bounties he bestowed upon Job; that there is nothing in God’s nature and being that could cause Job to serve him willingly. He slanders Job by implying that he was a hypocrite; he slanders God by asserting that Job only served him for what he could get out of the arrangement.
- c. “‘Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?’ Satan insinuates that Job’s motive is purely selfish. He serves God, not for love of God, or for love of goodness, but for what he gets by it. Satan is too shrewd to endeavour, as Job’s friends do later, to pick holes in Job’s conduct. No; that is exemplary. But the true character of acts is determined by the motive. What is Job’s motive? Does he not serve God to gain his protection and blessing? Similarly, in modern times, ungodly men argue that religious and devout persons are religious and devout with a view to their own interest, because they expect to gain by it, either in this world, or in the next, or in both. This is a form of calumny which it is impossible to escape. And bad men, who are conscious to themselves of never acting except from a selfish motive, may well imagine the same of others. It is rarely that such an insinuation can be disproved. In the present instance God vindicates his servant, and covers the adversary with shame, as the other adversaries and calumniators of righteousness will be covered at the last day” (Pulpit Commentary, PC Study Bible).
- d. “How impatient the devil was of hearing Job praised, though it was God himself that praised him. Those are like the devil who cannot endure that any body should be praised but themselves, but grudge the just share of reputation others have, as Saul (1 Sam 18:5, etc.) and the Pharisees, Matt 21:15. How much at a loss he was for something to object against him; he could not accuse him of any thing that was bad, and therefore charged him with by-ends in doing good. Had the one half of that been true which his angry friends, in the heat of dispute, charged him with (Job 15:4; 22:5), Satan would no doubt have brought against him now; but no such thing could be alleged, and therefore, see how slyly he censured him as a hypocrite, not asserting that he was so, but only asking, ‘Is he not so?’ This is the common way of slanderers, whisperers, backbiters, to suggest that by way of query which yet they have no reason to think is true.
- 1) “Note, It is not strange if those that are approved and accepted of God be unjustly censured by the devil and his instruments; if they are otherwise unexceptionable, it is easy to charge them with hypocrisy, as Satan charged Job, and they have no way to clear themselves, but patiently to wait for the judgment of God. As there is nothing we should dread more than being hypocrites, so there is nothing we need dread less than being called and counted so without cause. How unjustly he accused him as mercenary, to prove him a hypocrite.
- 2) “It was a great truth that Job did not fear God for nought; he got much by it, for godliness is great gain: but it was a falsehood that he would not have feared God if he had not got this by it, as the event proved. Job’s friends charged him with hypocrisy because he was greatly afflicted, Satan because he greatly prospered. It is no hard matter for those to calumniate that seek an occasion. It is not mercenary to look at the eternal recompence in our obedience; but to aim at temporal advantages in our religion, and to make it subservient to them, is spiritual idolatry, worshipping the creature more than the Creator, and is likely to end in a fatal apostasy. Men cannot long serve God and mammon” (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible).
- e. Satan accuses God of having hemmed Job in with a strong fence, making it impossible for the devil to penetrate Job’s defenses. God has protected Job, but the patriarch operated by free will; he could choose what to do or not to do. He chose to remain faithful to God, but not in order merely to keep
-

the God-given prosperity; he served God because God was worth serving. God had blessed the works of Job's hands and made his every effort to succeed.

- 1) The psalmist wrote of the righteous, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ps. 1:3).
 - 2) We have many "precious hedges" which protect us, including the Bible, God's providence, the Lord's church, prayer, worship, and a good Christian home. Living in a nation that has a measure of respect for God and his word is likewise a hedge of protection.
- f. Satan proposes a test of Job's devotion; his scheme is to remove from the patriarch the prosperity with which God had blessed him, and he predicts that Job will curse God to his face. "The proof Satan undertakes to give of the hypocrisy and mercenariness of Job's religion, if he might but have leave to strip him of his wealth. 'Let it be put to this issue,' says he (v. 11); 'make him poor, frown upon him, turn thy hand against him, and then see where his religion will be; touch what he has and it will appear what he is. If he curse thee not to thy face, let me never be believed, but posted for a liar and false accuser'" (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible).
- g. Satan's design is clear. God had declared the greatness of Job's loyalty, indeed the greatest such man of his generation. If Satan can prove that Job is a hypocrite, he would have shown that the greatest man on earth was nothing and that there is no such thing as true piety among the human family, but that all religious is empty and vain. At the very least, if Job should retain his integrity, he would have brought severe suffering upon one God considered great. A blow against the faithful servant is a blow against the Master.
5. Verse 12: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD."
- a. God gave permission to Satan to put Job to the test; he was confident that his servant would remain faithful. "It is a matter of wonder that God should give Satan such a permission as this, should deliver the soul of his turtle-dove into the hand of the adversary, such a lamb to such a lion; but he did it for his own glory, the honour of Job, the explanation of Providence, and the encouragement of his afflicted people in all ages, to make a case which, being adjudged, might be a useful precedent. He suffered Job to be tried, as he suffered Peter to be sifted, but took care that his faith should not fail (Luke 22:32) and then the trial of it was found unto praise, and honour, and glory, 1 Peter 1:7" (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible).
 - b. The devil was given limited power to afflict the prosperity of Job; that permission extended to the property and children of Job, but not to the body of the patriarch. Satan was not allowed to kill him, and at this time he was not permitted to afflict him personally.
 - c. No doubt it was with gladness that Satan departed from the presence of God, intent on bringing the greatest evil possible upon this great servant of God.
 - d. "God withdraws his protection from Job's possessions; he does not himself take them away, as Satan had suggested (ver. 11); but he allows Satan, who can do nothing without his allowance, to deal with them as he pleases. As God dispenses blessings through the angelic host (Ps 91:11,12; Heb 1:14), so he, sometimes at any rate, allows spirits of evil to be the ministers of his chastisements....The person of Job was not to be touched as yet. He was to be injured only in his belongings. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord. Having obtained a permission which he thought would serve his purpose, Satan did not delay, but promptly departed, to take advantage of the permission given him. To be in the presence of God must be an intense pain to the evil one" (Pulpit Commentary, PC Study Bible).

C. Job 1:13-22: Job's Integrity is Tested by the Loss of his Livestock and Children.

1. Verse 13: “And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house.”
 - a. The report of the great disasters that were about to fall upon Job is preceded by this statement about the children of the great man. The point seems to be to show that everything in his life was wonderful and happy; his children were enjoying each other's company in a feast; Job's flocks and herds were abundant; Job and his wife undoubtedly were happy and comfortable. There was not a discernible cloud on the horizon.
 - b. This verse also shows that the disasters were very close together. While his children were feasting, the heavy hand of Satan fell upon Job's livestock; before the feast was over, they were slain by the force of a great wind from the wilderness.
 - 1) Job was soon to feel the same pain as is described in Isaiah 21:4: "My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me."
 - 2) The harsh reports came in such rapid succession that Job did not have time to compose himself before the next appeared.
 - 3) “The children of God are often in heaviness through manifold temptations; deep calls to deep; waves and billows come one upon the neck of another. Let one affliction therefore quicken and help us to prepare for another; for, how deep soever we have drunk of the bitter cup, as long as we are in this world we cannot be sure that we have drunk our share and that it will finally pass from us” (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible)..
 - c. We are told that Job's children were feasting and drinking wine. We are not specifically told whether the wine was intoxicating or non-intoxicating; the same word is used to identify both, with the context indicating which. If this was a drunken feast they were having, they died in that state, making their deaths far more severe for the father. How much better it would have been for him (and them) if they had died while praying!
 2. Verses 14-15: “And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”
 - a. Satan was very efficient in doing this dastardly deed. Notice that the Sabeans were entirely successful in making this raid against Job's oxen and donkeys. They slew all the servants except one—he needed one left alive to bring the bad news to Job.
 - b. Who were the Sabeans? “Sheba” is presumed to be a root word for “Sabeans.” Some have suggested that they were descendants of Abraham through Keturah; one grandson is named Sheba, which is presumed to be sire of the Sabeans (Gen. 25:1-4). It is unlikely that this is their identity, since Job must have lived in close proximity to the time of Abraham, and there may not have been time for the descendants of Sheba to have multiplied into enough numbers to make such a raid. However, we read the name “Sheba” in Genesis 10:7,28: "And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan....And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba." It is unimportant to the story to identify just who these Sabeans were; the point is what they did.
 - c. The oxen were plowing and the asses were feeding nearby. The servants were using the oxen to good purpose and the other animals were not idle. Suddenly the Sabeans descended and wreaked great havoc. These murderous robbers fell upon Job's livestock and servants, not because Job was sinful, but because they were evil—and were doing the will of Satan, their master. Satan did not leave this important work for some underling to do, but took care of it personally.
 - d. All of our own personal efforts, attention, skill, and devices can only go so far in protecting out loved ones and our property. "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the
-

LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain. *It is* vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Ps. 127:1-2).

3. Verse 16: "While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."
 - a. Suddenly, before the previous servant had fully completed his report, another servant came, bringing the report that fire had fallen from heaven, consuming Job's seven thousand sheep and all the servants that kept them, except for this one.
 - b. Job could have felt anger at the Sabeans for their evil work, and perhaps seek to recover the lost animals and punish the evil-doers, but what can he feel and do in this present case! "The fire of God has fallen from heaven. As thunder is his voice, so lightning is his fire: but this was such an extraordinary lightning, and levelled so directly against Job, that all his sheep and shepherds were not only killed, but consumed by it at once, and one shepherd only was left alive to carry the news to poor Job" (Matthew Henry, *ibid.*).
 - c. In this case, Satan had been given authority to tap the powers of nature to destroy the property of Job. The fire most likely was lightning produced by some great storm. The damage done was only to the sheep belonging to the patriarch; there is no indication that there was any collateral destruction. His sheep were all quickly consumed by the fire, as well as all the shepherds except one. Fire is often said to devour what it destroys. Herodotus, the Greek historian, reported that the people of Egypt thought of fire as a vicious beast, which eats all it can reach, and dies when it has digested the meal.
 - d. The loss of the sheep was especially meaningful. These harmless animals had long been used in sacrifices to God. Job had undoubtedly used sheep in his sacrifices (Job 1:5). The fire (perhaps lightning) had fallen from the sky, obviously having God as its source; his sheep and shepherds were slain and consumed. It was as if God was telling Job that he was uninterested in his sacrifices.
 - e. "The devil, aiming to make him curse God and renounce his religion, managed this part of the trial very artfully, in order thereto. (1.) His sheep, with which especially he used to honour God in sacrifice, were all taken from him, as if God were angry at his offerings and would punish him in those very things which he had employed in his service. Having misrepresented Job to God as a false servant, in pursuance of his old design to set Heaven and earth at variance, he here misrepresented God to Jacob as a hard Master, who would not protect those flocks out of which he had so many burnt-offerings. This would tempt Job to say, It is in vain to serve God. (2.) The messenger called the lightning the fire of God (and innocently enough), but perhaps Satan thereby designed to strike into his mind this thought, that God had turned to be his enemy and fought against him, which was much more grievous to him than all the insults of the Sabeans. He owned (Job 31:23) that destruction from God was a terror to him. How terrible then were the tidings of this destruction, which came immediately from the hand of God! Had the fire from heaven consumed the sheep upon the altar, he might have construed it into a token of God's favour; but, the fire consuming them in the pasture, he could not but look upon it as a token of God's displeasure" (Matthew Henry, *ibid.*).
 - f. "If the fire of God, which fell upon Job's honest servants, who were in the way of their duty, had fallen upon the Sabean and Chaldean robbers who were doing mischief, God's judgments therein would have been like the great mountains, evident and conspicuous; but when the way of the wicked prospers, and they carry off their booty, while just and good men are suddenly cut off, God's righteousness is like the great deep, the bottom of which we cannot find, Ps 36:6. 4" (*ibid.*).
 4. Verse 17: "While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."
-

- a. The Chaldeans are supposed to have been excellent horsemen, so the Septuagint translates the phrase as “the horsemen” (Barnes). While it is possible for men on foot to round up and drive off the camels, it would seem much easier for this case of rustling on such a grand scale to be done by men on horseback.
 - b. The prophet Habakkuk, who lived many years later, about 625 B.C., wrote the following information, about the Chaldeans: "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a work in your days, *which* ye will not believe, though it be told *you*. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, *that* bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not theirs. They *are* terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle *that* hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it. Then shall *his* mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, *imputing* this his power unto his god" (Hab. 1:5-11).
 - c. It seems that the Chaldeans had a long history of raiding, killing, and pillaging. “The Chaldeans were a fierce and warlike people, and when they were subdued by the Assyrians, a portion of them appear to have been placed in Babylon to ward off the incursions of the neighboring Arabians. In time ‘they’ gained the ascendancy over their Assyrian masters, and grew into the mighty empire of Chaldea or Babylonia” (Barnes, PC Study Bible).
 - d. They came in three bands, perhaps each band rustling a thousand camels. However, the reference may simply be the long-used military tactic of attacking from more than one direction, dividing and confusing the party being assaulted. The stratagem worked perfectly; they were able to slay all the servants (except one) and steal all the camels.
5. Verses 18-19: “While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”
- a. Again, while the previous evil report was being delivered, another servant came with a report of another tragedy. “All this indicates the rapidity of the movement of Satan, and his desire to ‘overwhelm’ Job with the suddenness and greatness of his calamities. The object seems to have been to give him no time to recover from the shock of one form of trial before another came upon him. If an interval had been given him he might have rallied his strength to bear his trials; but afflictions are much more difficult to be borne when they come in rapid succession—It is not a very uncommon occurrence, however, that the righteous are tried by the rapidity and accumulation as well as the severity of their afflictions. It has passed into a proverb that ‘afflictions do not come alone’” (Barnes, PC Study Bible).
 - b. Job’s greatest treasure was his family—especially his ten children. If the tragic loss of one child is devastating to a parent, the agony of the loss of all of Job’s children is beyond comprehension.
 - c. “This was the greatest of Job's losses, and which could not but go nearest him; and therefore the devil reserved it for the last, that, if the other provocations failed, this might make him curse God. Our children are pieces of ourselves; it is very hard to part with them, and touches a good man in as tender a part as any. But to part with them all at once, and for them to be all cut off in a moment, who had been so many years his cares and hopes, went to the quick indeed.
 - 1) “They all died together, and not one of them was left alive. David, though a wise and good man,
-

- was very much discomposed by the death of one son. How hard then did it bear upon poor Job who lost them all, and, in one moment, was written childless!
- 2) “They died suddenly. Had they been taken away by some lingering disease, he would have had notice to expect their death, and prepare for the breach; but this came upon him without giving him any warning.
 - 3) “They died when they were feasting and making merry. Had they died suddenly when they were praying, he might the better have borne it. He would have hoped that death had found them in a good frame if their blood had been mingled with their feast, where he himself used to be jealous of them that they had sinned, and cursed God in their hearts—to have that day come upon them unawares, like a thief in the night, when perhaps their heads were overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness—this could not but add much to his grief, considering what a tender concern he always had for his children's souls, and that they were now out of the reach of the sacrifices he used to offer according to the number of them all....
 - 4) “They died by a wind of the devil's raising, who is the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2), but it was looked upon to be an immediate hand of God, and a token of his wrath. So Bildad construed it (Job 8:4): Thy children have sinned against him, and he has cast them away in their transgression.
 - 5) “They were taken away when he had most need of them to comfort him under all his other losses. Such miserable comforters are all creatures. In God only we have a present help at all times” (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible).
- d. “He [Satan] has no creative power. Fire and storm, by means of which he works, are of God; but he is allowed to excite these forces to hostility against man, just as he himself is become an instrument of evil....Satan is the great juggler, and has already manifested himself as such, even in paradise and in the temptation of Jesus Christ. There is in nature, as among men, an entanglement of contrary forces which he knows how to unloose, because it is the sphere of his special dominion...” (Keil, p.63).
 - e. “The narrative leads us to believe that these things were under the control of Satan, though by the permission of God; and his power over the lightnings and the winds (Job 1:19) may serve to illustrate the declaration, that he is the ‘Prince of the power of the air,’ in Eph 2:2” (Barnes, PC Study Bible).
6. Verses 20-22: “When Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”
- a. Job arose and rent his mantle. The expression “arose” does not necessarily imply that the individual was in a sitting or reclining position, but that he began to take some kind of action. Job rent his mantle—the upper or outer garment, the robe with which we are familiar.
 - b. He shaved the hair off his head. “This was also a common mode of expressing great sorrow. Sometimes it was done by formally cutting off the hair of the head; sometimes by plucking it violently out by the roots, and sometimes also the beard was plucked out, or cut off. The idea seems to have been that mourners should divest themselves of that which was usually deemed most ornamental...” (Barnes, PC Study Bible).
 - 1) Isaiah 7:20: "In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard."
 - 2) Jeremiah 7:29: "Cut off thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast *it* away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath."
-

- c. Job fell upon the ground, prostrating himself before Jehovah. This was a common practice among those people of Bible times; thus they showed their devotion. In this case, the patriarch showed his devotion and his humble acceptance of his condition. In a time of great trouble, Joshua fell upon the ground before the Lord: "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads" (Josh. 7:6).
 - d. He worshipped God. He knew that, despite the awful losses which had so suddenly fallen upon him, that God was just and merciful; he was the only source of strength and hope Job had; and despite the fact that the Lord had permitted these devastations to come upon him, he was still worthy of praise.
 - e. Job stated that he had entered this world, naked and destitute of any material possessions. He knew that he would depart this world, taking nothing with him. "For we brought nothing into *this* world, and *it is* certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). Material possessions can only benefit us in this world; they cannot exist in heaven—heaven is the home of the soul, not of the physical body. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50).
 - f. His reference to returning to his mother's womb is not to be taken as a literal statement. He entered this world through his mother's womb, but he could not return to the same. Nicodemus asked the Lord if the new birth meant that he should enter his mother's womb and be born again (John 3:1-5). But Christ was speaking of a different kind of birth altogether. Job's statement means that, as he entered the world without possessions, so he would leave the world without possessions.
 - 1) Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - g. The patient patriarch observed that God had given and God had removed; and his name is still to be blessed. Having entered the world without any worldly wealth, he acknowledged that God gave him what he obtained; since God gave it, he had the right and power to take it away—and that Job had no complaint. He did not blame the Sabeans or the Chaldeans; he did not blame God for allowing the fire to destroy his sheep or the storm which destroyed his children. Apparently he did not suspect the involvement of Satan in these tragedies.
 - h. This spiritual giant did not sin and did not attribute folly to God (cf. margin); he did not make any foolish charges against God. He did not cast aspersion toward the Almighty; he did not blame the ungodly raiders or the elements; he did not take out his anger on his wife or others. He understood that God permitted this tragedy to occur, and that he must have had good reason. Instead of cursing God, as Satan predicted, Job praised God's name the more.
-

Job 2

A. Job 2:1-6: The Second Heavenly Council.

1. Verses 1-3: "Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause."
 - a. This is a virtual replay of the report of the earlier council. Similar words are used to describe the occasion and the same audience was present. The sons of God were in attendance, God was there, and Satan once again put in his appearance.
 - b. God asked Satan the same question, regarding his activities. Jehovah was not asking for information, for he knew quite well where the devil had been and what he had been doing. The enemy of all men stated that he had been going to and fro in the earth, and had been walking up and down in it. He is an untiring worker! "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Pet. 5:8-9).
 - c. Once again God commended the integrity of his servant Job and asked Satan if he had considered that great man. The Lord stated that Job still retained his faithfulness to God, even though Satan had sought to destroy him. Satan has asserted that Job was faithful to God only because God has blessed him with great possessions (Job 1:9-11). His charge was that Job's faith was shallow, and would only last as long as the blessings continued. God had allowed Satan to tear Job's possessions from him, even to kill his children, yet Job remained devoted to God. His faith toward God was far greater than the material wealth with which he had been blessed. The Father called Satan's attention to this fact.
2. Verses 4-6: "And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he *is* in thine hand; but save his life."
 - a. The devil is never without the ability to make some kind of charge. In reply to God's statement about Job's continuing obedience, Satan said in effect that Job did not love his children and possessions very much, and that he would curse God to his face if the Lord should allow some physical malady to afflict Job. His life, said Satan, was all-important to Job—far more meaningful to him than his loyalty to God. "Afflict his body, and he will turn against you."
 - b. God gave Satan control over Job's physical status, with this proviso: he could afflict him as he would, but he could not kill Job. In a sense, the arch-enemy must preserve Job's life, although he was given power to afflict his body.
 - c. "Skin for skin" appears to be an ancient proverb. "The skin is figurative for *any outward good*. Nothing outward is so dear that a man will not exchange it for some other outward good...a man will sacrifice everything else for its sake. Satan sneers bitterly at man's egotism, and says, Job is willing to part with property and children, because these are mere outward and exchangeable goods, but he will give up all things, even his religion, in order to save his life, if you touch his bones and flesh....A man willingly gives up another's skin (life) for his own skin (life). So Job might bear the loss of his children, etc., with equanimity so long as he remained unhurt himself; but when touched in his own person he would renounce God" (JFB, p.4).

B. Job 2:7-10: Job Retains His Integrity.

1. Verses 7-8: "So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes."
 - a. The disease with which Satan afflicted Job was grievous indeed. It is described as "sore boils." Some commentators have thought the affliction was leprosy or elephantiasis; Clarke thought it might be smallpox: "In the elephantiasis and leprosy there is, properly speaking, no boil or detached inflammation, or swelling, but one uniform disordered state of the whole surface, so that the whole body is covered with loathsome scales, and the skin appears like that of the elephant, thick and wrinkled, from which appearance the disorder has its name. In the smallpox it is different; each pock or pustule is a separate inflammation, tending to suppuration; and during this process, the fever is in general very high, and the anguish and distress of the patient intolerable. When the suppuration is pretty far advanced, the itching is extreme; and the hands are often obliged to be confined to prevent the patient from literally tearing his own flesh" (Clarke, p.29).
 - b. The Hebrew term means "burning sores" (JFB). If the common boil is meant, most of us are acquainted with the pain that accompanies this affliction. Job's condition extended over his whole body—an intolerable state. In the absence of proof to the contrary, we conclude the affliction to be an outbreak of boils, covering the entire body. Its extent is described to be from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head; or as the older ones used to say, "from scalp-lock to bunion." Compare: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isa. 1:6).
 - c. The patient patriarch sat in ashes and scraped himself with a potsherd. The ashes were a token of his grief and suffering; the broken piece of pottery was used to scrape the sores and relieve the itching.
 - d. The disease appears to be described in several passages of the book:
 - 1) It was characterized by boils: "So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (Job 2:7)
 - 2) It itched: "And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes" (Job 2:8).
 - 3) It changed his appearance: "And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven" (Job 2:12).
 - 4) It made eating difficult: "For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters" (Job 3:24).
 - 5) Worms accompanied it: "My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome" (Job 7:5).
 - 6) It caused shortness of breath: "He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness" (Job 9:18).
 - 7) It caused swelling and emaciation: "And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, *which* is a witness *against me*: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face" (Job 16:8).
 - 8) Other side effects:
 - a) It gave him bad breath: "My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's *sake* of mine own body" (Job 19:17).
 - b) Loss of weight: "My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth" (Job 19:20).
 - c) Pain: "My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest" (Job

30:17).

- d) Darkened skin and fever: "My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat" (Job 30:30).
- 9) The affliction lasted for months.
 - a) Job 7:3: "So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me."
 - b) Job 29:2: "Oh that I were as *in* months past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me."
- 2. Verses 9-10: "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."
 - a. Job's "help-meet" did not serve him well with her thoughtless counsel. She advised her husband to curse God and thus bring forth his wrath. In her mind, it would be better for Job to suffer sudden death from God's vengeance than to continue in his present tormented condition. But to curse God would mean he would be guilty of sin; to die in guilt would mean eternal banishment from God—in the eternal torments of *Gehenna*. We have well-meaning folks say over the dead body of a sinner, "He is now at rest." No dead sinner is at rest; he might have escaped from the pain of his fatal disease or injury, but that does not mean he has escaped the punishment of those who die in sin.
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 2) Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
 - b. Job did not heed his wife's foolish advice; rather, he rebuked her for the evil suggestion. He reminded her that we must be willing to receive the good things God offers, but also the difficulties he may send upon us. Job came to see fully the purpose of his afflictions: "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).
 - c. Job rebuffed his wife's statement and maintained his faithfulness to God. In all of these ordeals, Job did not sin with his lips. Under stressful, painful circumstances, it is mighty easy to allow our anguish to express itself in shameful and sinful words.
 - d. Job faced the greatest of all human trials: the loss of his material goods, his children had been taken from him violently, he had suffered the sudden loss of his health, and was stricken with an awful, loathsome, and painful disease, and finally he was burdened with the discouragement his wife offered. He still had the rejection and accusations of his friends to face. Through it all, he maintained his integrity.

C. Job 2:11-13: Job's Friends Come to Comfort Him.

- 1. Verse 11: "Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him."
 - a. The three friends lived in close enough proximity to each other to communicate easily, for they made plans to travel together to visit Job. How they came to be friends with each other and with Job, we are not told; of the exact locations of their abodes we are not entirely clear.
 - b. The purpose of their visit was to mourn with Job over his afflictions and losses, and to offer comfort to him. This was their stated purpose for the visit but, as we shall see, they added to his troubles by charging him with sin.

- c. “It is not to be supposed that Job had no more than three friends—indeed, Elihu the Buzzite appears later on as one of his friends (Job 32:2-6)—but he had three contemporaries with whom he was especially intimate, old men (Job 32:6), with whom he was probably accustomed to confer from time to time, and who were in the habit of giving him their advice....Some months—at least two—seem to have elapsed between the date of Job's latest affliction and the time of their arrival (Job 7:3). They came every one from his own place. They had separate homes, and probably lived at some considerable distance from one another.
- 1) “Eliphaz the Temanite. There was an Eliphaz, the son of Esau by his wife Adah, who had a son Teman (Gen 36:4; 1 Chron 1:35,36); but it is not supposed that this can be the person here intended. The name Teman did not become geographical until the descendants of this Eliphaz's son had multiplied into a tribe, when they gave name to the portion of Arabia which they inhabited....The Temanites were celebrated for their wisdom, as we learn from Jeremiah, who says (Jer 49:7), ‘Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts; Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?’ Job's friend was probably among their wisest men at the time; and his discourses certainly show a considerable knowledge of human nature. They do not, however, solve the riddle of the universe.
 - 2) “And Bildad the Shuhite. Bildad is a name which does not occur elsewhere in Scripture, neither is there any other mention of Shuhites. Conjecture has identified the Shuhites with the Saccae of Ptolemy ('Geograph.,' 5:15), whom he places in the neighbourhood of Batanaea and Trachonitis. But the Saccae are unheard of till Ptolemy's time, and seem to be a tribe of very small importance. Perhaps Bildad belonged to the people known to the Assyrians as the Tsukhi, or Sukhi ('Records of the Past,' vol. 1. p. 14), who dwelt on the Middle Euphrates from about Anah to Hit ('Ancient Monarchies,' vol. 2. pp. 66, 67).
 - 3) “And Zophar the Naamathite. Zophar, or rather Tsophar, is another unknown name. There was a Naamah, a city, in south-western Judaea (Josh 15:41), to which Zophar may have belonged, though probably a region, rather than a city, is here intended. For they had made an appointment together; or, agreed together, by message or letter probably. To come to mourn with him and to comfort him. A good intention, at any rate, and one agreeable to the apostolic injunction to us to ‘weep with them that weep’ (Rom 12:15). That they failed to carry out their intention (Job 16:2; 21:34) was owing to a want of judgment, and, perhaps, in part, to a want of love.” (Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by BibleSoft).
2. Verse 12: “And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.”
- a. Job was likely sitting outside his house—in mourning and misery (cf. 2:8). As his friends approached, they could see someone but did not recognize him. Job was disfigured by the affliction and covered by ashes that they did not immediately know him.
 - b. When they perceived that this miserable person was Job, they raised their voice in weeping and lamentation. They tore their mantles and cast dust upon their heads. “They threw violently ashes upwards, that they might fall on their heads and cover them. Indication of the deepest mourning (Josh. 7:6; Acts 22:23)” (JFB, p.). Other passages report similar actions by other people:
 - 1) Joshua 7:6: "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads."
 - 2) 1 Samuel 4:12: "And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head."
 - 3) 2 Samuel 1:2: "It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David,
-

- that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance."
- 4) 2 Samuel 13:19: "And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that *was* on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying."
 - 5) Nehemiah 9:1: "Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them."
 - 6) Lamentations 2:10: "The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, *and* keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground."
 - 7) Ezekiel 27:30: "And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes."
 - 8) Acts 22:23: "And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air."
3. Verse 13: "So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great."
- a. The period of mourning commonly lasted seven days.
 - 1) Genesis 50:10: "And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which *is* beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days."
 - 2) 1 Samuel 31:13: "And they took their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days."
 - 3) Ezekiel 3:15: "Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days."
 - b. We are not to assume that they sat on the ground without moving for any purpose for seven days; rather, there would be some movement required by normal body functions. They likely partook of some food and drink during the seven days. "...If they could stay with him one day and one night without speaking, why not seven? Food would be brought them, and they might sleep rolled up in their begeds. The long silence may be accounted for by the fact that 'among the Jews,' and among Orientals generally, 'it is a point of decorum, and one dictated by a fine and true feeling, not to speak to a person in deep affliction until he gives an intimation of a desire to be comforted' (Cook). So long as Job kept silence they had to keep silence, at least so far as he was concerned. They might speak to any attendants who drew near, and they might speak one to another" (The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by Biblesoft).
 - c. The text emphasizes that the greatness of Job's grief was of such magnitude that his friends sat mourning in silence for seven days and nights with him.
 - d. "Their silence is quite understandable. First, they were shocked that this powerful man had been so reduced to a depraved level. Second, they were deeply wounded at his plight and probably just did not know what to say. In fact, they were better comforters in their silence than when they spoke (cf. 13:5). Genuinely sympathetic actions can sometimes speak more than volumes of words. Professor Wray says, 'Words may be like a probe to the wound, when silence would knit the torn edges of grief.' Third, they were confused. They had believed Job to be a good man, but now he is afflicted sorely, and, in view of their theology, this has to mean he was a sinner. Their confidence in Job's goodness had been shaken to the core!" (Jackson, p.25).
-

Job 3

Job Offers His Lament

A. Job 3:1-10: Job's Lament.

1. Verses 1-3: "After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day. And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a man child conceived."
 - a. To *open the mouth* is a common Hebrew idiom, denoting to begin to speak (cf. Matt. 5:2). We are told here that Job opened his mouth to speak, breaking the seven-days' silence that had prevailed since his friends arrived.
 - b. Job's speech is described as a curse. The patient patriarch did not curse God, as Satan had predicted, but he did set forth before his friends a fervent lament regarding the day of his birth. To curse his day means that he held the day of his birth in contempt, despising the fact that he was ever born.
 - c. The lament grew out of the pain of his tragic losses and the agony of his ruined health. The affliction of the sore boils brought upon him by the devil was grievous indeed (see comments under Job 2:7-8). His words were not intended as a reproach toward God, and certainly did not represent a curse thrown toward God. It was the natural mourning of a terribly afflicted man who bemoans the fact that he was ever born; he is not so depressed and desperate that he is willing to take his own life, but he did wish here that he had never entered the world, and thus to have missed the miseries of his present state.
 - d. He deplored the occasion when it was announced that a man-child was conceived. Barnes quotes an Arab who died near Damascus in 1258 A.D., after the crusaders had desolated his country and brought misery upon him: "O that my mother had remained unmarried all the days of her life! That God had determined no lord or consort for her! O that when he had destined her to an excellent, mild, and wise prince, she had been one of those whom he had created barren; that she might never have known the happy intelligence that she had borne a man or woman! Or that when she had carried me under her heart, I had lost my life at my birth; and if I had been born, and had seen the light, that, when the congratulating people hastened on their camels, I had been gathered to my fathers" (p.126).
 - e. "The sense of this expression in Job is plain. He wished there never had been such a day, and then he would not have been born. It is impossible to vindicate these expressions in Job and Jeremiah [20:14-16], unless it be on the supposition that it is highly wrought poetic language, caused by sorrow so acute that it could not be expressed in prose" (Barnes, p.125).
 - f. Job lived during the relatively unenlightened age of the patriarchs, insofar as revelation is concerned. Not much had been revealed to the ancients, not nearly as much as we have in the full revelation of the New Testament. Job's spiritual understanding does not reflect the depth of information that we have under Christ (Eph. 3:1-11).
 - 1) Matthew 13:14-17: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."
 - 2) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

- 3) 1 Peter 1:10-12: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."
2. Verses 4-10: "Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it. *As for* that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months. Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein. Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning. Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but *have* none; neither let it see the dawning of the day: Because it shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes. "
- a. Job's curse on the day of his birth is amplified in this passage. He desired that that day be in darkness and that God would not bring light upon it. "The meaning is exactly the same with our expression, 'Let it be blotted out of the calendar.' However distinguished it may have been, as the birthday of a man once celebrated for his possessions, liberality, and piety, let it no longer be thus noted; as he who was thus celebrated is now the sport of adversity, the most impoverished, most afflicted, and most wretched of human beings....If it must be a part of *duration* let it not be distinguished by the light of the sun" (Clarke, p.31).
- b. Job thought that it would have been better not to have been born at all, than to have been born to have the trouble and misery which he now endured. Compare the following passages:
- 1) Jeremiah 20:14-18: "Cursed *be* the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed *be* the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad. And let that man be as the cities which the LORD overthrew, and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide; Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb *to be* always great *with me*. Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?"
- a) But think of the results if Jeremiah had not been born. We would not have the benefit of his marvelous writings, and the nation of Judah would not have had the advantages his work provided them. Every faithful Christian has a corresponding good effect on his generation.
- b) The highly fictional experiences of George Bailey, the main character of the classic movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, amply illustrates this point. In this tale of fiction, the main character reaches a point in trouble that he thinks it would have been better had he not been born. Miraculously, he was given his wish—suddenly he and all of his influences were completely removed from the earth and from the memory of all those who knew him. George had saved his younger brother when they were young; the younger brother had grown up to be the World War II, in which he saved the lives of a group of people. Since George had not been, his brother died at an early age; because he died, he was not alive to save those people had saved. Each loyal child of God has a great effect on society and especially on those people who are close to him. Think of the great hole that would be left in our generation if you had not been born!
- 2) Matthew 26:24: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." As far as Judas personally was concerned, it would have been better had he not been born, rather than to so-live
-

as to obtain the penalty of *Gehenna*.

- c. "Job recognizes that his wish, that the day should perish utterly, is vain, and limits himself now to the possible. Let not God regard it from above; i.e. let not God, from the heaven where he dwells, extend to it his protection and superintending care....The shadow of death' ...is a favourite expression in the Book of Job, where it occurs no fewer than nine times. Elsewhere it is rare, except in the Psalms, where it occurs four times....Let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it. The hot, stifling 'blackness' of the *khamzin* wind is probably meant, which suddenly turns the day into night, spreading all around a thick lurid darkness. When such a wind arises, we are told, 'The sky instantly becomes black and heavy; the sun loses its splendour, and appears of a dim violet hue; a light, warm breeze is felt, which gradually increases in heat till it almost equals that of an oven. Though no vapour darkens the air, it becomes so grey and thick with the floating clouds of impalpable sand, that it is sometimes necessary to use candles at noonday' (Russell, 'Ancient and Modern Egypt,' p. 55)....Job wishes the day of his birth and the night of his conception to be utterly blotted out from the calendar; but, aware that this is impossible, he subsides into a milder class of imprecations.
- 1) "Lo, let that night be solitary; or, sterile; 'let no one be born in it.' Let no joyful voice come therein; literally, no song....
 - 2) "Let them curse it that curse the day....'Let those desperate men curse it who are in the habit of cursing their day,' like Job himself (Job 3:1) and Jeremiah (Jer 20:14)....
 - 3) "Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; i.e. 'let not even the light of a star illuminate the morning or evening twilight of that night; let it be dark from beginning to end, uncheered even by the ray of a star.' Let it look for light, but have none. Again a personification. The night is regarded as consciously waiting in hope of the appearance of morning, but continually disappointed by the long lingering of the darkness.
 - 4) "Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb....By a stretch of imagination, the night is supposed to have power to open or shut wombs, and is blamed for not having shut up the womb in which Job was conceived. Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes; i.e. 'and did not so prevent all the sorrows that have befallen me" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by BibleSoft).

B. Job 3:11-19: Job Raises Some Searching Questions.

1. Verses 11-12: "Why died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?"
 - a. But Job had been conceived; there was no changing that fact of history. The patriarch finds the answer to the dilemma by saying even though he had been conceived, why had he not died before birth! And in the process of being born, why did he not give up the ghost during that ordeal!
 - b. Why was his life preserved even after the birth process? Why was he born and received with joy upon the knees of his parents?
 - 1) Genesis 48:12: "And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth."
 - 2) Genesis 50:23: "And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third *generation*: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees."
 - 3) Isaiah 66:12: "For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees."
- c. Why did the knees *prevent* me? The word prevent is the old English word for "anticipate." At birth, the infant is placed in the lap of the mother or the nurse. "The sense, is, that if he had not been

delicately and tenderly nursed, he would have died at once. He came helpless into the world, but for the attention of others he would have soon died” (Barnes, p.132). The mother of the new born anticipates the needs of her infant, and takes prompt and proper notice of its needs. Job asks, “What did I receive such good care if my fate was to descend into my present misery?”

2. Verses 13-16: “For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest, With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves; Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver: Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants *which* never saw light.”
 - a. His lying still and being quiet is a reference to sleeping the sleep of death. In that case, he would be at rest, having avoided the troubles of his present case. In death, he would be beyond the reach of the wicked and be in a state of rest. In death, even the prisoners are at rest; the small and great are there. There is no hint of suicide from Job; he merely wished that he had not been born or had died in infancy.
 - b. He would be akin to kings and other great men. They had built for themselves great palaces, but these proved to be ruins.
 - 1) “Job had been an eminently rich man; a man greatly honoured; an emir; a magistrate; one in whose presence even princes refrained talking, and before whom nobles held their peace; chapt. 29:9. Now he was stripped of his honours, and made to sit in ashes. But had he died when an infant, he would have been numbered with kings and counsellors, and would have shared their lot. Death is repulsive; but Job takes comfort in the thought that he would have been associated with the most exalted and honourable among men. There is some consolation in the idea that when an infant dies he is associated with the most exalted of the race; there is consolation in the reflection that when we die we shall lie down with the good and the great of all past times, and that though our bodies shall moulder back to dust, and be forgotten, we are sharing the same lot with the most beautiful, lovely, wise, pious, and mighty of the race” (Barnes, p.133).
 - 2) “The wounded spirit of Job, once a great emir himself, sick of the vain struggles of mortal great men after grandeur, contemplates the palaces of kings, now desolate heaps of ruins. His regarding the repose of death the most desirable end of the great ones of the earth, wearied with heaping up perishable treasures, marks the irony that breaks out from the black clouds of melancholy....The *for themselves* marks their *selfishness* (JFB, p.7).
 - 3) “His simple idea is, that, had he died from the womb, he would have been equally at rest, neither troubling nor troubled, as those defunct kings and planners of wars and great designs are, who have nothing to keep even their names from perishing, but the monuments which they have raised to contain their corrupting flesh, mouldering bones, and dust” (Clark, p.33).
 - c. Wayne Jackson, one of the brotherhood’s finest scholars, wrote the following regarding *Death As Sleep* [pp.30f]: “Job says, ‘For now should I have lain down and been quiet; I should have slept; then had I been at rest’ (3:13). Death, in some sense in the Bible is spoken of as a ‘sleep.’ Jesus, for example, said of Lazarus, ‘Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep.’ Later he plainly said, ‘Lazarus is dead’ (John 11:11,14). Paul wrote of them that had ‘fallen asleep in Jesus’ (1 Thessalonians 4:14). The term ‘asleep’ is used in these passages to describe the state of the *body* in death. Only the body of man sleeps in death. This is revealed in Daniel 12:2, ‘And many of them that sleep *in the dust of the earth*....’ Here, it is clear that: (a) The part of man that is placed in the dust of the ground is that part of him which sleeps. (b) But, it is his body that is deposited in the ground. (c) Thus, it is the body that sleeps in death (not the spirit).
 - d. “In the New Testament the word ‘asleep’ translated the Greek *koimaomai*, which is from the term *keimai*, literally meaning ‘to lie down.’ The Greeks used the word *koimeterion* of a place where

traveling strangers could stop for sleep, and from that word derives our term ‘cemetery,’ a place where the bodies of the dead sleep. Some scholars suggest that the use of ‘sleep’ for death conveys the idea ‘that, as the sleeper does not cease to exist while his body sleeps, so the dead person continues to exist despite his absence from the region in which those who remain can communicate with him, and that, as sleep is known to be temporary, so the death of the body will be found to be....’ [Vine, Vol. I, p.81]. It must be remembered that the Old Testament understanding of death was not nearly as full as the later New Testament revelation.”

3. Verses 17-19: “There the wicked cease *from* troubling; and there the weary be at rest. *There* the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant *is* free from his master.”
 - a. In death, there is nothing that the wicked can do to Job. They are powerless over him now. In death, those who are weary are at rest. Job is simply expressing the better condition he would experience if he were now dead. There, the prisoner and the slave are released from their earthly toils and bonds. The small and the great are equal, for none of earth’s standards are in effect there. The barriers of wealth, social standing, race, nationality, beauty, intelligence, or education are not recognized there.
 - b. “For Job, death was principally an escape from earth’s miseries—even for a godly man such as himself. How much more thrilling is the glorious concept of the greater New Testament revelation that in death there is a *blissful rest* from life’s toils. ‘And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed *are* [happy] the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow with them’(Revelation 14:13)” (Jackson, p.30).
 - c. Clarke cites an ancient source [*Seneca ad Marciam*, cap. 20] giving this depiction of death: “Death, in spite of the master, manumits the slave. It loosens the chains of the prisoners. It brings out of the dungeon those whom impotent authority had forbidden to go at large. This is the state in which none is sensible of his humiliation. Death obeys no man. It does nothing according to the will of another. It reduces, by a just law, to a state of equality, all who in their families and circumstances had unequal lots in life” (p.34).
 - d. 1 Corinthians 15:50-58: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

C. Job 3:20-26: The Mystery of Suffering.

1. Verses 20-23: “ Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul; Which long for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures; Which rejoice exceedingly, *and* are glad, when they can find the grave? *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?”
 - a. Job asks the question of why is light [life] given to one who is living in misery and is in bitterness of soul? The word *light* is used in parallel with the word *life* in the second part of the verse.
 - b. The patriarch’s desire for death is greater than the treasure-seeker’s wish to find hidden treasure. But death does not come! Paul desired to obtain his eternal reward, but not at the expense of his brethren:

"For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:21-23).

- c. Our desire is to be more righteous and to have the eternal riches of heaven.
 - 1) Matthew 5:6: "Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."
 - 2) Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
- d. "Earlier, Satan had charged that the man of Uz served God selfishly because the Lord had 'made a hedge' of blessings about him. Now, with the same term, Job complains that God has *hedged him in with suffering!*" (Jackson, p.31).
 - 1) "The meaning here is, that God had surrounded him as with a high wall or hedge, so that he could not move freely. Job asks with impatience, why light, i.e., life, should be given to such a man? Why should he not be permitted to die? This closes the complaint of Job, and the remaining verses of the chapter contain a statement of his sorrowful condition, and the fact that he had now been called to suffer all that he had ever apprehended" (Barnes, p.137).
 - 2) Compare Jeremiah's statement: "He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer. He hath enclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked" (Lam. 3:7-9).
2. Verses 24-26: "For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters. For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."
 - a. The statement of verse 24 may have reference to the patriarch's loss of appetite. Or, the reference might be to the regularity of the pain—the pain is as regular as his meals (cf. ASV fn). His roarings [groanings] flow as freely as water. "The word translated 'roaring' is used primarily of the roar of a lion (Zech 11:3; comp. Amos 3:8); secondarily, of the loud cries uttered by men who suffer pain (see Ps 22:1; 32:4)" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - b. He states that his worst fears have been realized.
 - 1) "He probably means that as difficulties began to assault him, he commenced to fearfully suspect that others were on the way—and he was not wrong; he was inundated with heartache" (Jackson, pp.31f).
 - 2) "While I was in prosperity I thought adversity might come, and I had a dread of it. I feared the loss of my family and my property; and both have occurred. I was not lifted up: I knew that what I possessed I had from Divine Providence, and that he who gave might take away" (Clarke, p. 35).
 - 3) "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; literally, for I fear a fear, and it comes upon me. The meaning is not that the affliction which has come upon him is a thing which Job had feared when he was prosperous; but that now that he is in adversity, he is beset with fears, and that all his presentiments of evil are almost immediately accomplished. The second clause, And that which I was (rather, am) afraid of is come unto me, merely repeats and emphasizes the first" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - c. The patriarch states that he was not in safety [peace]. "The sense is, that his mind had been disturbed with fearful alarms; or perhaps that at that time he was filled with dread.... Trouble comes upon me in every form, and I am a stranger wholly to peace. The accumulation of phrases here, all meaning nearly

the same thing, is descriptive of a state of great agitation of mind. Such an accumulation is not uncommon in the Bible to denote any thing which language can scarcely describe” (Barnes, p.140).

- 1) Job 10:21-22: "Before I go *whence* I shall not return, *even* to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; A land of darkness, as darkness *itself*; *and* of the shadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light *is* as darkness."
 - 2) Isaiah 8:22: "And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and *they shall be* driven to darkness."
- d. Regarding verse 26: “Some Hebraists give quite a different turn to this passage, rendering it as follows: ‘I am not at ease, neither am I quiet, neither have I rest; but trouble cometh’ (see the Revised Version, and compare Canon Cook's rendering in the *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. 4. p. 29, ‘I have no peace, nor quiet, nor rest; but trouble cometh). Professor Lee, however, certainly one of the most eminent of modern Hebraists, maintains that the far more pregnant meaning of the Authorized Version gives the true sense. ‘If I rightly apprehend,’ he says, ‘the drift of the context here, Job means to have it understood that he is conscious of no instance in which he has relaxed from his religious obligations; of no season in which his fear and love of God have waxed weak; and, on this account, it was the more perplexing that such a complication of miseries had befallen him’ (*The Book of Job*, pp. 201, 202); and he translates the passage (*ibid.*, p. 121), ‘I slackened not, neither was I quiet, neither took I rest; yet trouble came.’ Job's complaint is thus far more pointedly terminated than by a mere otiose statement that, "without rest or pause, trouble came upon trouble" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by Biblesoft].
-

JOB 4

Eliphaz Speaks

A. Job 4:1-8: Eliphaz Charges Job With Iniquity.

1. Verse 1: "Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said."
 - a. "'The Temanite,' suggests two possible home places: Teman, located about three miles east of Petra in Idumaea; or Tema, some two hundred and fifty miles southeast from Teman. It could have been some unknown place. Although some commentators attempt to give the meaning of the names Bildad and Zophar, and of their nativity, 'the Shuhite' and 'the Naamathite,' the names are uncertain and the locations are unknown. We can conclude that the men were not from the Hebrew race, and that the places from which they came were from outside the country of Palestine. Out of regard for what appears to have been a long established friendship, they came to their friend to comfort him and express their sympathy to his misfortune" (Hailey, p.44).
 - b. It seems clear that the home of Eliphaz is not Teman, the city of the Edomites. Evidence indicates that Job lived during the time of the patriarchs, many years before Esau's descendants founded the nation of Edom (Idumaea), thus long before their city of Teman was established.
 - c. Since Eliphaz spoke first of the three friends, it may be presumed that he was the oldest. His first speech covers chapters four and five.
 - d. Job's three friends had this in common—they each believed that his great sufferings had been brought upon him because of some sin he had committed. This was the only way they could explain the sudden hardships which had come upon their friend.
 - e. They use their speeches in an attempt to convict Job of sin. That they are wrong in this presumption, is seen by the statement of Job 13:1-5: "Lo, mine eye hath seen all *this*, mine ear hath heard and understood it. What ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you. Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. But ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all physicians of no value. O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom."
2. Verses 2-4: "If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking? Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees."
 - a. Eliphaz began his speech with soft words. He spoke with great tact as he first addressed Job, saying that he hesitated to offer counsel to his friend, who was in such turmoil due to the sufferings he was presently enduring. But he cannot, he suggests, refrain from speaking to the point, since he believes Job has offended God in some way.
 - b. He begins by asking Job whether he would be offended if he should bring up some disconcerting subject. "Will it be offensive to you, or weary you, or tire your patience?...Here it is the language of courtesy, and is designed to introduce the subsequent remarks in the kindest manner. Eliphaz knew that he was about to make observations which might implicate Job, and introduced them in as kind a manner as possible. There is nothing abrupt or harsh in his beginning. All is courteous in the highest degree, and is a model for debaters" (Barnes, Vol. 1, p.142).
 - c. The man from Teman refers to the help Job had offered to others in the past, for which he was to be commended. He had instructed many, given strength to those who were faltering, had upheld those who were about to fall, and had offered vitality to those with feeble knees. Although he mentions these ways in which Job had aided others, Eliphaz does not identify specific cases. Job's willingness to help others must have been well-known by those who knew him, and is one reason God could describe him with glowing terms.
 - 1) Job 1:1: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and

- upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil."
- 2) Job 1:8: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"
 - 3) Job 2:3: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause."
- d. Job had offered help to others who were undergoing trials and afflictions, showing them how they were to endure them. "This was not designed to be irony, or to wound the feelings of Job. It is intended to recall to his mind the lessons which he had inculcated on others in times of calamity, and to show him how important it was now that he should reduce his own lessons to practice, and show their power in sustaining himself" (Barnes, *ibid.*).
 - e. "If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? rather, If one assay a word against thee wilt thou be angry? Eliphaz feels that what he is about to say will be unwelcome, and, as it were, apologizes beforehand. Surely Job will not be angry if a friend just ventures a word. But who can withhold himself from speaking? Let Job be angry or not, Eliphaz must speak. It is impossible to hear such words as Job has uttered, and yet keep silence. God's wisdom and justice have been impugned, and must be vindicated" (PC Study Bible, Pulpit Commentary).
 - f. If Job lived today and suffered with that same condition of sore boils, where would he be? No doubt he would be in the hospital, possibly in the intensive care unit. Would anyone (doctor or friend) confront a suffering patient in a hospital room like these friends did to Job? Although their intentions at the first were kind and well-meant, their words and attitudes soon degenerated into a verbal assault against a good man.
3. Verses 5-6: "But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled. Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?"
 - a. The calamities that Job had witnessed in others had now come upon him. It is not now a matter of theory, to be discussed indifferently, but has come upon Job directly. "Instead of evincing the calm submission which you have exhorted others to do, your mind is now disturbed and restless. You vent your complaints against the day of your birth, and you charge God with injustice" (Barnes, p.143).
 - b. Christians sometimes fall into periods of depression and weakness. We owe it to ourselves to re-ignite our failing faith, and lift up our hearts to greater strength: "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees" (Heb. 12:12). It is also our happy duty to lift up others who have fallen into sin or whose faith is faltering.
 - 1) Proverbs 25:11: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Solomon exalts the beauty and fitness of the properly spoken word. He describes it as like "apples of gold in pictures of silver" ("net work of silver"—ASV).
 - 2) Romans 15:1: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."
 - c. "A good word, well and wisely spoken, may do more good than perhaps we think of. But why does Eliphaz mention this here? Perhaps he praises him thus for the good he had done that he might make the intended reproof the more passable with him. Just commendation is a good preface to a just reprehension, will help to remove prejudices, and will show that the reproof comes not from ill willThose who have rebuked others must expect to hear of it if they themselves become obnoxious to rebuke" (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible).
 - d. Romans 2:17-24: "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,
-

And knowest *his* will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written."

- e. "Men in deep distress must have grains of allowance, and a favourable construction put upon what they say; when we make the worst of every word we do not as we would be done by" (ibid.).
 - f. Eliphaz uses sarcasm in his remarks. His words do not indicate any real sympathy for Job. The hardness of his words do not reflect genuine affection for his suffering friend.
 - g. "If one has to rebuke a friend, it should be done with great delicacy. Our 'precious balms' should not be allowed to 'break his head' (Ps 141:6). It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled; or, perplexed—'confounded'" (PC Study Bible, Pulpit Commentary).
 - h. In verse six, the two clauses balance each other. The speaker's point appears to be this: "If you [Job] are as convinced of your uprightness as you claim to be, you ought to maintain your trust in God, and ultimately expect full deliverance from your present troubles. If you do not, then it must be the case that your assertion of innocence is empty."
4. Verses 7-8: "Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."
- a. Eliphaz points out to Job that the age-old principle, that we reap what we sow, has application to the present case. God has never punished anyone who was innocent. His point is as abundantly clear as it is blunt. [There is such a thing as providential chastisement. This involves some form of hardship, designed to strengthen a faithful saint—Hebrews 12].
 - b. The principle is true, being stated and illustrated many times in the Scriptures.
 - 1) Proverbs 26:27: "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him."
 - 2) Hosea 8:7: "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up."
 - 3) Hosea 10:13: "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men."
 - 4) Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
 - c. Eliphaz's statement is true, but his application of the principle to Job's case is in error. God does not punish the innocent. However, there are circumstances in this imperfect world which bring hardship upon the innocent. Why do innocent babies suffer? A little child might accidentally get too close to an open window and fall; it might unknowingly touch an electric current and be killed. The innocent are often killed by drunk drivers. Accidents can bring suffering upon the innocent; sinful conduct on the part of others can cause the innocent to suffer. Hardship and trials can be brought upon us by the Lord for the purpose of developing greater strength within us. In such cases as these, the innocent may suffer, but God does not punish the innocent. On the other hand, there are many cases of wicked men who do evil and apparently escape any punishment in this life for their evil deeds. Just because a man is well-blessed with material prosperity does not necessarily mean he is in good standing with God;
-

and just because a man such as Job is suffering great troubles does not necessarily mean that he is being punished for some evil in his life.

- d. Eliphaz over-simplified the problem; other factors were involved in Job's case—factors which were unknown to the speaker. We know the full story, and can understand the cause for Job's sufferings.
- e. Job's friend apparently forgot the case of "righteous Abel" (Matt. 23:35). What evil had Abel done to bring the murderous hands of his brother upon him? Had he never observed a case of a righteous man struggling with adversity? "One would imagine it impossible to attain old age, in the world wherein we live, without becoming convinced by our own observation that good and evil, prosperity and adversity, are not distributed in this life according to moral desert....To account for the sufferings of the righteous, the explanation of 'secret sins' was introduced, and it was argued that, where affliction seemed to fall on the good man, his goodness was not real goodness—it was a counterfeit, a sham....This is what Eliphaz hints to be the solution in Job's case. God has seen his secret sin—he has 'set them in the light of his countenance' (Ps 90:8)—and is punishing them openly. Job's duty is to humble himself before God, to confess, repent, and amend. Then, and then only, may he hope that God will remove his hand, and put an end to his sufferings" (PC Study Bible, Pulpit Commentary).

B. Job 4:9-21: Shall Mortal Man be More Just Than God?

1. Verses 9-11: "By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed. The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken. The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad."
 - a. Eliphaz points out another Biblical truth, that the wicked will be blasted by the power of God; they will inevitably perish. It matters not how strong they may be in this world's might—their power will ultimately be broken.
 - b. In time, the strength of the greatest and most ferocious lion dissipates. In the natural order of things, time is able to bring down the strongest. The laws of nature see to it that material items and entities return to the elements of the earth. If not in time, then certainly in eternity, the wicked will likewise come to nought.
 - c. Job's friend utters truthful words, but he misapplies these principles to Job.
2. Verses 12-16: "Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying."
 - a. Eliphaz tries to brace his allegation against Job by appealing to an alleged vision. "To confirm his views, Eliphaz appeals to a vision of a most remarkable character which he says he had had on some former occasion on the very point under consideration. The object of the vision was, to show that mortal man could not be more just than God, and that such was the purity of the Most High, that he put no confidence comparatively even in the angels. The design for which this is introduced here is, evidently, to reprove what he deemed the unfounded self-confidence of Job" (Barnes, Vol. 1, p.147).
 - b. "'It is in vain,' says Mr. Good, 'to search through ancient or modern poetry for a description that has any pretensions to rival that upon which we are now entering. Midnight—solitude—the deep sleep of all around—the dreadful chill and horripilation or erection of the hair over the whole body—the shivering, not of the muscles only, but of the bones themselves—the gliding approach of the spectre—the abruptness of his pause—his undefined and indescribable form—are all powerful and original characters, which have never been given with equal effect by any other writer'" (Clarke, p.37).
 - c. Eliphaz relates an experience of a very curious and striking nature. He states that he had fallen into a deep sleep. It was at night, a time when we are susceptible to extreme emotions. He couches his

report of this incident in mystical terms. He was in a deep sleep; he heard a scarcely-perceived sound; in the vision, he came awake; he beheld the appearance of a spirit that passed before him; the hairs of his face stood up; he became afraid and trembled; his bones shook with fear. He could not discern the exact form of the spirit, although it paused in front of him; there was silence for a moment before he heard a voice speaking to him.

- d. "Then out of the silence there seemed to come a voice, a whisper, which articulated solemn words. 'Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man,' etc.? Supernatural visitations were vouchsafed by God to many besides the chosen people—to Laban, when he pursued Jacob (Gen 31:24), to Abimelech (Gen 20:6), to the Pharaoh of the time of Joseph (Gen 41:1-7), to his chief butler (Gen 40:9-11), and his chief baker (Gen 40:16,17), to Balaam the son of Beer (Num 22:12,20; 23:5-10, 16-24; 24:3-9, 15-24), to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:28-35; 4:1-32), and others..... Whether a spirit really appeared to him is a separate question. The whole may have been a vision; but certainly the impression left on Eliphaz was that he had had a communication from the spirit-world. The hair of my flesh stood up. Not the hair of his head only, but every hair on his whole body, stiffened, bristled, and rose up on end in horror..." (PC Study Bible, Pulpit Commentary).
 - e. "The vision of Eliphaz is a striking example of the worthlessness of *subjective* 'revelation.' And his application of it to Job, the design of which was to extract a confession of guilt from an innocent man, was totally false" (Jackson, p.36).
 - f. When men are unable to substantiate their claims by objective standards, reason and revelation, they resort to subjective means—a vision, a feeling, an emotional story, an opinion. Whether Eliphaz actually had had a vision is questionable; if he had one, we may be certain that his application of it to Job was wrong. That would repudiate what God had said about this noble patriarch (1:8; 2:3), and is nullified by Job's plain declaration of his innocence and his friends' culpability (13:1-5). Even Eliphaz does not say that the vision had only recently been given him; rather, he places it at some undefined point in the past.
3. Verses 17-21: "Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly: How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth? They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it. Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom."
 - a. The statements Eliphaz attributes to the spirit of the vision are truthful. God is far greater than any mortal man; he is purer than any man; he cannot place full trust in his servants, for even some angels have committed sin. This latter statement relates to the fall of angels, who kept not their first estate.
 - 1) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
 - 2) Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
 - b. Eliphaz's report states that God could not place full confidence in his angelic servants, and even less in those servants who dwell in houses of clay. A man dwells in a physical body—a house of clay. It is comprised of the elements of the earth, and is destined to return to the earth.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:5, 7: "Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.... Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

- 3) 2 Peter 1:12-14: "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."
 - 4) Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
 - 5) Genesis 3:19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return."
 - 6) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 7) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
- c. How much trust could God put in a creature (man) who can be brought down by a lowly insect? Moths can destroy the clothing man designs. Even insignificant items can destroy a man's life. Bacteria can cause infections which can kill us; a small wasp can sting some people, causing their death; a tiny bullet can kill.
 - d. Scholars assert that the creature here called a "moth" may be the "moth-worm." Regarding the moth of the passage, Barnes offers the follow quotation: "There is in Yemen, in India, and on the coasts of the South sea, a common sickness caused by the Guinea, or nerve-worm, known to European physicians by the name of *vena Medinensis*. It is supposed in Yemen that this worm is drunk in from the bad water which the inhabitants of those countries are under a necessity of using. Many of the Arabians on this account take the precaution to strain the water which they drink. If any one has by accident swallowed an egg of this worm, no trace of it is to be seen until it appears on the skin; and the first indication if there, is the irritation which is caused. On our physician, a few days before his death, five of these worms made their appearance, although we had been more than five months absent from Arabia....The worm is not dangerous, if it can be drawn from the body without being broken. The Orientals are accustomed, as soon as the worm make its appearance through the skin, to wind it up on a piece of straw, or of dry wood. It is finer than a thread, and is from two to three feet in length. The winding up of the worm frequently occupies a week; and no further inconvenience is experienced than the care which is requisite not to break it. If, however, it is broken, it draws itself back into the body, and then becomes dangerous. Lameness, gangrene, or the loss of life itself is the result" (Barnes, pp.153f). Whether this is the creature referred to by Eliphaz may or may not be so; but it illustrates the point of the statement—little creatures can be dangerous even to a healthy man.
 - e. "They are destroyed from morning to evening. Human bodies undergo a continuous destruction. From the moment that we are born we begin to die. Decay of powers is coeval with their first exercise. Our insidious foe, Death, marks us as his own from the very first breath that we draw. Our bodies are machines wound up to go for a certain time. The moment that we begin to use them we begin to wear them out. They perish for ever. The final result is that our 'houses of clay' perish, crumble to dust, disappear, and come to nothing. They 'perish for ever,' says Eliphaz, repeating what he believed the spirit of ver. 15 to have said to him; but it is not clear that he understood more by this than that they perish and disappear for ever, so far as this life and this world are concerned. Without any regarding it. No one is surprised or thinks it hard. It is the lot of man, and every one's mind is prepared for it.... They die, even without wisdom; literally, not in wisdom; i.e. not having learnt in the whole course of their lives that true wisdom which their life-trials were intended to teach them" (PC Study Bible, Pulpit Commentary).
-

JOB 5

Eliphaz Continues His Speech

A. Job 5:1-8: The Wicked Fall by the Justice of God.

1. Verse 1: "Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?"
 - a. In view of the weakness of mankind, says Eliphaz, it would be useless for him to call on his fellow-creatures for help. If God could not depend on man, what makes Job think he could expect their help?
 - b. Furthermore, Eliphaz asks, to which of the *saints* [holy ones] could Job turn for help? Some of the angels turned from God (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Would they be any more trustworthy to fill Job's need?
 - c. "Neither angel nor saint can help any man unless sent especially from God; and all prayers to them must be foolish and absurd, not to say impious. Can the channel afford me water, if the fountain cease to emit it?" (Clarke, p.39).
 - d. Eliphaz asserts that Job can call for God's help as loudly as he can, but he can expect no help. His argument is based on the assumption that Job is in sin. God does not hear those who are in sin, thus it would be fruitless for Job to think he could obtain God's help. Job was not being punished for sinful conduct—the book has already established that fact beyond question. But what Eliphaz argues is a Bible truth, that the prayers of sinful men go unanswered:
 - 1) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*"
 - 2) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
 - 3) John 9:31: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."
2. Verses 2-5: "For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one. I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation. His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them. Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance."
 - a. "By way of an alleged analogous illustration, Job is sharply depicted as a 'foolish' and 'silly' man (2) whose family and fortune have fallen victim to his sins (4,5)" (Jackson, p.36).
 - b. The wrath of God will destroy the foolish man, the foolish man being one who is engrossed in sin. Likewise, the indignation of God will slay the silly individual. The KJV has "envy" while the margin has "indignation." Since envy cannot be properly applied to the holy God, and in view of the fact that verse two gives a thought expressed in parallel ways, the wrath of God is equal to the indignation of God. "The wrath of God is manifested only against the wicked and impious; and if thou wert not such, God would not thus contend with thee" (Clarke, p.39). Eliphaz in a blatant way is asserting that Job is in sin, and that his present affliction is a demonstration of the wrath and indignation of God upon his sinful conduct.
 - c. "To confirm the sentiment which he had just advanced, Eliphaz appeals to his own observation, and says that though the wicked for a time seem to be prosperous, yet he had observed that they were soon overtaken with calamity and cut down. He evidently means that prosperity was no evidence of the divine favour; but that when it had continued for a little time, and was then withdrawn, it was proof that the man who had been prospered was at heart a wicked man" (Barnes, p.156).
 - d. Eliphaz says he has seen cases where wicked men were prospering, but from past knowledge, he knew that this prosperity was only temporary, that God would soon destroy it. "I even ventured to pronounce their doom; for I knew that, in the order of God's providence, that was inevitable" (Clarke, p.39). However, there have been many wicked men who prospered throughout their lives and died wealthy

and content. Compare: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid" (1 Tim. 5:24-25).

- e. The point Eliphaz makes here is also made by David: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found" (Psa. 37:35-36).
3. Verses 6-7: "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward."
 - a. The afflictions brought upon the wicked do not spring from the dust of the earth; they do not result from natural causes. Nevertheless, trouble comes upon sinful man. As certain as the fact that sparks from a fire arise, just that certain are the troubles that befall fallen man.
 - b. Again, while the statement is true, the application of the principle to Job by Eliphaz is faulty. The illustration is excellent and graphic, but misapplied.
 - c. "The meaning is that 'since afflictions are ordered by an intelligent Being, and since man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward, therefore it is wise to commit our cause to God, and not to murmur against him....It follows from the condition of our being, as certainly as that unconscious objects will follow the laws of their nature—that sparks will ascend....It is as true now as it was then; for it is still the great law of our being, that trouble as certainly comes sooner or later, as that material objects obey the laws of nature which God has impressed on them'" (Barnes, p.159).

B. Job 5:9-16: The Providence of God Brings to Nought the Counsel of the Froward.

1. Verses 8-11: "I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause: Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number: Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields: To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety."
 - a. Eliphaz offers this as counsel for Job to follow. "Given your condition, Job, the fact that you are now steeped in affliction which you brought upon yourself by your sinful conduct, you ought to commit yourself to God." The speaker has an excellent point, but he errs in thinking that Job's condition was caused by personal wickedness.
 - b. God is described by several excellent statements:
 - 1) He does things that cannot be searched out by feeble man.
 - 2) He does marvellous things without number.
 - 3) He sends rain upon the earth, watering the fields.
 - a) Matthew 5:45: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
 - b) Acts 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
 - c) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
 - 4) He exalts the lowly to positions of greatness.
 - 5) He provides safety to those who mourn.
 - c. Eliphaz is telling Job that he ought to repent, not lament, over his troubles. If he would repent, God would remove his afflictions and troubles. But God has already given us his assessment of Job, that there is not another like him in his generation.
 - 1) Job 1:8: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"

- 2) Job 2:3: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause."
 - 3) Job 42:7-8: "And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job."
2. Verses 12-16: "He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night. But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty. So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth."
- a. "All of these sayings refer to God's particular providence, by which he is ever working for the good, and counterworking the plots of the wicked. And as various as are the contingent, capricious, and malevolent acts of men, so varied are his providential interferences; disappointing the devices, snares, and plots of the crafty, so that their plans being confounded, and their machinery broken in pieces, their hands cannot perform their enterprises" (Clarke, p.41).
 - b. 1 Corinthians 3:19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." As we sometimes express it, the wicked can "out-smart" themselves. Haman constructed a great gallows on which to hang Mordecai; it became the means by which he was executed: "So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified" (Esther 7:10).
 - 1) Psalms 7:15: "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made."
 - 2) Psalms 9:15: "The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken."
 - 3) Psalms 37:15: "Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken."
 - c. "God confounds them and their measures; and, with all their cunning and dexterity, they are outwitted, and often act on their own projects, planned with care and skill, as if they had been the crudest conceptions of the most disordered minds. They act in noonday as if the sun were extinct, and their eyes put out. Thus does God 'abate their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices'" (Clarke, p.41).
 - d. Job 5:15: "But He saves the needy from the sword, From the mouth of the mighty, And from their hand" (NKJ). This seems to be a much clearer rendering of the passage.
 - e. Because God intervenes in behalf of the poor, they are given hope. If the rapacious dictators had their full way all the time, the poor could scarcely survive. Hitler tried to exterminate certain classes and nationalities of people, but fell short of his goal. There have been many such rulers through the ages, but God aided the common man. "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10).
 - f. What Eliphaz here says about God are true statements; his mistake was in charging Job with sin, when he did not understand the whole picture.
- C. Job 5:17-27: God's Correction is to be Desired.
1. Verses 17-20: "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening
-

of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.”

- a. The speaker makes some excellent points regarding God’s dealings with mankind. One who sins, and is chastened by the Lord because of it, has reason to rejoice and be happy, when he repents.
 - 1) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - 2) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:5-11: "And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (NKJ).
 - b. The Lord may bring chastisements upon a man, but when the erring man who is being corrected, repents, God will bind up his wounds.
 - c. In six times, the Lord will deliver from trouble; a seventh time will he deliver from evil. This phraseology is reminiscent of other Old Testament statements:
 - 1) Proverbs 6:16: "These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him."
 - 2) Amos 1:11: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever."
 - d. God will deliver the penitent one from famine and the power of the sword. This is not intended as a universal proposition—to be applied in every single instance. It is a general truth, that God will take care of his own, protecting them from evil and harm, providing for their needs.
2. Verses 21-25: “Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin. Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.”
- a. Lying behind these statements is Eliphaz’s belief that Job is being punished for sin; his point in this section is that Job will receive the blessings and protections the Lord can provide—if he will repent.
 - b. The points the speaker makes in this passage are excellent and appropriate. God does indeed take care of his own; he will protect from the evil tongue; there will be no need to fear destruction when war or other calamity approaches; a child of the Lord can be without fear regarding destruction and famine; he can be unafraid of the wild beasts, for they will do him no harm; he can enter his house without fear, and live there in peace and contentment; his possessions will be untouched; he can know that
-

God will also bless his offspring, giving him a great progeny. One of the problems of farmers are the stones which are plentiful in many places; they continually must be removed from the field. But in the situation cited, the righteous man would have no struggle with the stones—he would be in league with them, as though they had signed a treaty to cause him no trouble.

- c. These are the usual cases. But were not Job's children also God's children? Why then were they not protected from the great storm that took their lives? In this and other similar situations, other factors were involved. It was necessary for these tragic results to be had in order for the story of Job to be complete. Think of the great good which countless people have derived from the experiences of Job. Paul, James, and Stephen suffered martyrdom—along with many others. Why did not God protect them? Hardship and tragedy are essential for some good ends to be met.
 - 1) Acts 8:1-4: "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:24-28: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:5-11: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."
 - d. The New King James gives this wording of the passage: "You shall be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, And you shall not be afraid of destruction when it comes. You shall laugh at destruction and famine, And you shall not be afraid of the beasts of the earth. For you shall have a covenant with the stones of the field, And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you. You shall know that your tent *is* in peace; You shall visit your dwelling and find nothing amiss. You shall also know that your descendants *shall be* many, And your offspring like the grass of the earth" (Job 5:21-25, NKJ).
3. Verses 26-27: "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season. Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good."
 - a. Eliphaz assures Job that, if he will repent, he can live out his years and die at an old age. He would be like a shock of grain that has been harvested when it has fully ripened, not before. "Thou shalt completely run through the round of the spring, summer, autumn, and winter of life... (Clarke, p.43).
 - b. "This is a beautiful comparison, and the meaning is obvious. He would not be cut off before the fruits of righteousness had ripened in his life. He would be taken away when he was ripe for heaven—as the
-

yellow grain is for the harvest. Grain is not cut down when it is green; and the meaning of Eliphaz is, that it is as desirable that man should live to a good old age before he is gathered to his fathers, as it is that grain should be suffered to stand until it is fully ripe” (Barnes, p.170).

- c. What Eliphaz has presented is a statement of what he has observed. What he states is remarkable, in view of the fact that he did not have any written revelation from which to draw this information. These men lived during the Patriarchal Age, before even the Mosaic Law had been given. The world was still in a young age. God dealt with people through the fathers of the various family clans.
 - d. It is important to notice that Eliphaz spoke many great truths, but he erred in applying these truths to Job’s case. He was convinced that Job was steeped in sin, which was not the case. We may learn good lessons from what Eliphaz said here, and from the things yet to be presented by Job’s other friends.
-

Job 6

Job Answers Eliphaz

A. Job 6:1-4: The Patriarch Describes his Grief.

1. Verses 1-3: "But Job answered and said, Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up. "
 - a. Job, in his anguish, calls out that his grief might be weighed in the balances. He asks his friends to assess accurately his woeful condition. If they did, they would see that his complaints were justified. "He supposed his friends had not understood and appreciated his sufferings; that they were disposed to blame him without understanding the extent of his sorrows, and he desires that they would estimate them aright before they condemned him" (Barnes, p.171).
 - b. He maintains that his lamentations have not been unjustified or unreasonable. If his afflictions were measured in a balance against his complaints, they would be equal; if they were weighed against the sands of the sea, there would be equality.
 - c. Job describes his words as having been swallowed up. We might express this thought as our being choked-up with grief, or that our sorrows were too great to be expressed in words. There are occasions when our grief is so intense and immense that we lose out ability to describe them. "Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak" (Ps. 77:4).
 - d. Many scholars translate the word "swallowed up" as "rash." It is translated *rash* in the ASV and the NKJ. Barnes thinks the KJV has the correct translation, and cites these verses [which use the Hebrew word] as evidence:
 - 1) Job 39:30: "Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain *are*, there *is* she."
 - 2) Proverbs 20:25: "*It is* a snare to the man *who devoureth that which is holy*, and after vows to make inquiry."
 - 3) Obadiah 16: "For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, *so* shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been."
2. Verse 4: " For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me."
 - a. The great man describes his afflictions as having been brought upon him by poisoned arrows, directed by the Almighty. His troubles are greater than those caused by mere mortals. Therefore, being assailed by divine powers, his lamentations are justified. The arrows of God had sapped his strength.
 - b. "He here compares his afflictions with being wounded with poisoned arrows. Such arrows were not unfrequently used among the ancients. The object was to secure certain death, even where the wound caused by the arrow itself would not produce it. Poison was made so concentrated, that the smallest quantity conveyed by the point of the arrow would render death inevitable" (Barnes, p.172).
 - c. Those who were assaulted by the powerful weapons of men have reason to lament; how much more so those who receive the awesome afflictions that come from God.

B. Job 6:5-13: The Loss of Hope.

1. Verses 5-7: "Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder? Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg? The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat."
 - a. He excuses his lamentations on the basis of the wild ass, who raises his complaints only when he is in need; he does not bray when there is plenty of food. The same with the ox. Job's complaints were
-

- just as natural as those of the wild or tame animal who is hungry.
- b. Unseasoned food is not tasty. It is necessary to add salt to give flavor to certain food items. If the proper seasoning is not put in the food, the diner is apt to complain. If one could complain about his food, why should not Job complain about his afflictions?
 - c. Is there any taste in the white of an egg? The part of the egg that is tasty is the yolk. One who was fed a diet consisting only of the white of an egg would likely raise a complaint over his food. Again, Job has reason to voice complaint in his afflictions.
 - d. In verse seven, the patriarch's point seems to be: "His sorrows were as sickening to him as the articles of food which he had mentioned were to the stomach" (Barnes, p.173).
2. Verses 8-13: "Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off! Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One. What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life? Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass? Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?"
- a. Job expressed the desire that God would grant him a request, namely that he would die. His condition was so miserable and painful that he could hardly bear it. Each moment of each hour of each day was so filled with discomfort as to make life undesirable.
 - b. "This state of feeling is not uncommon—where sorrows become so accumulated and intense that a man desires to die. It is not evidence, however, of a preparation for death. The wicked are more frequently in this state than the righteous. They are overwhelmed with pain; they see no hope of deliverance from it and they impatiently wish that the end had come. They are stupid about the future world, and either suppose that the grave is the end of their being, or that in some undefinable way they will be made happy hereafter....Such sometimes were Job's feelings; but here, as in some other instances, no one can doubt that he was betrayed into unjustifiable impatience under his sorrows, and that he expressed an improper wish to die" (Barnes, p.173).
 - c. The patriarch desires that God should "loose his hand and cut me off." The picture may be that of God's hand being restrained (bound); if that is the imagery, Job is asking that God remove the restraint and smite him to death. Possibly the picture is one of an archer, whose hand is still on the arrow fitted to the bowstring; this would depict God being ready to turn loose the arrow that would end Job's life. Another picture that comes to this scribe's mind is that of God holding Job by the hand; if this is the case, Job is asking God to turn loose and let him perish.
 - d. He speaks in verse ten of having hope if God would "cut him off" (vv. 8-9). "The expectation that he will speedily make an end of me would cause me to rejoice with the great joy....To know that I should shortly have an end put to my miseries would cause me to endure the present with determinate resolution. Let him not spare—let him use whatever means he chooses, for I will not resist his decree; he is holy, and his decrees must be just" (Clarke, p.44).
 - e. In verse eleven, the sage speaks of his strength as being well nigh spent; that he had no reasonable prospect of improvement. "I am neither a rock, nor is my flesh brass, that I can endure all these calamities. This is a proverbial saying, and exists in all countries. Cicero says...'For man is not chiseled out of rock, nor hewn out of the oak; he has a body and he has a soul; the one is actuated by intellect, the other by the senses'" (ibid., p.45).
 - f. Verse thirteen is difficult to grasp. It appears that the point could be better rendered as an affirmative or an exclamation, not as a question.
 - 1) As Barnes expressed it, the sense is, "Alas! There is no help in me....I have no strength; I must give up under these sorrows in despair" (ibid.). Perhaps he is saying that the only help he has is what
-

he can provide for himself, and his strength has virtually disappeared.

- 2) “Job’s disappointment in his friends and his hurt at their response to his condition are keenly affirmed in this strophe. He saw himself as one ready to faint (‘inwardly melting’), despairing of any hope for recovery. Therefore, out of a sense of loyalty to a former relationship, his friends should have shown him sympathy and kindness. His calamities should cause no break between him and them. How virulent must a sin be considered in the mind of a friend for it to drive him from sympathy and compassion toward one who has been close and dear to him? Job had not forsaken the fear of the Almighty, but even if he had, would that justify the friends’ conduct?” (Hailey, p.74).

C. Job 6:14-31: Job’s Assessment of his Friends.

1. Verses 14-16: “To him that is afflicted pity should be showed from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty. My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away; Which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid.”
 - a. “Job now reproaches his friends for not having shown him proper kindness, especially at a time when his faith has been sorely tested (14). They have been like winter brooks, which promise much refreshment but dry up when needed most. Deceitful indeed have they been, and of no help; in fact they have been terrified of him (15-21). Macbeath says that ‘Never was there a more biting exposure of *fair weather friends*.’ Job points out that he had asked no financial assistance of them (22,23), but surely he ought to have received some spiritual and emotional aid from them” (Jackson, p.37).
 - b. Job’s friends have offered him no real support; they have tried to blacken his name and undermine his confidence. “Their hand became the heavier, because they supposed the hand of God was upon him” (Clarke, p.45). Job had looked to them for comfort and encouragement, but was denounced by them as a sinful man, who had incurred the wrath of God because of unrighteousness. They showed him no pity, as they ought to have done.
 - c. *But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.* “This may be either understood as referring to the language which Job says they had used of him—charging him with forsaking the fear of God, instead of consoling him; or it may mean that they had forsaken the fear of God in reproaching him, and in failing to comfort him; or it may mean that if such kindness were not shown to a friend in trial, he would be left to cast off the fear of God” (Barnes, p.178).
 - d. Job had looked to his brethren (the three friends who had come to comfort him) for the comfort their visit was intended to offer. When they heard his lamentation, they took that as an indication of weak faith, if not an abandonment of faith; the horrible afflictions he suffered meant, in their feeble way of reasoning, that he was being punished for some good reason; his complaints of chapter three they took to be evidence of his spiritually-depraved condition. Job reproves their lack of kindness, saying they had dealt with him deceitfully; a winter brook seems to be an unending source of water, but when summer arrives, the water in the brook disappears. “He represents the waters as being sometimes suddenly frozen, their foam being turned into the semblance of snow or hoar-frost: when the heat comes, they are speedily liquefied; and the evaporation is so strong from the heat, and the absorption so powerful from the sand, that they soon disappear” (Clarke, p.46).
2. Verses 17-20: “What time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place. The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish. The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them. They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.”
 - a. Job continues the thought of the preceding verses. He describes the deceitfulness and instability of his friends as a winter stream; it appears to give promise of much good water for the summer, but when hot weather returns, the water of the stream grows warm and evaporates; the channel through which the stream formerly sped is now dry; it is like a stream that has been diverted from its bed, leaving the

channel empty of water.

- b. “The caravans coming from Tema are represented as arriving at those places where it was well known torrents did descend from the mountains, and they were full of expectation that here they could not only slake their thirst, but fill their *girbas* or water-skins; but when they arrive, they find the waters totally dissipated and lost. In vain did the caravans of Sheba wait for them; they did not reappear: and they were confounded, because they had hoped to find here refreshment and rest” (Clarke, p.46).
 - c. “The route of the caravans of Tema in north Arabia connected the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Aqaba, therefore, were from east to west; whereas, the route of the caravans of Sheba, modern Yeman on the extreme southwest coast of Arabia, would travel south to north. Caravans from both countries would look to these streams for water as they passed through the desert of Arabia” (Hailey, p.75).
 - d. “There are few images more poetic than this, and nothing that would more strikingly exhibit the disappointment of Job, that he had looked for consolation from his friends, and had not found it. He was downcast, distressed, and disheartened, like the travellers of Tema and of Sheba, because they had nothing to offer to console him; because he had waited for them to sustain him in his afflictions, and had been wholly disappointed” (Barnes, p.181).
3. Verses 21-24: “For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid. Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance? Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty? Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.”
- a. They had offered no consolation to Job; they were helpful in no way; they were as nothing—like the stream that dried up when summertime came. Their coming had held promise of great comfort and hope for Job, but they were empty of anything encouraging.
 - b. They had beheld his low condition, both in material possessions and in physical health. But that did not mean he expected them to provide for his worldly necessities. He raises some direct questions for them to consider. These questions are rhetorical. Did he ask them to bring a gift to him? He had not even asked them to come. Did he ask them to share their property with him? Had he asked them to fight some enemy for Job? He had not asked them to pay the ransom to deliver him from some enemy. He had done none of these things.
 - c. He demands that they show him where he has erred. “Teach me!” The implication he leaves is that if they can give rational evidence to prove his guilt, he will quickly make things right.
4. Verses 25-27: “How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove? Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind? Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your friend.”
- a. Job recognizes the strength of a well-constructed argument. Furthermore, he is willing to accept any such argument, even if it proves his guilt. Their carping criticism of Job is unjustified. Much of what these men say is excellent material, but is wrongly applied to Job’s case. He accuses them of making desperate speeches, that reproved him, but were no more substantial than the wind.
 - b. Job accuses his friends of attacking him for lamenting his condition. They did not develop a well-ordered argument which would prove him to be guilty of some specific transgression. Their assaults focused on his laments over his painful troubles.
 - c. ““Will you pass over weighty and important arguments and facts and dwell upon the words merely that are extorted from a man in misery? Do you not know that one in a state of despair utters many expressions which ought not to be regarded as the result of his deliberate judgment? And will you spend your time in dwelling on those words rather than on the main argument?’ This is probably the true sense of the verse; and if so it is a complaint of Job that they were disposed to make him ‘an offender for a word’ rather than to enter into the real merits of the case, and especially that they were
-

not disposed to make allowance for the hasty expression of a man almost in despair” (Barnes, p.182).

- d. Job likens himself to an orphan. He had lost his children, his wife was non-supportive, and his three friends had assaulted him. It was as if he were alone in the world. He accuses these friends of having attacked their helpless friend. He describes their tirades as digging a pit for him to fall into. This is not the work of a friend, but of an enemy.
5. Verses 28-31: “Now therefore be content, look upon me; for it is evident unto you if I lie. Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in it. Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my taste discern perverse things?”
- a. He asks his friends to carefully examine him. Even an inspection of his countenance should reveal to them his sincerity and show that he was not lying.
 - b. He asks them to carefully consider his situation, to see that they had wrongly assessed his plight. Even in that time when no written revelation had been given by God, they should have been able to perceive that prosperity does not prove acceptability before God, and poverty and abject suffering such as Job was now experiencing, does not prove God is against the individual. He asks them to review their conclusions about him.
 - c. Job declares that he is able to discern good and evil, just as the tastebuds can discern flavor in food. He is qualified to know what his spiritual state is; he can know the sincerity of his own heart; he can know whether he has so-sinned as to bring this turmoil upon him. He knows that he is not being punished for sin.
 - d. To the credit of his friends, they continued to stay with Job, and listened to what he had to say.
-

Job 7

Job Continues His Speech

A. Job 7:1-10: The Shortness of Man's Days.

1. Verses 1-2: "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) The NKJ gives this translation: "Is there not a time of hard service for man on earth? *Are not* his days also like the days of a hired man? Like a servant who earnestly desires the shade, And like a hired man who eagerly looks for his wages."
 - 2) The ASV translates the passage in this manner: "Is there not a warfare to man upon earth? And are not his days like the days of a hireling? As a servant that earnestly desireth the shadow, And as a hireling that looketh for his wages."
 - b. Each man is given a period of time on earth, a time of labor and hardship, which inevitably ends in death. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). Each one is "enlisted" for a period of time; each has a term of activity to fulfill; this span of time involves many struggles—and concludes with death.
 - c. As the military conscript longs for the day of his discharge, as the servant looks forward to the time he can sit in the shade and rest, so Job awaits the time of his release from the sorrows and agonies of his present condition.
 - d. "The object of Job in introducing this remark evidently is, to vindicate himself for the wish to die which he had expressed. He maintains that it is as natural and proper for man in his circumstances to wish to be released by death, as for a soldier to desire that his term of service might be accomplished, or a weary servant to long for the shades of evening...The sense is, that the life of man was like the hard service of a soldier; and this is one of the points of justification to which Job referred in chapt. 6:29,30. He maintains that it is not improper to desire that such a service should close" (Barnes, p.184).
 - e. Clarke observes: "Human life is a state of probation; and every day and place is a time and place of exercise, to train us up for eternal life. Here is the exercise, and here the warfare: we are enlisted in the bands of the Church militant, and must accomplish our time of service, and be honourably dismissed from the warfare, having conquered through the blood of the Lamb; and then receive the reward of the heavenly inheritance" (p.47).
2. Verses 3-5: "So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome."
 - a. The patriarch describes his discomfort as unending. At night, he "tosses and tumbles" as he awaits the coming of day. When night is over, his sufferings are just as severe. Compare: "In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see" (Deut. 28:67).
 - b. This cycle has continued for months—which were empty of meaningful living. This suggests that his distress had been in progress for several months, which makes us to appreciate his fortitude even more.
 - c. He describes his flesh as being covered with worms. Apparently, the affliction he had was one which

made it possible for worms to infest. Insects could lay their eggs in the afflicted flesh; before long, these eggs hatched into worms; this repulsive state added perhaps a horrible stench, and certainly was loathsome in its appearance.

- d. Clods of dust formed on his afflicted body. As the boils emitted their repugnant contents, the dust of that dry climate would settle and absorb the moist discharges from the sores. This would tend to promote the infection and increase his misery. The air-borne dust would carry other bacteria. The brief description Job gives us here is an excellent picture of his horrible state.
 - e. He speaks of his skin being broken and loathsome. As the boils enlarged and as he scraped them with the potsherd, the skin would be cracked open and torn, tormenting him the more, not only with the pain, but with its abhorrent appearance.
3. Verse 6: “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope.”
- a. Job describes his life as being like a weaver’s shuttle. “The weaver’s shuttle is the instrument by which the weaver inserts the filling in the woof. With us few things would furnish a more striking emblem of rapidity than the speed with which a weaver throws his shuttle from one side of the web to the other” (Barnes, p.186).
 - b. He sees the days of his life passing quickly away, and each filled with misery. He could doubtless remember the wonderful times before his afflictions came, when life was filled with happiness and good times. These went by too rapidly, and now in his misery, his days are being spent without profit—no enjoyment and no hope. Soon his life will be over—and to what end? The days of his torment did not pass quickly, but undoubtedly were as slow as they were painful; his meaning here is likely to be in reference to the fact that his life would soon be spent, without the enjoyment and happiness he had anticipated.
4. Verses 7-10: “O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good. The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.”
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: “Oh remember that my life is a breath: Mine eye shall no more see good. The eye of him that seeth me shall behold me no more; Thine eyes shall be upon me, but I shall not be. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, So he that goeth down to Sheol shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, Neither shall his place know him any more.”
 - 2) NKJV: “Oh, remember that my life is a breath! My eye will never again see good. The eye of him who sees me will see me no more; While your eyes are upon me, I shall no longer be. As the cloud disappears and vanishes away, So he who goes down to the grave does not come up. He shall never return to his house, Nor shall his place know him anymore.”
 - 3) ESV: “Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good. The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more; while your eyes are on me, I shall be gone. As the cloud fades and vanishes, so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up; he returns no more to his house, nor does his place know him anymore.”
 - b. There is no comfort in this passage for the “Watchtower Witnesses,” who assert that when a man dies, that is the end of him—except for their own members! The passage does not teach that man is only flesh and blood; it does not teach their annihilation doctrine. This will be clearly seen.
 - c. Job speaks of his life being like a wind—it appears quickly and just as quickly disappears. James describes our life as a vapor: "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth
-

away. For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (Jas. 4:13-15). The vapor from a steaming kettle soon disappears; a cloud appears in the sky quickly, and can just as quickly dissipate. So it is with a man's life.

- 1) God is on the scene to behold the appearance of a generation of men, and he is still on the scene to see their departure: "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel" (Judg. 2:10).
 - 2) The writer of a beautiful hymn expressed in a very graphic way the shortness of human life:

"As the life of a flow'r, As a breath or a sigh,
So the years that we live, As a dream hasten by;
True, today we are here, But tomorrow may see,
Just a grave in the vale, And a mem'ry of me"

[Laura E. Newell; G.H. Ramsey]
 - 3) Psalms 78:38-39: "But he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they *were but* flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again."
 - 4) Ecclesiastes 5:16: "And this also *is* a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?"
 - 5) Isaiah 26:18: "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen."
 - 6) Isaiah 41:9: "*Thou* whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou *art* my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away."
 - 7) Jeremiah 5:13: "And the prophets shall become wind, and the word *is* not in them: thus shall it be done unto them."
 - 8) The suffering saint (Job) laments that when his life is gone, he will no longer see the good things of this world—all those experiences and pleasures will have forever passed from him.
- d. In verse eight, Job states that those who had previously seen him, would see him no more. It appears that the second part of the verse is a reference to God, that his eyes would see him, even though he "was not" (as far as men were concerned).
- 1) Genesis 37:35: "And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."
 - 2) Psalms 39:13: "O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more."
 - 3) Isaiah 14:9-18: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet *thee* at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; *That* made the world as a

- wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, *even* all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house."
- e. The shortness of a man's life is likened to a cloud (vs. 9). Again, James speak of life as a vapor that appears for a little time and then quickly dissipates (4:13-14). As the cloud is seen no more once it vanishes, so a man who dies is seen no more—in his former earthly situation. The next verse make this clear.
- 1) Job is not denying the resurrection. In fact, he strongly affirmed the resurrection in a later passage: "If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands" (14:14-15).
 - 2) When he dies, he will descend into *sheol* (hades) and will walk no more among men; his earthly place will forever be empty.
- f. In verse ten, Job states that one who dies (as described in the previous verses) will not return to his house again—his place will know him no more. This is the point that Solomon made: "For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; **neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.** Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl. 9:4-10). Neither Job nor Solomon supports the "Watchtower Witnesses" or other religious materialists! The Scriptures offer not even a semblance of support to their views.
- g. "Job is dwelling on the calamity of death, and one of the circumstances most deeply felt in the prospect of death is, that a man must leave his own house to return no more. The stately palaces that he has built; the splendid halls which he has adorned; the chamber where he slept; the cheerful fireside where he met his family; the place at the table which he occupied, he will revisit no more. His tread will be no more heard; his voice will no more awaken delight in the happy family group; the father and husband returning from his daily toil will no more give pleasure to the joyous circle.
- 1) "Such is death. It removes us from all earthly comforts, takes us away from home and kindred—from children and friends, and bids us go alone to an unknown world. Job felt that it was a sad and gloomy thing. And so it is, unless there is a well-founded hope of a better world. It is the gospel only that can make us willing to leave our happy dwellings, and the embraces of kindred and friends, and to tread the lonely path to the regions of the dead.
 - 2) "The friend of God has a brighter home in heaven. He has more numerous and better friends there. He has there a more splendid and happy mansion than any here on earth. He will be engaged in more blissful scenes there, than can be enjoyed by the most happy fireside here; will have more cheerful employments there, than any which can be found on earth; and will have higher and purer pleasures there, than can be found in parks, and lawns, and landscapes; in splendid halls, in music, and the festive board; in literary pursuits, and in the love of kindred.
 - 3) "How far Job had the means of consolation from such reflections as these, it is not easy now to determine. The probability, however, is, that his views were comparatively dim and obscure. [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
-

B. Job 7:11-21: Job's Complaint.

1. Verses 11-19: "Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me? When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions: So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life. I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity. What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment? How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?"
 - a. Job utters a strong complaint against God in this passage, a criticism he later regrets when he sees the whole picture: "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee. Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:1-6).
 - b. In verse eleven, Job states his inability to keep from speaking his lament. "The idea in this verse is, 'such is my distress at the prospect of dying, that I cannot but express it. The idea of going away from all my comforts, and of being committed to the grave, to revisit the earth no more, is so painful that I cannot but give vent to my feelings'" (Barnes, p.188).
 - c. The patriarch asks if he is like a sea that has to be restrained by God's hand. God exercises control over the seas, lest they break over the land and wash away humanity again. "Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" (Job. 38:8-11). Job wonders whether God considers him so tumultuous that the Almighty must restrain him by the use of the terrible tragedies which have befallen him.
 - d. He asks if he is some animal that must be under guard, ever kept under control. He wonders whether God thinks he is so rambunctious that he cannot be trusted, such as a great sea monster might be. Some commentators view this passage (verse 12) as a reference to the Nile River, which overflows its banks, and to the crocodile, which lives along its banks.
 - e. Job offers the further complaint that, when he figures that he will find comfort if he should go to bed, God gives him terrifying dreams instead of rest. "There is no doubt that Satan was permitted to haunt his imagination with dreadful dreams and terrific appearances; so that, as soon as he fell asleep, he was suddenly roused and alarmed by those appalling images. He needed rest by sleep, but was afraid to close his eyes because of the horrid images which were presented to his imagination. Could there be a state more deplorable than this?" (Clarke, p.49).
 - f. In verses fifteen and sixteen, he bemoans his life of misery, thinking he had rather suffer death than to continue his present wretched existence. "It is very likely that he felt, in those interrupted and dismal slumbers, an oppression and difficulty of breathing something like the incubus or nightmare; and, distressing as this was, he would prefer death by this means to any longer life in such miseriesLife in such circumstances, is hateful to me; and though I wish for long life, yet if length of days were offered to me with the sufferings which I now undergo, I would despise the offer and spurn the boon" (Clarke, p.49). [Incubus: an evil spirit or demon that could cause a nightmare].
 - g. Verses seventeen and eighteen are similar to Psalm 8: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the
-

avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!" From Job's statement, two notions have been expressed:

- 1) Since man is so insignificant in relation to God, why should God have any interest in contending with him? One earlier commentator paraphrased this as follows: "Does man, such as he at present is, merit thy attention! What is man that God should make it his business to examine, try, prove, and afflict him? Is it not doing him too much honour to think thus seriously about him? O Lord! I am not worthy that thou shouldst concern thyself about *me!*" (Calmet, Quoted by Clarke, p.50). David wondered what there was about man that causes God to look with favor upon him; but Job wonders what there is about man that causes God to afflict him so.
- 2) The very fact that God has an interest in lowly man is an indication of the Magnificent love the Almighty has for his offspring. "Man is so insignificant compared with God, that it may be asked why he should so carefully provide for his wants? Why make so ample provision for his welfare? Why institute measures so amazing and so wonderful for his recovery from sin? The answers to all these questions must be substantially the same.
 - a) "It is a part of the great plan of a condescending God. No insect is so small as to be beneath his notice. On the humblest and feeblest animalcula [*a tiny animal usually invisible to the naked eye—bw*] a care is bestowed in its formation and support as if God had nothing else to regard or provide for.
 - b) "Man is of importance. He has an immortal soul, and the salvation of that soul is worth all which it costs, even when it costs the blood of the Son of God.
 - c) "A creature who sins, always makes himself of importance. The murderer has an importance in the view of the community which he never had before. All good citizens become interested to arrest and punish him. There is no more certain way for a man to give consequence to himself, than to violate the laws, and to subject himself to punishment. An offending member of a family has an importance which he had not before, and all eyes are turned to him with deep interest. So it is with man—a part of the great family of God.
 - d) "A sufferer is a being of importance, and man as a sufferer is worthy of the notice of God. However feeble may be the powers of anyone, or humble his rank, yet if he suffers, and especially if he is likely to suffer forever, he becomes at once an object of the highest importance: Such is man; a sufferer here, and liable to eternal pain hereafter; and hence, the God of mercy has interposed to visit him, and to devise a way to rescue him from his sorrows, and from eternal death" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
- h. Verse nineteen has Job wondering how long it will be before God turns his eyes away from him. "The idea here is, that God had fixed his eyes upon Job, and he asks with anxiety, how long this was to continue, and when he would turn his eyes away..." (Barnes, p.192). Job asserts that God will not look away long enough for him to swallow. [He might be meaning by this statement that his sufferings are not removed long enough for him to swallow without pain].
2. Verses 20-21: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself? And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be."
 - a. Other translations:

- 1) Job 7:20: "If I have sinned, what do I unto thee, O thou watcher of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark for thee, So that I am a burden to myself?" (ASV).
 - 2) Job 7:20: "Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, So that I am a burden to myself?" (NKJ).
- b. Job's friends erred in asserting that the sufferings sent upon Job were due to his sinfulness. God states that Job was the very kind of man he wanted (1:8; 2:3). The first two chapters prove that Job was a good and godly man. However, we must remember that he, being a man, was subject to the vagaries and weaknesses all accountable humans have; he was, therefore, capable of committing sin. "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not....Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:20,29; cf. Rom. 3:23).
 - c. In the present passage (Job 7:20), the great man states that he had sinned (KJV). In the ASV and NKJ, the rendering states this as a question—he may or may not have sinned. It is clear from Job 42:1-6 that the patriarch had committed sin; doubtless in the harsh complaints he raised in this chapter. "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee. Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:1-6).
 - d. "Job's confession of sin (v. 20) was not an admission of guilt commensurate with his suffering, but acknowledgment that in his life there could be found sin" (Hailey, p.84). Since [or if] I have sinned, what shall be done about it? In verse twenty-one, Job states that if he is guilty of sin, the Lord ought to take away his iniquity—thus to forgive him and remove from him the terrible misery he is presently suffering.
 - e. Job asks the Almighty why he had set him up as a mark (a target). A target is the point at which an archer would shoot his arrows. The term may be used in a military sense, indicating the point at which an attacking force would direct its primary assault. Job is asking the Lord why he had set him up as a mark toward which to direct his attacks.
 - f. "And if he has sinned, why not forgive him and take away this penalty? Then with a sharp jab the patriarch says, 'I will lie down in the dust, and thou shall seek me diligently, but I shall not be' (21). Essentially, he is saying, 'I'll soon be gone and you won't have me to kick around anymore.' Job speaks disrespectfully and stupidly, but remember he is talking rashly (6:3), desperately (6:26) and without understanding (42:3)" (Jackson, p.38).
-

Job 8

Bildad Answers Job

A. Job 8:1-7: Bildad Accuses Job of Perverting Judgment.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind? Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?"
 - a. Bildad makes harsh charges against Job, claiming that he is full of complaints that are like a strong wind. In his view, Bildad thinks Job is acting hypocritically, asserting that he is innocent of wrongdoing. The Shuhite is convinced that his friend is suffering just punishment for sinful conduct. He demands to know how long Job will continue to proclaim his windy grievances. He reproves Job for justifying himself, but that his words are only a strong wind.
 - b. Bildad asks if Job thinks that God would pervert judgment. In other words, assuming the point to be proved, he asserts that Job is receiving the just recompense of his reward—a just punishment for sin. God does not bless the wicked and assault the righteous. God would not have afflicted Job unless he deserved it, for God does not pervert justice—he does not punish the innocent. The statement about God's justice is correct, but his application of the point to Job is misplaced. The patriarch had bemoaned his sufferings, but he had not charged God with perverting justice.
2. Verses 4-7: "If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression; If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty; If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase."
 - a. Bringing up a very sore point, Bildad intimates that Job's children must have been guilty of sin, or else they would not have been slain. His pronouncement is a mere assertion; he had no knowledge of sin on the part of Job's children. The text does not overtly charge them with sin, when the report is given of their feasts. The word "if" with which verse four begins, means "since." "It was not a supposition that *if* they should now do it, certain other consequences would follow; but the idea is, that since they *had been* cut off in their sins, if Job would even now seek God with a proper spirit, he might be restored to prosperity, though his beginning should be small" (Barnes, p.197).
 - b. It must be amazing to the Almighty how men, based on scant information and many assumptions, will make great proclamations! If Bildad had known what we know, from having learned chapters one and two of the book of Job, he would not have presumed that Job's children were slain because of their sinful conduct; he would know that Satan brought about their death as an assault against Job. There is a grave danger involved in making judgments when we do not possess all the facts.
 - 1) Our judging must be righteous: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).
 - 2) Our judging must not be harsh or hypocritical: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:1-6).
 - c. By alleging that Job's children would not have died as they did if they had been righteous, Bildad added misery and sorrow to the heart of his friend. We are aware of the fact that no accountable person has ever lived above sin (except, of course, Christ—Heb. 4:15). Neither Bildad nor Eliphaz, or their

compatriots, could claim sinless perfection, but they appear to be expecting absolute flawlessness on the part of Job and his children.

- d. In verses six and seven, Bildad says that if Job were pure and upright, God would take notice of his spiritual excellence, and would make him prosperous again. Whereas Job had had a small amount of material prosperity, that would be small in comparison to what God would now give him. That is what happened (Job 42), but Bildad had misjudged the spiritual qualities of Job. Bildad's statement that "if thou wert pure and upright" carries an unwarranted implication. If Job was not presently pure and upright, he must be impure and crooked!
- e. An incorrect assumption (premise) can lead to evil conclusions. Job's friends assumed that God will inevitably bless with material prosperity everyone who is pure and upright, and that he does not long allow a wicked man to have material prosperity. If that premise is true, then the apostle Paul must have been a mighty corrupt man! And what about all those other saints who had their property confiscated, their businesses ruined, their jobs taken away, and suffered terrible abuse?
 - 1) Acts 8:1-4: "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."
 - 2) Hebrews 10:32-34: "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."
 - 3) Hebrews 11:35-38: "Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth."

B. Job 8:8-22: Bildad Urges Job to Examine the Former Age.

1. Verses 8-12: "For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:) Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart? Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water? Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb."
 - a. "Ask the generations which have passed, and who in their poems and proverbs have left the records of their experience. The sentiment which Bildad proposes to confirm by this appeal is, that though the wicked should for a time flourish, yet they would be cut off, and that the righteous, though they may be for a time afflicted, yet if they seek God, they will ultimately prosper. It was common to make these appeals to the ancients. The results of observation were embodied in proverbs, parables, fables, and fragments of poems; and he was regarded as among the wisest of men who had the fruits of these observations most at command. To that Bildad appeals, and especially, as would appear, to the fragment of an ancient poem which he proceeds to repeat, and which, perhaps, is the oldest poem extant in any language" (Barnes, p.198).
 - b. The ones of the former age are the ancients—men who lived up to nine hundred or more years of age. During these extraordinarily long lifetimes, they would glean much knowledge and wisdom, much of

which was passed down to following generations. The truths and lessons learned by Adam and Eve were no doubt passed on to their children; the same with Enoch and Noah. For a time, this good information kept the younger generations in line.

- c. Compared to those ancient worthies, Bildad observes that the generation then present (including Job and Bildad) knew little. The ancients knew many things; they spoke from long experience; their sayings may agree with Bildad and also condemn Job. Compared to their long lives, Job and his generation lived short lives—only a shadow compared to those of the past. With the passing of many years, we may presume that the individual picks up much knowledge and more than a little wisdom—although that is not always the case. Someone, visiting a new community, was abundantly impressed by the fact that one old gentleman had passed the century mark. One who knew the elderly man said, ‘Oh, he ain’t much—all he’s ever done is git old, and look how long it took him!’
 - d. Apparently from these ancient nobles, Bildad derived the gems of truth he now presents. His purpose it to convict Job of sin, using the principle of cause and effect. Plants cannot long survive without water, says Bildad. This is an obvious truth. The point being made is that Job is suffering—why? He is suffering because his sin has incurred the wrath of God. The paths (the ways or activities) of those who forsake God are no more able to endure than a plant can survive without moisture.
2. Verses 13-19: “So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure. He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden. His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones. If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee. Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.”
 - a. The hope of a hypocrite shall perish—it is no more substantial or enduring than a spider’s web. The slightest breeze stirs the web; it can be destroyed with small effort. The hypocrite’s future is no more reliable than a spider’s web. “The hope of the hypocrite is called the house which he has built for himself—his home, his refuge, his support. But it shall fail him. In times of trial he will trust to it for support, and it will be found to be as frail as the web of the spider. How little the light and slender thread which a spider spins would avail a man for support in time of danger! So frail and unsubstantial will be the hope of the hypocrite! It is impossible to conceive any figure which would more strongly describe the utter vanity of the hopes of the wicked” (Barnes, pp.202f).
 - b. Bildad further describes a hypocrite in verses sixteen and seventeen. “The wicked is represented as a luxuriant plant, in a good soil, with all the advantages of a good situation; well exposed to the sun; the roots intervolving themselves with stones, so as to render the tree more stable; but suddenly a blast comes, and the tree begins to die. The sudden fading of its leaves, etc., shows that its root is become as rottenness, and its vegetable life destroyed” (Clarke, p.53).
 - 1) A plant which sends its roots around and amongst rocks is presumed to be strongly fastened to the earth, and appears able to withstand any ordinary force brought against it. The figure would depict a plant that sends its runners through and around a pile of rocks, making it very difficult to extract. But it can still be cut down, pulled up, or otherwise destroyed. A wicked man is pictured as such a tree.
 - 2) “The figure is beautiful. The earth will be ashamed of it; ashamed that it sustained the tree; ashamed that it ever ministered any nutriment, and will refuse to own it. So with the hypocrite. He shall pass away as if the earth refused to own him, or to retain any recollection of him” (Barnes, p.205).
 - 3) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many

- wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).
- c. Verse nineteen apparently is irony or sarcasm. "He boasts of joy, as all hypocrites do, but his joy endures only for a little time. This is the end of it. He is cut down and removed, and the earth and the heavens disown him" (Barnes, p.205).
- 1) "A strong irony. Here is the issue of all his mirth, of his sports, games, and pastimes! See the unfeeling, domineering, polluting and polluted scape-grace, levelled with those whom he had despised, a servant of servants, or unable to work through his debaucheries, cringing for a morsel of bread, or ingloriously ending his days in that bane of any well-ordered and civilized state, a parish workhouse....As in the preceding case, when one plant or tree is blasted or cut down, another may be planted in the same place; so, when a spendthrift has run through his property, another possesses his inheritance, and grows up from that soil in which he himself might have continued to flourish, had it not been for his extravagance and folly" (Clarke, p.53).
 - 2) There is no end of the weeds that spring up in a field, especially Johnson Grass, cockle burrs, or nut grass. In a similar way, there is no end of hypocrites and other wicked men—there is always a new crop ready to spring forth as soon as there is space! How disheartening it must be to the tender heart of our Heavenly Father, to see his offspring fall into the same trap, generation-after-generation. Through history, it appears that every third generation apostatizes. This pattern is repeated several times in the book of Judges. In modern times, in the Lord's church in America, this pattern is evident. In the early decades of the 19th century, faithful men restored the Lord's church in all its purity and truth. The next generation was faithful, but by the end of the War Between the States, an apostasy was well under way; this falling away reached its maturity by the turn of the century. Faithful men preached the truth, and began to make great progress again. Before long, the church had regained its strength again. The following generation was strong and active, but then the next generation saw a repeat of the ages-old pattern—a falling away from God's word. We are presently seeing the final throes of this most recent apostasy—how painful it is to those who love the truth!
3. Verses 20-22: "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers: Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing. They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought."
- a. In the preceding verses, Bildad has brought a scathing denunciation against Job. He is being afflicted because of his evil life; true, he had received great bounties from God, but the sins of a man will surely find him out; Job's blessings were removed when God took action against his iniquity (according to Bildad). This is the attitude Bildad had toward Job—that he was wrong is seen from the overall theme of the book and by several specific statements God made in the book in Job's behalf.
 - b. Bildad assures Job that, if he will repent, God will restore his prosperity, and return to the patriarch the laughter and rejoicing he formerly enjoyed. His enemies will be put to shame and the wicked will be brought to nothing.
 - c. His statement here is that God will not cast away a perfect man and he will not bless a doer of evil. Since Job is being afflicted, that must mean (according to Bildad) that Job is not an upright man. This statement must be one of those Bildad derived from the sayings of the ancients.
-

Job 9

Job Responds to Bildad

A. Job 9:1-10: The Greatness of God.

1. Verses 1-4: "Then Job answered and said, I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand. He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?"
 - a. In Job's response to Bildad, the patriarch shows his desire to plead his cause before God. He again shows his despondency by calling for death, since it appears to be the only means out of his present unbearable situation.
 - b. He acknowledges that God is just and that man is sinful. Bildad had shown that God was just in his dealings with man, and that in those cases where punishment was meted out by the Almighty, he did so justly—the individual deserved his chastisement.
 - c. In effect, Job says: "I acknowledge the general truth of the maxims you have advanced. God will not ultimately punish a righteous person, nor shall the wicked finally triumph; and though righteous before man, and truly sincere in my piety, yet I know, when compared with the immaculate holiness of God, all my righteousness is nothing" (Clarke, p.54).
 - d. If God should bring charges against a man before a tribunal, the man could not answer one charge out of a thousand. Therefore, the man must be judged guilty of the charges. One argument or excuse out of a thousand would not stand up to God's justice. "A man who could not answer for one charge brought against him out of a thousand, must be held to be guilty; and the expression here is equivalent to saying that he could not answer him at all. It may also be implied that God has many charges against man. His sins are to be reckoned by thousands. They are numerous as his years, his months, his weeks, his days, his hours, his moments; numerous as his privileges, his deeds, and his thoughts. For not one of those sins can he answer. He can give no satisfactory account before an impartial tribunal for any of them. If so, how deeply guilty is man before God! How glorious that plan of justification by which he can be freed from this long list of offences, and treated as though he had not sinned" (Barnes, p.208).
 - e. Jehovah is infinitely wise and unlimited in strength—no one could successfully oppose him. Anyone who sets himself in opposition to God will inevitable fail in his efforts and be destroyed. It is against the best interests of any man to oppose God; it is in the best interests of any man to be submissive to God's will.
 2. Verses 5-10: "Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number."
 - a. Job illustrates his former point. God is able to move mountains. Through natural means or by supernatural power, God is able to do what is impossible for man to accomplish. Attributing personality to the mountains, the patriarch states that God could remove a mountain without the mountain knowing what is about to occur. Likewise, the Almighty can bring destruction upon an unsuspecting wicked man: "Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall" (Ps. 35:8).
 - b. Since God formed the mountains of the earth, the earth itself, and the sun and stars, he can do what he pleases—he still has control over them. He has power to keep the sun or moon from rising or from going down; he could hide the stars from view.
-

- 1) He could cause the sun not to go down, as in the long day of Joshua 10:13-14: "And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. *Is* not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel" (Josh. 10:13-14).
 - 2) He could easily cause the shadow to move backward, as a sign to King Hezekiah: "And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz" (2 Kings 20:10-11).
 - 3) Colossians 1:15-17: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and **by him all things consist.**" There is a consistency about the material world; as batter that is properly mixed with the right amount of ingredients will hold together, so the Lord has made the universe so that it holds together.
 - 4) Hebrews 1:1-4: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds...upholding all things by the word of his power...."
- c. God's power is so awesome that he spread out the heavens; and could walk upon the waves of the sea. Indeed, Christ did just that: "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea" (Matt. 15:25). The Psalmist paints a beautiful figurative picture of the Lord, using similar language to that employed by Job: "He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness *was* under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail *stones* and coals of fire. The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail *stones* and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils" (Ps. 18:9-15).
- d. It was by God's great power that the constellations were made. He formed Arcturus (the Great Bear—Ursa Major); he made Orion (the constellation on the equator); he formed the Pleiades. Science has only scratched the surface of the vast knowledge of the universe. Man does not have the means or the time to discover all of this knowledge.
- 1) ORION: "(The strong one)—the name of a constellation, consisting of thousands of stars which is mentioned in the Old Testament (Job 9:9; 38:31; Amos 5:8). The constellation is near Gemini and Taurus, and contains the giant red star Betelgeuse and Rigel, a blue-white star of first magnitude. Most of the stars of Orion cannot be seen without the aid of a telescope" (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers).
 - 2) PLEIADES: "A brilliant cluster of stars seen in the shoulder of Taurus (the Bull). The name Pleiades comes from the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione in Greek mythology. This constellation consists of several hundred stars, although the naked eye can usually see only six or seven. Job declared that God made the Pleiades (Job 9:9) and bound them in a cluster (Job 38:31)" (ibid).
 - 3) ARCTURUS: "(The bear keeper)—KJV translation of a Hebrew word meaning 'crowd,' and referring to a constellation of stars. The NKJV translates the word as "the Bear" (Job 9:9) and 'the Great Bear with its cubs' (Job 38:32)—the 'cubs' being a reference to the seven main stars of this
-

constellation” (ibid.).

- 4) The “chambers of the south” [the Southern Hemisphere?] may have reference to those parts of the sky which were not visible to those living in Job’s region—in the Northern Hemisphere.
- e. The vastness of the universe is an indicator of the even greater wisdom, knowledge, and power of the Creator. It is folly for man to assert that the universe created itself! The earth and its life-forms are beyond man’s feeble ability to comprehend. Nothing can come from nothing. The only logical answer to the origin of the universe and life is God. No wonder that the Bible pronounces the man foolish who denies the existence of God.
 - 1) Psalm 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good."
 - 2) Psalms 19:1-6: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."
3. Space is unfathomable to man's finite mind, and cannot be entirely seen by his most powerful telescopes. The earth is 8,000 miles in diameter; the sun is 864,000; a star near Orion has a diameter of 215 million miles. Arcturus, a star mentioned by Job, is said to be 25,600 times greater in volume than our sun. And Antares is estimated to have a diameter of 400 million miles. And there are even larger stars.
 - a. Our galaxy is 100,000 light years in width. There are a billion or more galaxies. Two-hundred-inch telescopes can see about 1.5 billion light years into space; beyond that, the stars appear as great clouds of light.
 - 1) Job 9:8-9: "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."
 - 2) Psalms 8:3: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained."
 - 3) Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."
 - 4) Isaiah 40:22: "*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."
 - 5) Jeremiah 33:22: "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me."
 - 6) Romans 1:19-22: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."
 - b. No wonder great men of the Bible trembled at God’s spoken word and manifestations!

B. Job 9:11-24: God is Incomprehensible.

1. Verses 11-12: “Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not. Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?”
 - a. The patriarch exalts the greatness of God even more. His nature is such that man cannot see him; a

- spirit being cannot be seen by physical eyesight.
- b. God is a spiritual being. There is nothing material or physical about him.
 - 1) Luke 24:39: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." The apostles thought the risen Lord was a spirit; he gave them proof that they were seeing a flesh and blood person; a spirit has no such body.
 - 2) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - 3) God the Father, Christ the Son [in his eternal state], and the Holy Spirit are all spirit Beings. We do not know what a spiritual body is like. We cannot see any person's spirit with our physical eyes; the physical and the spiritual are entirely different. In heaven, it will be necessary for us to have spiritual bodies in order to fill our role there; physical items and entities are not fashioned for heaven (1 Cor. 15:50). On a much smaller scale, a fish is not equipped to survive on land and man is not naturally equipped to live under water.
 - 4) John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."
 - 5) 1 John 4:12: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."
 - c. God is not only invisible to human eyesight, but when he takes some action, no one can keep him from his intended operation. Job did not know the whole story of his affliction, so he assumed that God was directly responsible for the loss of his property, the death of his children, and the present agonies he was suffering. His statement shows that no one had the power to oppose God in such ventures. No one has the right to force God to give an accounting for his actions.
2. Verses 13-16: "If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him. How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him? Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge. If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice."
- a. If God chooses to pour out his anger against a man, that individual cannot withstand that intention. He will not turn away from his plan of action because of any opposition the man may raise.
 - b. What is the meaning of the clause, *the proud helpers do stoop under him*?
 - 1) "The meaning is, probably, that all those things which contribute to the support of pride, or all those persons who are allied together to maintain the dominion of pride on the earth, must sink under the wrath of God. Or it may refer to those who sustain the pride of state and empire—the men who stand around the thrones of monarch, and contribute, by their talent and power, to uphold the pomp and magnificence of courts" (Barnes, pp.215f).
 - 2) Hailey writes: "Job sees God retaining His anger until its objective or purpose is accomplished, even to the point that 'The helpers of Rahab do stoop under him.' 'Rahab' is defined literally as 'storm,' 'arrogance,' 'a mythical sea-monster' (ISBE, Vol. IV, 2525), evidently a power that produces upheavals in nature, symbolic of evil. In view of this mighty power, 'how much less' shall Job be able to answer one who rules stars, sea, storms, and men? How shall he choose words to meet such a one in discussion? This is beyond his or any man's ability" (p.94).
 - c. Job understands his inferiority to God. He knows that he cannot contend with God successfully. This was powerfully demonstrated by the earlier reference to the vastness of God's creation. If he should offer any argument unto God, Job must use great care in the selection of words.
 - d. If Job had "utmost confidence that I was righteous, yet, if God judged otherwise, and regarded me as a sinner, I would not reply to him, but would make supplication to him as a sinner....The meaning is, that God is a much better judge of our character than we can possibly be, and that his regarding us as sinners is the highest proof that we are such, whatever may be our view to the contrary. This shows
-

- the extent of the confidence which Job had in God, and is an indication of true piety” (Barnes, p.216).
- e. In verse sixteen, Job states his inability to believe that God would condescend to consider one so unworthy as himself. He does not claim sinless perfection; he realizes his own insignificance before God. Thus, how is it that the Almighty could descend to him? “I could scarcely suppose, such is his majesty and such his holiness, that he could condescend to notice a being so mean, and in every respect so infinitely beneath his notice. These sentiments sufficiently confuted that slander of his friends, who said he was presumptuous, had not becoming notions of the majesty of God, and used blasphemous expressions against his sovereign authority” (Clarke, p.56).
3. Verses 17-21: “For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause. He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness. If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead? If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.”
- a. The afflictions which had come upon Job, says the patriarch, are as a veritable storm, whose onslaught is on the verge of breaking him. Job did not know about the part Satan was playing in this matter, so he speaks of his hardships as having been sent upon him by God.
 - b. “The idea seems to be, that God acted towards him not as a judge determining matters by rule of law, but as a sovereign—determining them by his own will. If it were a matter of law; if he could come before him as a judge, and maintain his cause there; if the case could be fairly adjudicated whether he deserved the calamities that came upon him, he would be willing to enter into such a trial.
 - 1) “But where the matter was determined solely by will, and God acted as a sovereign, doing as he pleased, and giving no account of his matters to any one, then it would be useless to argue the cause. He would not know what to expect, or understand the principles on which an adjudication would be made. It is true that God acts as a sovereign, but he does not act without reference to law....
 - 2) “In him [God] sovereignty and law coincide; and to come to him as a sovereign, is to come with the assurance that supreme rectitude will be done” (Barnes, p.217).
 - c. Job describes his afflictions as so constant that he cannot take a breath without pain. “I have no respite in my affliction; I suffer continually in my body, and my mind is incessantly harassed” (Clarke, p.56).
 - d. Job describes his problems in a legal setting. Assuming that God is the source of his troubles, he shows why he could have no hope of succeeding in arguing his case with the Almighty.
 - 1) If the matter came down to strength, he would surely lose (vs. 19).
 - 2) Verse 19a: If the issue turns on the matter of judgment (justice), he has no one who could plead his cause [if would be impossible for him to make an appointment with such an advocate—there is none who is capable].
 - 3) Verse 20a: If he should try to manage his own case, he would not be able to succeed—his words would show his weakness. He would say something that would expose him to other charges. Some sage has observed, “I had rather be thought a fool, than to open my mouth and remove all doubt.”
 - 4) Verse 20b: He would have to affirm that he was perfect (guiltless; innocent), and that very affirmation would expose his spiritual frailty. Although Job is spoken of as a perfect man (Job 1:1), he did not see himself as sinlessly perfect. When God referred to Job as a perfect specimen, he did not mean that Job was above sin.
 - e. The text of verse 21 is obscure and difficult. If he should advance a claim that he is perfect in the absolute sense, he would be affirming the impossible—he could not know everything, which he would have to know in order to make the affirmation. Job admits that he does not fully know his own soul. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9). Job
-

was aware that he could not know every detail about his own heart, but that God did know; if he should claim that he is without sin, God could know that there were imperfections within Job—of which the patriarch was not cognizant. If he should say that he was entirely without sin, that claim would be manifestly false.

- 1) “He is innocent, but the contradiction between his lot and his innocence seems to show that his self-consciousness is deceptive, and makes him a mystery to himself, leads him astray respecting himself; and having thus become a stranger to himself, he abhors this life of seeming contradictions...” (Keil, p.156).
 - 2) “Although versions and interpretations differ, it seems Job is saying that by man’s standard he cannot know his true state, whether perfect or imperfect; there must be a standard from a higher source....In my present state of suffering, yet innocent, I have no standard by which to judge” (Hailey, p.96).
 - 3) If he were to try to prove his innocence, he thinks he would be opposing God; if he opposes God, there can be but one outcome—to lose and suffer the consequences. If this is his point here, then he means that to try to defend himself in the presence of his own ignorance and God’s infinite knowledge, he would be exposing his life to death—he would be despising his life.
4. Verses 22-24: “This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?”
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: “It is all one; therefore I say, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the scourge slay suddenly, He will mock at the trial of the innocent. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked; He covereth the faces of the judges thereof: If it be not he, who then is it?”
 - 2) NKJV: “It is all one thing; Therefore I say, 'He destroys the blameless and the wicked.' If the scourge slays suddenly, He laughs at the plight of the innocent. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked. He covers the faces of its judges. If it is not He, who else could it be?”
 - 3) ESV: “It is all one; therefore I say, He destroys both the blameless and the wicked. When disaster brings sudden death, he mocks at the calamity of the innocent. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked; he covers the faces of its judges—if it is not he, who then is it?”
 - b. This passage is a key to understanding the Book of Job. Here the patriarch states that all men face the same challenges offered by this world. Regardless of a man’s spiritual stature, he must face a world that is often hostile to his best interests. The wicked and the righteous must suffer from the vagaries of nature. We must all operate under the laws of nature; if we violate one of these laws, there will be consequences to be faced. An innocent little toddler can unknowingly stumble over a precipice; an evil man might do the same; the effect is identical. God allows the righteous and unrighteous to suffer.
 - c. On April 27, 1865, at the end of the War Between the States, a steamboat named *Sultana* exploded and sank on the Mississippi River, a short distance from Memphis. Many of the union soldiers on board were men who had been released from the Confederate prisoner of war camp at Andersonville, Georgia. About 1450 people died in the tragic event. Some might wonder why God allowed such a tragedy, especially since a goodly number of the victims had already suffered greatly as prisoners of war. However, God does not miraculously override the laws of nature to prevent such catastrophes. If so, he would scarcely have time to do anything else but to neutralize the follies and blunders of careless men.
 - d. “That Job was right in this his main position there can be no doubt; and the wonder is, that his friends did not all see it. But it required a long time in the course of events, and much observation and discussion, before this important point was made clear. With our full views of the state of retribution
-

in the future world, we can have no doubt on the subject. Heavy and sudden judgments do not necessarily prove that they who are cut off are peculiarly guilty, and long prosperity is no evidence that a man is holy. Calamity, by fire and flood, on a steamboat, or in the pestilence, does not demonstrate the peculiar and eminent wickedness of those who suffer (cf. Luke 13:1-5), nor should those who escape from such calamities infer that of necessity they are the objects of the divine favour” (Barnes, p.220).

- 1) Luke 13:1-5: "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
- 2) Great and good men and women in the Bible faced the same kind of trouble that some of the wicked and vile individuals encountered. Paul had his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:1 ff); Timothy had a stomach problem and other infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23); Paul's fellow-worker Trophimus had to be left behind in Miletus because of illness (2 Tim. 4:20); that godly saint Dorcas died prematurely (Acts 9:36-43); and Epaphroditus suffered a life-threatening ailment (Phil. 2:25-30).
- e. Verse 23 speaks of the scourge—the implement by which punishment was applied to certain people. The scourge in the text would have reference to some affliction or calamity. If an individual is suddenly slain by the scourge [an affliction or calamity], administered perhaps by some human source [some wicked man or nation or unexpected circumstance], Job speaks of God being indifferent to the problem. He describes God's attitude as laughing at the trial of the innocent.
 - 1) "That is, he seems to disregard or to be pleased with their trials. He does not interpose to rescue them. He seems to look calmly on, and suffers them to be overwhelmed with others. This is a poetic expression, and cannot mean that God derides the trials of the innocent, or mocks their sufferings. It means that he seems to be inattentive to them; he suffers the righteous and the wicked to be swept away together as if he were regardless of character” (Barnes, p.220).
 - 2) Since Job is shown to be an upright individual, it seems highly unlikely that he would make such a crass statement as that of verse twenty-three, and intend it to be taken literally.
- f. Verse 24 states a truth that godly saints have observed through the centuries. Those in control of human governments are often corrupt individuals. Power has a corrupting influence. Where power is, there is the temptation to misuse it. A crooked politician may get by with small offenses, which gives him the confidence to do greater offenses. Job uses this fact as an illustration of his point just made. Later, Herod the Great and Nero were two such rulers. Therefore, Job teaches, prosperity and power do not necessarily mean an individual is pleasing to God.
- g. The second part of verse 24 is difficult to interpret. The verse appears to contain a parallelism, with the first part expressing the same thought as the second. Justice is not commonplace in a wicked regime; judges can be bought; righteousness is outcast; truth is unsought and ignored. Truth, justice, and godliness are hindered—are covered up. "Job saw the earth 'given into the hand of the wicked,' with no interference from God. He covers the faces of the judges so that they do not see or discern what is right or wrong” (Hailey, p.96). Wicked men willfully chose to ignore truth and righteousness when they are guided by their own notions and selfish interests.
- h. Job asks these questions at the end of verse 24: "If not, where, and who is it?" He seems to be asking: If my point is incorrect, what is the truth on this matter? "If God is not the cause of these anomalies, where is the cause to be found, and who is he?" (JFB, p.24). His friends would know that the wicked are usually in charge of governments, and that evil people usually accumulate the most wealth. Who allows this to happen, if it is not God? The basic error of his friends (that Job is being punished only

because he had done evil) is shown to be faulty. Much more is involved in God's dealings with mankind than may meet the casual eye.

- i. "...We must take into account the severity of Job's physical suffering, the fruitless effort to find an answer to God's rejection of him, and the turbulent thoughts that flowed through his mind. Job did not hold long to this wild statement. Before judging him harshly, let us sit with him in the ash heap and try to see events through his eyes. Is this not what God did" (Hailey, pp.96f).

C. Job 9:25-35: Job Maintains his Innocence.

1. Verses 25-26: "Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey."
 - a. Job states that the days of his life are swiftly passing; he knows he cannot live forever on earth; if the affliction is not lifted from him, he is doomed to live out his days in misery, without the enjoyment that a man craves.
 - b. He describes his fast-passing days as swifter than a post. A post is a messenger. "The messengers in Barbary who carry despatches, it is said, will run one hundred and fifty miles in twenty-four hours (Harmer's Observa, ii. 200. Ed. 1808), and it has been said that the messengers among the American savages would run an hundred and twenty miles in the twenty-four hours. In Egypt, it is a common thing for an Arab on foot to accompany a rider, and to keep up with the horse when at full gallop, and do this for a long time without apparent fatigue" (Barnes, p.221). On a fast horse, with frequent changes, an even quicker trip could be made. The rapid pace of the Pony Express riders is legendary.
 - c. He describes his days as passing away as swift ships and as an eagle that is pursuing its prey. A ship laden with perishable fruit or other items must make haste. They pass quickly over the sea, and leave no sign of their passage.
 - d. Each day might seem to be interminable to Job, as he endured his constant misery, but one day follows another, and soon the week, the month, and the year are gone! And before long, one's life is history. His days are swiftly passing away, and he is getting no enjoyment from life.
 2. Verses 27-28: "If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself: I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent."
 - a. He contemplates making the resolution to forget his complaint and put his sorrows away from him. He wants to quit lamenting and desires to put on a cheerful countenance. This would do him some good, if he were able to do it, and make him a more pleasant person to be around.
 - b. But try as he might, his sorrows cannot be dismissed; his pain and discomfort are too unrelenting. To deny or ignore the reality of his affliction is impossible. It is easy to say, "Smile, God loves you." It is quite another to maintain a cheerful countenance while in the midst of great pain and sorrow.
 - c. His fears and his sorrows quickly return. He cannot make them go away. "God will not remove my sorrows so as to furnish the evidence that I am innocent. My sufferings continue, and with them continue all the evidence on which my friends rely that I am a guilty man. In such a state of things, how can I be otherwise than sad? He was held to be guilty; he was suffering in such a way as to afford them the proof that he was so, and how could he be cheerful?" (Barnes, p.222).
 3. Verses 29-31: "If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."
 - a. If he was wicked in the eyes of his friends, it would not matter how much he might be able to put on a happy face—they would still consider him guilty. Any effort on his part in that direction would be fruitless.
 - b. He may be speaking to God in this statement. If so, he is not confident that he would get a better situation, despite his protestations of innocence. "Job maintains that it would be in vain to contend with God, and he gives up the argument in despair. It is quite evident, however, that he does not do
-

it so much because he is convinced himself, as because he knows that God is great, and that it would be useless to contend with him....As it is, he submits—not because he is convinced, but because he is weak; not because he sees that God is right, but because he sees that he is powerful” (Barnes, p.222).

- c. If he were to bathe in snow water, he would only be plunged into a ditch and be made dirty again. The pure whiteness of snow implies purity; as the snow is white and clean, so the water that melts from the snow is pure and clean. By making his hands cleaner than they had ever been (in the snow water), he says he would not be able to keep them that clean. He thinks that God would throw him into the filth of a drainage ditch. Job had doubtless prayed many times that this affliction be lifted; he did not get the result he sought. He had no inkling of the activities of Satan, in his denial of Job’s righteousness. If the patriarch had understood this, his plight would have been easier to bear. But as it was, he did not understand why he was being tormented as he was. He thought God was punishing him too harshly, and could not discover the reason. Since his requests had gone unanswered and his torments were unabated, he perceived that God was against him.
 - d. It is not clear that God is addressed in verses 29-31, for in verses 32-35 Job speaks of God indirectly; but in the previous passage, the person indicated is addressed directly.
 - e. Job thought that there was no hope for him; that he was doomed to fill out the rest of his time on earth in utter misery. If he has washed in snow water, he thinks he would only be thrown into a ditch; if he washed his clothes, they would only become offensive to him again.
4. Verses 32-35: “For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me: Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.”
- a. In any contention with God, Job would be over-matched. “The idea is, that the contest would be unequal, and that he might as well surrender without bringing the matter to an issue. It is evident that the disposition of Job to yield, was rather because he saw that God was superior in power than because he saw that he was right, and that he felt that if he had ability to manage the cause as well as God could, the matter would not be so much against him as it was then. That there was no little impropriety of feeling in this, no one can doubt; but have we never had feelings like this when we have been afflicted?...True submission is always accompanied with the belief that God is right —whether we can see him to be right or not” (Barnes, p.224).
 - b. In verse 33, Job observes that there is not any *daysman* (mediator; umpire; arbiter; judge) between God and Job. In the patriarch’s experience, he knew of no person who could serve in this capacity. There were some who could represent Job’s case fairly, but no human could approach God on an equal footing. “He has no hope, therefore, in a cause where one of the parties was to be the judge, and where that party was omnipotent; and he must give up in despair” (ibid). No human mediator could “lay his hand upon us both”—have power to control both God and Job.
 - c. Job asks God, in verse 34, to take his rod of punishment from him, so that he could speak with God without terror. “I am oppressed, and broken down, and crushed under his hand, and I could not hope to maintain my cause with any degree of success. If my sufferings were lightened, and I could approach the question with the vigour of health and the power of reasoning unweakened by calamity, I could then do justice to the view which I entertain. Now there would be obvious disparity, while one of the parties has crushed and enervated the other by the mere exercise of power” (ibid., p.225). In the next verse, Job states the issue. He further states, that the situation he asks for does not presently exist.
 - d. Compare: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:4-6).
-

JOB 10

Job's Speech Continues

A. Job 10:1-13: Job Speaks of his Weariness of Life.

1. Verses 1-3: "My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; show me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?"
 - a. "Being daunted with the dread of God's majesty, so that he could not plead his cause with him, he resolves to give himself some ease by giving vent to his resentments. He begins with vehement language: 'My soul is weary of my life, weary of this body, and impatient to get clear of it, fallen out with life, and displeased at it, sick of it, and longing for death'He will complain, but he will leave his complaint upon himself. He would not impeach God, nor charge him with unrighteousness or unkindness; but, though he knew not particularly the ground of God's controversy with him and the cause of action, yet, in the general, he would suppose it to be in himself and willingly bear all the blame" (Matthew Henry, PC Study Bible).
 - b. Job was no materialist—he believed in the existence of the soul. He speaks of both his soul and his life, thus he does not use "soul" in reference to life, as the materialists must do. The word "soul" is used in some instances in reference to animal life, but not so here and in many other places. His soul, the innermost part of him, was weary of life. He had no hope of an improved situation. As far as we know, Job had suffered more losses and endured greater affliction than any other human. In our relatively smaller problems, we sometimes bemoan our lot, and would welcome death as the final escape from our tormented state. If we could excuse ourselves in this, surely we would be willing to give Job the privilege of venting his frustrations under the weight of his greater dilemma.
 - c. Although he speaks of his weariness of life, yet he will place his complaint upon himself. "I will charge myself with the cause of my own calamities; and shall not charge my Maker foolishly: but I must deplore my wretched and forlorn state" (Clarke, p.59).
 - d. In what amounts to a prayer, Job speaks of asking God why the Almighty had caused this dilemma; if he has committed some offense, he asks to be shown his error. "This was the ground of Job's complaint, that God by mere sovereignty and power held him to be a wicked man, and that he did not see the reasons why he was so considered and treated. He now desired to know in what he had offended, and to be made acquainted with the cause of his sufferings. The idea is, that it was unjust to treat one as guilty who had no opportunity of knowing the nature of the offence with which he was charged, or the reason why he was condemned" (Barnes, p.226).
 - e. In verse three, Job notes that it would be against the nature of God to inflict punishment upon a man arbitrarily, merely to cause pain wantonly. Job raises the rhetorical question that it could not be the intention of the Almighty to oppress and despise the work of his hands—Job (or any other human). At this point it appears that Job did not fully comprehend the possibility that God could afflict his faithful children for their own good; he came to see this later: "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).
 - f. Job could not see why God brought calamity upon his own children, but blessed the wicked. Even at that relatively early age of human history, the wicked had been able to seize control over the weaker ones, for their own enrichment and advantage. It was true then as it is true now, that those who possess most of this world's goods are not inclined to be sincere followers of God. It is often the case that the wicked prosper, while the godly suffer. Job seeks to know why.
 - 1) Psalms 119:67: "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:32: "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not

be condemned with the world."

- 3) Lamentations 3:34-36: "To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High, To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not."
2. Verses 4-7: "Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth? Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days, That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin? Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand."
 - a. God does not possess a physical body (John 4:24; cf. Luke 24:39). Job asks whether he looked through the eyes of a man, to judge as men judge. Job's friends had judged him harshly and unfairly; they had not discerned his true situation, but had quickly jumped to the conclusion that their friend must have sinned grievously to incur such punishment. Did God make such unjust judgments? His friends had judged by the mere appearance of things, and had not judged righteously.
 - 1) 1 Samuel 16:7: "But Jehovah said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart."
 - 2) John 7:24: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."
 - b. He asked if the Lord's days were limited, as are the days of a man. "The whole passage (ver. 4-7) expresses the settled conviction of Job that God could not resemble man. Man was short lived, fickle, blind; he was incapable, from the brevity of his existence, and from his imperfections, of judging correctly of the character of others. But it could not be so with God. He was eternal. He knew the heart. He saw every thing as it was. Why, then, Job asks with deep feeling, did he deal with him as if he were influenced by the methods of judgment which were inseparable from the condition of imperfect and dying man?" (Barnes, p.227).
 - c. Job perceives that God has had to look "under every rock and in every cranny" to discover wrongdoing in the life of the patriarch. Job is unaware of any overt act of sin in his life.
 - d. "As the God of power, infinite and absolute in all his attributes, he should (and does) know that Job 'is not wicked;' he is not one who disdains law, walking contrary to it. God is so far above his creation that Job says, 'There is none that can deliver me out of thy hand.' So, since he is in his hand, he must not let him die the death of a wicked person. And so Job concluded that he must either suffer and die as a sinner in the eyes of the world and ignorance of his true state, or look to God for vindication of his cause" (Hailey, p.103).

B. Job 10:8-13: Job Extols the Greatness of God.

1. Verses 8-9: "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?"
 - a. Job states that he knows he is not wicked. He does not claim sinless perfection, but he denies that he has lived a wicked life. His friends had accused him of being a hypocrite, but Job knew his own heart as well as any man can know it; he knew he was not an evil man, and knew that the Lord knew this about him, too. But the patriarch cannot comprehend why he is being afflicted. "Why am I being afflicted when God knows that I am not wicked?"
 - b. God had made Job, but apparently now was trying to destroy him. No rational man will fashion a fine piece of work and then proceed to destroy it. God has been gracious to Job, but now for some unknown reason is seeking to destroy him [so it seemed to Job]. Neither Job nor any other man could deliver him from God's hand, if God has set his hand to assault Job.
 - c. Jehovah had shown great skill, knowledge, and power in fashioning Job. He put forth much effort to bring the patriarch to the state he enjoyed at the time his troubles started. "He argues that it would
-

seem like caprice to take such pains, and to exercise such amazing wisdom and care in forming him, and then, on a sudden, and without cause, dash his own work to pieces? Who makes a beautiful vase only to be destroyed? Who moulds a statue from marble only to break it to pieces. Who builds a splendid edifice only to pull it down? Who plants a rare and precious flower only to have the pleasure of plucking it up? The statement of ver. 8-12, is not only beautiful and forcible as an argument, but is peculiarly interesting and valuable, as it may be presumed to embody the views of the patriarchal age about the formation and the laws of the human frame. No inconsiderable part of the value of the book of Job, as was remarked in the Introduction, arises from the incidental notices of the sciences as they prevailed at the time when it was composed. If it is the oldest book in the world, it is an invaluable record on these points” (Barnes, p.28).

2. Verses 10-13: “Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews. Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit. And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee.”
 - a. “‘Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?’ ‘Didst not thou’ i.e., ‘form me as an embryo in the womb, gradually solidifying my substance, and changing soft juices into a firm though tender mass?’” (Pulpit Commentary, PC Study Bible).
 - b. “The whole image in this verse [10] and the following, is designed to furnish an illustration of the origin and growth of the human frame....The idea of Job is, that God was the author of the human frame, and that that frame was so formed as to evince his wonderful and incomprehensible wisdom. A consultation of the works on physiology, which explain the facts about the formation and growth of the human body, will show that there are few things which more strikingly evince the wisdom of God than the formation of the human frame, alike at its origin, and in every stage of its development” (Barnes, p.229).
 - c. Psalms 139:13-16: "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them."
 - d. Verse eleven continues the thought regarding the formation of the physical body of a person. In the process of its development, the internal organs are formed and, at the same time, the skin, flesh, bones, and sinews are fashioned. All of this is ordered by the natural laws of God. A study of the amazing intricacies of the human body is a powerful tool in proving that there must be a God in heaven!
 - e. Verse twelve adds to the previous thoughts that, besides providing for Job a marvelous physical body, God had also given him life and loving favor. Jehovah had superintended the formation of his body and had providentially overseen and blessed him as he made his way from infancy to adulthood. He had been blessed with a family, many possessions, peace, and happiness for many years. The patriarch remembers these good things from days past. “The word rendered *visitation*...means properly the *mustering* of an army, the care that is manifested in looking after those who are enlisted; and then denotes care, vigilance, providence, custody, watch. The idea is, that God had watched over him and preserved him, and that to his constant vigilance he owed the preservation of his life” (Barnes, p.229).
 - f. Verse thirteen speaks of the fact that God had not revealed to mankind the fullness of his operations. He did not tell Job ahead of time what was in store for him. “‘Yet all the while, notwithstanding thy protecting care and gracious favour, thou wert hiding in thy heart the intention to bring all these evils upon me; thou couldst not but have known what thou wert about to do, though thou didst conceal thy intention, and allow no sign of it to escape thee.’ I know that this is with thee; rather, I know that this

was with thee; i.e. this intention to destroy my happiness was ‘with thee’—present to thy thought—even while thou wert loading me with favour. Job's statement cannot be gainsaid; but it involves no real charge against God, who assigns men prosperity or suffering as is best for them at the time (The Pulpit Commentary, PC Study Bible).

- g. Job's point may be broader than this; he may have reference to God's operations and plans in many other activities—such as the great plan by which he would send his Son into the world.
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
 - 2) Galatians 4:4: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”
 - 3) John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
- h. Job would not have been privy to the details, but obviously he made some statements which required inspiration.
 - 1) Job 14:14: “If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.”
 - 2) Job 19:25: “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.”

C. Job 10:14-22: The Patriarch Speaks of His Confusion.

1. Verses 14-15: “If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction.”
 - a. Job understood that nothing could be hidden from God. If he committed sin, God would know it. The patriarch had an accurate perception of God's omniscience. Later, plain affirmations were included in the Scriptures declaring this fact.
 - 1) Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - 2) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
 - b. Job is perplexed. He knows his own heart, that he has sincerely tried to follow God the best he could; he knows his life, that he is not conscious of anything that he has done that would mark him as a vile sinner; he knows that God knows him better than he knows himself. Why, then, does not God acquit him? His friends have accused Job of wickedness, but he knew there was no basis for their charges. Since God knows all, why does he not announce in some definite way that Job is not the sinner they have charged him with being?
 - c. The patriarch states that if he is indeed wicked, then woe to him. He knows that punishment awaits the wicked, thus if he is wicked, he has no hope for the improvement of his state. On the other hand, if he is righteous (which he believes to be the case), then he is perplexed and confused. He could not lift up his head in confidence, for his affliction is still with him, giving his erstwhile friends arrows to shoot at him. “He felt humbled and mortified that he was brought into this situation, and was ashamed that he could not meet the arguments of his friends....On every side there was embarrassment and he knew not what to do. His friends regarded him as vile, and he could not but admit that he was so treated by God” (Barnes, p.231).
 2. Verses 16-17: “For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me. Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.”
-

- a. Apparently Job speaks here about the intensification of his afflictions. His physical malady certainly had not improved, but had increased. So desperate had his situation become, that he describes it as being hunted by a fierce lion. Being stalked by a lion as prey would be hopeless and frightful. No one could hope to overpower a fierce lion, or even to elude its stalking approach. Job did not know it at the time, but he had been stalked and attacked by the master lion—the devil: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). But in Job's mind, it was God who was stalking him, with the intent of destroying him. He is properly impressed with the power God was marshaling against him.
 - b. Job's condition had not improved, which lent to his friends additional evidence to use against him, to show that he must be wicked.
 - c. As Job sees it, God was increasing his indignation (wrath) against him, bringing changes and war against him. The word translated *changes* may be used also "of soldiers keeping watch until they are relieved by a succeeding guard....Here it is not improbably employed in the sense of a *succession* of attacks made on him. One succeeds another, as if platoon after platoon, to use the modern terms, or phalanx after phalanx, should come up against him. As soon as one had discharged its arrows, another succeeded in its place; or as soon as one became exhausted, it was followed by a fresh recruit" (Barnes, p.232).
3. Verses 18-22: "Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness."
- a. The patriarch laments his birth. He wishes that he had not been delivered from his mother's womb; that he had given up the ghost (died) before birth, and had never been seen; in that case, it would have been as though he had never been.
 - b. He further wishes that he had been born dead, and his body carried from the womb to the grave. If this had occurred, think what all of those generations of Bible readers would have missed! He could not know the extent of his influence. For perhaps four thousand years, his story has given courage and impetus to countless thousands of people who struggled against the troubles and turmoils of life. And think of the hope his ultimate victory provides for us. God is faithful; he will not forget our labor of love and struggles; he will reward the faithful. He demonstrated it in Job's case.
 - c. He speaks of death as the land from whence he will not return; as the land of darkness, and a shadow and darkness. "This passage is important as furnishing an illustration of what was early understood about the regions of the dead. The essential idea here is, that it was a land of *darkness*, of total and absolute night. This idea Job presents in a great variety of forms and phrases. He amplifies it, and uses apparently all the epithets which he can command to represent the utter and entire darkness of the place. The place referred to is not the grave, but the region beyond, the abode of departed spirits, the Hades of the ancients; and the idea here is, that it is a place where not a clear ray of light ever shines. That this was a common opinion of the ancients in regard to the world of departed spirits, is well known....There is nowhere to be found, however, a description which for intensity and emphasis of expression surpasses this of Job" (Barnes, p.233).
 - d. "Job's idea of the receptacle of the dead, while it has some analogies with the Egyptian underworld, and even more with the Greek and Roman conceptions of Hades or Orcus, was probably derived from Babylonia, or Chaldea, on which the land that he inhabited bordered (Job 1:17). It was within the earth, consequently dark and sunless....The Babylonians spoke of it as 'the abode of darkness and famine, where earth was men's food, and their nourishment clay; where light was not seen, but in
-

darkness they dwelt; where ghosts, like birds, fluttered their wings; and where, on the doors and on the door-posts, the dust lay undisturbed' (Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, vol. 1. p. 118)...A land of darkness, as darkness itself; or, a land of thick darkness (see the Revised Version). And of the shadow of death, without any order. The absence of order is a new and peculiar feature. We do not find it in the other accounts of Hades. But it lends additional horror and weirdness to the scene. And where the light is as darkness. Not, therefore, absolutely without light, but with such a light as Milton calls 'darkness visible'" (Pulpit Commentary, PC Study Bible.).

- e. How much of these quotations from Barnes and the Pulpit Commentary is true, we may not know. Was Job inspired to make the comments of this passage? Perhaps. How much information did he have regarding the Hadean Realm? Not much. Even with the fullness of the New Testament open to us, we do not know a great deal. But we know all that we will ever know—on this side of death. He did not have the fullness of revelation we now have in the Bible; he lived and died before any of the Bible was even written (unless he wrote this book). Insofar as the grave and its contents are concerned, there is no light. "For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl. 9:4-10).
-

JOB 11

Zophar Responds to Job

A. Job 11:1-12: Zophar Accuses Job of Lying.

1. Verses 1-6: "Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified? Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes. But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee; And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth."
 - a. Zophar responds to Job's remarks by a very caustic and severe tirade. He perceives that the patriarch has mistakenly maintained innocence. His reply contains a demand that Job repent, for this would be the only way he could restore himself into God's favor. The three friends all are convinced that Job must be guilty of sin, for they could not understand how God could send the great troubles upon an innocent man.
 - b. "Eliphaz began the discussions in a much warmer spirit than was displayed by the other two speakers and even his own later speeches. Each of his speeches became more severe than the one preceding it. Job's response to Eliphaz's speech received an indignant reply from Bildad; and Job's response to Bildad aroused a blunt, harsh rejoinder from Zophar. The spirit of Zophar is dogmatic, cold, heartless and unfair in its accusations. There is no warmth or sympathy in it; he had not heard the voice of Job's heart—the cry of anguish, the yearning for comfort and friendliness" (Hailey, p.109).
 - c. Zophar describes Job's speech as merely a multitude of words—a speech more akin to that of a fool than a man of Job's stature. Compare: "For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice *is known* by multitude of words" (Eccl. 5:3).
 - d. Asserting that Job had uttered lies, Zophar takes it upon himself to give his friend a stern "dressing-down." He states that such foolish words as those which Job had uttered demanded a strong response. He charges that Job has mocked God with his boastful, empty, lying words.
 - e. Zophar is unable to comprehend the truth that Job's troubles are not a punishment for sin; it appears that he has no conception of divine chastisement for the purpose of strengthening the soul (cf. Heb. 12). Job came to see this very well:
 - 1) Job 13:15: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him."
 - 2) Job 23:10: "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."
 - f. He derides Job for thinking that his doctrine is pure and that God sees him as being clean. This is just the opposite of Zophar's understanding of the case. Zophar is unable or unwilling to be objective. Instead, he alleges that the affliction, which he sees as divine punishment for sin, is not nearly as harsh as it ought to be. Zophar sorely wishes that God would speak to Job, and show him just how awful his sins have been.
2. Verses 7-12: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him? For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it? For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt."
 - a. Zophar states, correctly, that God is beyond human comprehension. No mortal can perfectly grasp the fullness of God. He is right in this statement about the Almighty, but he is wrong in the application he makes to Job's case of this truth. God has already placed his stamp of approval on the patriarch in

the first two chapters of the book. Zophar could not have known anything about what had transpired in the heavenly meetings described earlier in the book; evidently Job did not know of these events either.

- b. “Zophar’s eulogy on the transcendence of God is majestic. It is similar to Paul’s description of Christ’s love manifested in the scheme of redemption (Eph. 3:18-19). But its beauty is overcast by Zophar’s insinuation in verses 11-12. The nature and grandeur of God and His wisdom are high as heaven, deep as the depths of Sheol...long as earth from ‘end to end,’ and as broad as the sea, yea, ‘from sea to sea. Who can comprehend it?’” (Hailey, p.111).
- c. Job’s friend does not call him by name in verses eleven and twelve, but his implication is clear! He makes the statement in general terms, but it is obvious that his intent is to apply the remark to Job. In his view, Job is a false man; his iniquity is beheld by God, even though God might take no direct or immediate action.
- d. Verse twelve is difficult to translate.
 - 1) Other translations give these renditions:
 - a) ASV: “But vain man is void of understanding, Yea, man is born as a wild ass's colt.”
 - b) NKJV: “Or an empty-headed man will be wise, When a wild donkey's colt is born a man.”
 - c) ESV: “But a stupid man will get understanding when a wild donkey’s colt is born a man!”
 - 2) We take the American Standard rendering of the verse. A vain [empty] man is devoid of understanding—as much as the colt of a wild donkey. “In whatever way we translate or interpret the verse, Zophar is emphasizing the difficulty of Job’s comprehending the wisdom and ways of God” (Hailey, p.112).
- e. “Zophar refers to a hollow-hearted man, who, though he was in fact like a wild ass's colt, attempted to appear mild and gentle, and to have a heart...God, seeing this hollow-heartedness, treats him accordingly. The reference here is to men like Job, and Zophar undoubtedly meant to say that he was hollow-hearted and insincere, and yet that he wished to appear to be a man having a heart, or, having true piety” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].

B. Job 11:13-20: Zophar Calls on Job to Repent.

1. Verses 13-14: “If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.”
 - a. With these words, Zophar calls on Job to repent—still holding to the notion that his friend’s dilemma has been brought on him by sin.
 - b. While his thinking that Job needed to repent is wrong, his depiction of repentance is remarkably correct:
 - 1) A change of heart [prepare thy heart]: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).
 - 2) Ask for pardon [stretch out thy hands toward him]: “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (Acts 8:22). Holding forth one’s hands is a symbol of making a plea to God: “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Tim. 2:8).
 - 3) A reformation of life [let not sin dwell in thy house]: “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” (Matt. 3:8; cf. Acts 26:20).
2. Verses 15-20: “For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear: Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning. And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. Also thou shalt

lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee. But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost."

- a. In Zophar's mind, the stain of many heinous sins was upon Job's soul, but all his problems would be removed and he could stand in his former position with God. [Again, this assumes Job's guilt, a conclusion that is not accurate].
 - b. Zophar perceives that all of Job's sorrows would be swept away and he would no longer remember them any more than one remembers a rain shower of the past or a pool of water that has dried up.
 - c. "And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; literally, shall arise above the noonday; i.e. 'exceed it in splendour.' Instead of the 'thick darkness' to which Job is looking forward (Job 10:21,22), he shall bask in a light brighter than that of the sun at noon" (Pulpit Commentary, *ibid.*). In his despair, Job could only see a dark and bleak future; Zophar assures him that if he would straighten up, his future would be bright and happy.
 - d. Instead of existing in a hopeless and insecure state, if he should return to the Lord, he would bask in the happy hope the faithful enjoy. He could live without fear of returning to his present state of misfortune. There would be nothing to distress him.
 - e. He would be able to rest in complete security. There would be no fear of being raided by the Sabians, or other vicious invaders. Instead of having enemies to assault him, he would have many who would be working and interceding in his behalf. Rather than having his friends besetting him (as his three friends were presently doing), many would seek his favor.
 - f. "Had Zophar ended with ver. 19 Job might possibly have taken some comfort from his speech, holding out, as it did, a hope of restoration to God's favour and a return to happiness. But, as if to accentuate the unfavourable view which he takes of Job's conduct and character, he will not end with words of good omen, but appends a passage which has a ring of malice, menace, and condemnation. But the eyes of the wicked shall fail; or, waste away, grew weary, i.e. of looking for a help that does not come, and a deliverer who does not make his appearance. And they shall not escape; literally, their refuge is perished from them. And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost; rather, shall be the giving up of the ghost. They shall have no other hope but death—a manifest allusion to Job's repeated declarations that he looks for death, longs for it, and has no expectation of any other deliverance (see Job 3:21,22; 6:7,8; 7:15; 10:1,18. etc.). Such, says Zophar, is always the final condition of the wicked" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - g. As repeated frequently in these notes, Job's friends had made the wrong assessment of him—they erroneously thought he was in rebellion to God.
-

JOB 12

Job Responds

A. Job 12:1-6: Job Rejects the Misapplied Words of His Friends.

1. Verses 1-2: "And Job answered and said, No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you."
 - a. The present section includes this chapter and extends through chapter 14. It contains Job's strong rebuke to his friends, and makes an appeal that he be tried before the tribunal of God.
 - b. The patriarch repudiates their self-assumed wisdom. With biting irony, he declares that [in their view of themselves] they were the real people and that wisdom would vanish when they died. His friends did not indicate any humility in their speeches; they did not give Job any credit for acting wisely; they would not consider the fact that Job might be innocent of the charges they brought against him.
2. Verses 3-4: "But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these? I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn."
 - a. Job states that he possessed a measure of wisdom, as well as they did. He does not believe that their wisdom exceeds his own.
 - b. It was commonly held that those who suffered did so because of sin. This is frequently true, but it is not so in Job's case. He has regularly directed his prayers to God, and has been answered. Job knows from personal knowledge that he walking with the Almighty.
 - c. He points out their lack of charity toward him. They held him up to scorn; their charges against him made him a laughingstock. No one likes to be mocked, even when we might be in the wrong in some matter. Sneering scorn is always out of place, especially among God's people. It demonstrates an absence of love.
3. Verses 5-6: "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease. The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: "A lamp is despised in the thought of one who is at ease; It is made ready for those whose feet slip. The tents of robbers prosper, And those who provoke God are secure -- In what God provides by His hand."
 - 2) ASV: "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease. The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly."
 - b. Verse five is not easy to put into a concise statement.
 - 1) The idea of the verse is that one who will not take advantage of an available light, is sure to slip. If one who is traveling on a path in the dark, but will not light the lamp he has in his hand, he is acting foolishly; his overconfidence and belief that he will be able to navigate the pathway without help, is setting himself up for a fall.
 - 2) In the context, Job directs this statement to his friends. They have assumed that Job must be guilty of sin, which in their view, explains why he is suffering his present distresses. The patriarch is cautioning them by this statement that their blind assumption has set them up for a fall.
 - c. In verse six, Job points out two objections to their assumption of his guilt.
 - 1) If one is punished for wrongdoing, why are not robbers punished? Why do they prosper? Many criminals pursue lives of crime, but never get caught.
 - 2) Also, why do those who oppose God in direct ways continue to live in security? Why are they

- given great bounties?
- d. The point Job is making is obvious: Just because one is suffering great distress and affliction, does not prove that God is punishing that individual for sin. If that is always the case, why are the robbers and others who oppose God not being punished? Why are they seemingly well-blessed?
 - 1) God's dealings with humanity are too profound for a man to comprehend fully. There may be purposes that are too deep for us to grasp, or too subtle for us to perceive.
 - 2) In Job's case, since we now have the full story, we can understand God's purpose in sending the sufferings on the patriarch. He was put to the test in order to have his faith brought to maturity. His case also furnishes an example to show that hardship is strengthening, and that faithfulness will be rewarded.
 - e. David dealt with the problem of the righteous facing hardship while the wicked appear to be blessed: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction" (Ps. 73:1-18).

B. Job 12:7-12: Nature Testifies of God's Wisdom.

1. Verses 7-8: "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee."
 - a. All of God's creation is subject to his authority. Everything was designed by his wisdom and was created by his power.
 - 1) Psalms 33:6-9: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."
 - 2) Colossians 1:15-17: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
 - 3) Hebrews 3:4: "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God."
 - b. God's creation is governed by natural laws. He created this world so that there is no need for his supernatural intervention; life can continue on its own, under the control of natural law. In the natural order of things, tragedies frequently occur.
 - c. Job asks his friends to consult the creatures of earth; their experiences show that disasters often afflict all animal life.
 2. Verses 9-10: "Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."
-

- a. Job's point seems to be:
 - 1) "Maybe the troubles I'm experiencing are the natural occurrences in an imperfect world."
 - 2) Or, "Perhaps the misery I suffer is the work of God, who has some hidden purpose in mind to accomplish."
 - b. It is true that we live in an "imperfect" world—that is, there are troubles all around us. In the world of animals, it is the natural order of things for one creature to feed on another creature. Natural enemies create hardship for their victims. Floods, heat, cold, and natural disasters bring suffering to all. But God preserves the various species of beings. For each canine, there is an unbroken line all the way back to the original pair of canines in the Creation. The same is true with each human being, and each of the other animal creatures. God governs his universe by means of natural laws. In Bible times, he infrequently used miraculous powers. His providence is always available to aid his people.
 - c. "In their speeches the friends had shown no special insight into the wisdom and power of God. The instincts and characteristics of beasts and birds testify to the wisdom and power of God their Creator who so endowed them; from these we can all learn" (Hailey, p.117).
 - d. God's faithful have their Father's providential care, but that does not insulate them from the problems that abound in this world (cf. Heb. 12:1-11).
 - 1) Matthew 6:25-34: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."
 - 2) Acts 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
 - 3) Acts 17:27-28: "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."
3. Verses 11-12: "Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat? With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding."
 - a. The human ear can decipher sounds, identifying the source and the meaning of the words we hear; the mouth has the ability to identify various tastes from the food we eat. In other words, our natural senses [hearing, taste, sight, touch, and smell] can reveal much about the natural world. Our sense of smell is such that it can instantly identify the smell of a rose or a skunk.
 - b. What is Job's point? It appears he is telling his friends that they ought to examine the evidence. His godly life was manifest to those who knew him. Surely his friends could see that he is not being punished for sinful conduct.
 - c. With the passing of years, experience is gained; with experience, wisdom develops. One who is of ancient days should have acquired a goodly measure of wisdom. His friends had the ability to discern
-

the truth about Job's condition; and Job had the ability to test the arguments his friends made against him.

C. Job 12:13-25: The Wisdom of God.

1. Verses 13-15: "With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding. Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening. Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth."
 - a. God has wisdom and strength; he has perfect counsel to offer, and his understanding is infinite. No one can instruct the Almighty! No one can tell him anything that he does not already know. God's strength is so far beyond man that there is no comparison.
 - 1) Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
 - 2) Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."
 - 3) Psalms 33:11: "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."
 - 4) Ephesians 1:9-11: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."
 - b. God created, and he alone can destroy. Man can change the form of a material item, but he cannot destroy it. Man can burn a log, changing it into ashes; he can scatter the ashes, but he cannot cause them to go out of existence. But God is able to utterly destroy!
 - 1) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - 2) 2 Peter 3:10-11: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."
 - c. No city has a wall so strong that it can withstand God's power to destroy it. Jerusalem was protected by enormous walls, that were well nigh impregnable to the military might of the time. The Roman general who conquered the city, gave God the credit for his success. Mighty Babylon of old seemed to be unconquerable, but God was able to bring it down; mighty Rome seemed invulnerable, but God overthrew it.
 - d. If God imprisons or binds a man, that unfortunate person cannot get loose—unless God permits it. Heaven gives us opportunities or withholds them, and no man can override it. Compare: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Rev. 3:7-8).
 - e. God has the power to withhold the waters, and dry up the earth; and he can send forth the water and overflow the earth. How helpless puny man was to hold back the flood of Noah's day; and how helpless man is today to thwart the forces of a great hurricane!
 2. Verses 16-18: "With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools. He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle."
-

- a. Job describes God as all-powerful, and that no one has anything unless God allows him to have it. All the essentials of life have God as their ultimate source. All that we possess, we have only by his grace.
 - 1) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
 - 2) Matthew 5:45: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
 - 3) Acts 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
 - 4) Acts 17:28: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."
 - 5) 1 Timothy 6:17: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."
 - b. He is able to catch the deceiver by his own deceit; he is able to spoil the counselors; he can make fools of mighty judges. As Hailey pointed out, in ancient days men were ruled by men and not by laws; many of the rulings were based on personal whims or anger. God even has power over Satan, for even he could have no power over Job without God's permission (cf. vs. 16).
 - c. God is greater than the greatest of kings. "So God loosens or removes the chastening restraint that hold in check kings, monarch or chief magistrate. The loins as the seat of strength (40:16) are bound with a girdle (a part of the soldier's attire) for war, or for captivity by which he lead away. In either case, God determines the use and destiny of kings" (Hailey, p.119).
 - 1) Daniel 4:30-32: "The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."
 - 2) John 19:11: "Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."
3. Verses 19-21: "He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged. He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty."
 - a. God can give victory or defeat; he can bring man's wisdom to nought; he can remove the great and the wise; he brings about the downfall of nations or their rise; only he can know true wisdom and reveal it; he can cause panic among councils and leaders; he can cause lands and kingdoms to become desolate. No man can save that which God purposes to destroy.
 - b. "'He takes away the lip,' that is, he takes away the power of giving safe counsel or good advice. The 'trusty' or 'faithful' here refers to those of age and experience, and on whose counsel men are accustomed to rely. The meaning here is, that their most sagacious anticipations are disappointed, their wisest schemes are foiled. They fail—in their calculations of the course of events, and the arrangements of Providence are such that they could not anticipate what was to occur" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - c. Aged men of great wisdom do not have infallible understanding; their counsel can be brought down. Some counselors have been able to overthrow kings or bring men to the throne, through wisdom or chicanery. But they are but children before God.
 - d. There are often among men certain fearsome rulers who intimidate their subjects; all others shake in
-

terror at his anger. But these are but minor characters before God. They will all tremble and quake in the presence of the Almighty!

- e. "God is not intimidated by princes, men of noble estate, but 'poureth contempt' upon them, holding them as insignificant in His eyes. And He 'looseth,' slackens the girdle of the strong, leaving him weak and of no account. Job saw God exercising control over all the great and mighty of earth, and in His wisdom determining their destiny. This a fact of His Godhood confirmed over and over by the prophets" (Hailey, p.120).
4. Verses 22-25: "He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death. He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again. He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man."
 - a. "That is, God discloses truths which are wholly beyond the power of man to discover—truths that seem to be hidden in profound night. This may refer either to the revelation which God was believed to have furnished, or to his power of bringing out the most secret thoughts and purposes, or to his power of predicting future events by bringing them out of darkness to the clear light of day, or to his power of detecting plots, intrigues, and conspiracies. [And bringeth out to light the shadow of death][This] denotes whatever is dark or obscure. It is rather a favorite expression with the author of this poem (see Job 10:22; 16:16; 24:17; 34:22; 38:17), though it occurs elsewhere in the Scriptures. The deepest darkness, the obscurest night, are represented by it; and the idea is, that even from the most dark and impenetrable regions God could bring out light and truth. All is naked and open to the mind of God" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - b. Men sometimes develop deep, diabolical schemes which are hidden from the sight of other men, but God is able to uncover their plots, and expose them for the evil conspiracies that they are. Our Lord saw through the plots of his enemies, and turned their evil designs against them.
 - 1) Matthew 22:15-22: "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way."
 - 2) Matthew 22:23-33: "The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine."
 - 3) Matthew 22:34-46: "But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence,

- they were gathered together. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”
- c. God has demonstrated through the centuries that he has the ability to bring great nations into being and to destroy other great kingdoms.
- 1) Isaiah 13:19-20: “And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.” [When this prophecy was given, Babylon had not yet become a great empire; God here reveals that it would become very great, and would later be brought to desolation].
 - 2) Habakkuk 1:5-11: “Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it. Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god.”
- d. God is able to remove the understanding of the great people of the earth, and cause them to wander aimlessly in the wilderness, where there is no road. Think how stupid and foolish the atheists and evolutionists will be when they face the Maker in the Judgment! Think how foolish their argument are in the light of the clear proofs of God’s existence and the infallibility of his word.
- 1) Psalms 14:1-3: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”
 - 2) Romans 1:20: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 1:20-31: “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see
-

your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

- e. God can make these “wise” men to stagger about in utter confusion, not being able to answer him a word. Job’s descriptions of God are accurate and undoubtedly inspired. Even the apostles did not always grasp the inspired truths they presented. “Job’s comprehension of God’s wisdom, might, and providence was equal to, or greater than that of his friends. However, in spite of his insight, he was baffled that he could not find an answer to the question of his suffering as an innocent friend of God” (Hailey, p.121). His friends made some great statements about God, but they erred in charging Job with sin.
 - f. Ronald Reagan said he would like to serve an atheist a fabulous feast and then ask him if he believed in the cook. Many partake of God’s great bounties on earth, but deny the existence of the Creator.
-

Job 13

Job Continues His Speech

A. Job 13:1-5: Job States That He Also Possesses Wisdom.

1. Verses 1-3: “Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it. What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you. Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.”
 - a. Job makes his defense against the accusations of his friends. First, he affirms that he knows as much about the matter as they do. He is not inferior to them.
 - b. In fact, Job could know more about his situation than they could ever know. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?...” (1 Cor. 2:11). As long as a man is honest with himself, and will examine the evidence openly and logically, he will know more of what is going on in his own life and mind than anyone else. How can someone else know whether you are worshiping sincerely? How can anyone else know whether you are sincere in your service to Christ? They can only go by outward indication, or by what you tell them.
 - c. Job’s friends had misjudged his situation by accepting without proof that his distress was a direct result of sin in his life. They could not know this; they only assumed it; but their ignorance did not keep them from making bitter charges against him.
2. Verses 4-5: “But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value. O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.”
 - a. He accuses them of raising false charges against him. They had invented the false charges. Their attempts to aid him were fruitless; their “doctoring” was of no value. Compare:
 - 1) “And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any” (Luke 8:43).
 - 2) “For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?” (Jer. 8:21-22),
 - b. They only made a bad situation worse. The best thing they could do for Job was to hold their tongues; they would be showing wisdom if they kept quiet.
 - 1) Proverbs 17:28: “Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.”
 - 2) “If one is born an idiot, he ought not to lose ground!”
 - c. To “hold one’s peace” is to keep quiet and take no action.
 - 1) Genesis 24:21: “And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.”
 - 2) Genesis 34:5: “And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.”
 - 3) Leviticus 10:3: “Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.”
 - 4) Matthew 26:62-63: “And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.”
 - 5) Luke 20:26: “And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at

his answer, and held their peace.”

B. Job 13:6-12: Job Reproves His Friends for Their False Charges.

1. Verses 6-8: “Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips. Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?”
 - a. Job’s friends had been arguing for God, although they did not know the whole story. They had failed to understand the situation correctly and therefore were misguided in their allegations. They thought that their charges against Job were the very things that God would say if he were making a charge. Job asks them whether they really thought they could speak evil things in God’s behalf. There is no respect of persons with God:
 - 1) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - 2) Romans 2:11: “For there is no respect of persons with God.”
 - b. They blundered greatly by speaking for God. There are many religionists today who think they are qualified to speak for the Almighty. Some have even gone so far as to say, “God told me to tell you _____!” The only way anyone can know a single thought God has ever had, or a word that he has spoken, is by what he has recorded in the Bible.
 - c. He asks them whether they really thought they could argue God’s case for him. He knows they could not do so, for what they had alleged against him was deceitful talk.
 - d. Job inquires them if they would accept the person [i.e., show partiality] in God’s behalf. Are they ready to show favoritism for one party or against another party in God’s behalf?
 - e. The patriarch wanted to know if the three friends were ready to fight God’s battles for him, using their faulty judgments and biased opinions. One who shows partiality cannot be pleasing to an unbiased God; harsh and unfair judgments cannot be served up as coming from a longsuffering, just, and good Creator.
2. Verses 9-11: “Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him? He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons. Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?” (KJV). “Is it good that he should search you out? Or as one deceiveth a man, will ye deceive him? He will surely reprove you if ye do secretly show partiality. Shall not his majesty make you afraid, And his dread fall upon you?” (ASV).
 - a. Job’s rhetorical questions show that it would be to their hurt and shame if God should search them out—look into their charges against their friend. Did they think they could make these accusations against him with impunity? Did they think they could get away with their attacks?
 - b. No one can mock God and get away with it. What they were doing in effect was to presumptuously put words in God’s mouth.
 - 1) Psalms 19:13: “Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”
 - 2) Galatians 6:7-8: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”
 - c. They knew the general rule that one reaps what he sows. But many times, in this life, the righteous are not blessed with prosperity and health, while the unrighteous often have an abundance of both. There are exceptions to the rule—in this life. In the Judgment, God will mete out the appropriate reward. Job’s friends failed to see that other factors can enter into the equation; thus, just because he was suffering, may not point to any wrongdoing on his part. Indeed, the full story of Job shows that

he was an outstanding servant of God. Could it be that they were secretly envious of Job's standing with God?

- d. They played the hypocrite by judging things according to their outward appearance; this in effect was to show partiality—they did not evaluate the situation honestly and righteously. “No matter for whom it may be done, it will be displeasing to God. Even if it be in favor of the righteous, the widow, the fatherless, or of himself, if there is not a disposition to judge according to truth and evidence, God will frown upon you. No matter who the parties might be; no matter what their rank; no matter what friendship there might be for one or the other of them, it was never to be assumed that one was right and the other wrong without evidence. The exact truth was to be sought after, and the judgement made up accordingly” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - e. God's excellency is called his “majesty” in the ASV. Job inquires of his erstwhile friends if they were not afraid to bring such unrighteous judgments against him, since their charges were fully known by God. Did they not dread falling under God's condemnation? God is not partial in his judgments; he does not permit his people to show partiality. The friends are wrong, if they are suggesting that Job thought he deserved special handling by Jehovah. God bases his judgment on his word, the truth; we are to do likewise. Job's friends should have done so.
3. Verse 12: “Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes, Your defences are defences of clay” (ASV).
 - 2) “Your platitudes are proverbs of ashes, Your defenses are defenses of clay. Hold your peace with me, and let me speak, Then let come on me what may!” (NKJV).
 - b. The patriarch here evaluates the proverbs they have directed against him. They have no more truth and substance (as to Job's true condition) than ashes.
 - c. Notice the difference between the KJV and the others cited in reference to “bodies of clay.” The other versions have “defences” instead of “bodies” (in the KJV).
 - 1) “Your bodies to bodies of clay; rather, your mounds' or your defences (see the Revised Version). These defences, Job says—i.e, the arguments by which his opponents support their views—are no better than "defences of clay"—easy to batter down and destroy. The ancient defences of a town were usually either of stone, as at Khorsabad ('Ancient Monarchies,' vol. 1. pp. 278, 279), or of crude brick faced with burnt brick, as at Babylon and elsewhere. But Job seems to be speaking of something more primitive than either of these—mere earthworks, like the Roman aggera' hastily thrown up and easy to level with the ground” [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - 2) “They could not resist an attack made upon them, but would be easily thrown down, like mud walls. Grotius renders it, ‘Your towers (of defense) are tumult of clay.’ Rosenmuller remarks on the verse that the ancients were accustomed to inscribe sentences of valuable historical facts on pillars. If these were engraved on stone, they would be permanent; if on pillars covered with clay, they would soon be obliterated. On a pillar or column at Alexandra, the architect cut his own name at the base deep in the stone. On the plaster or stucco with which the column was covered, he inscribed the name of the person to whose honor it was reared. The consequence was, that that name became soon obliterated; his own then appeared, and was permanent. But the meaning here is rather, that the apothegms and maxims behind which they entrenched themselves were like mud walls, and could not withstand an attack” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].

C. Job 13:13-19: Job Affirms His Willingness to Trust in God.

1. Verses 13-14: “Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will. Wherefore

do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?"

- a. He calls on his friends to hold their peace, and he would speak, regardless of the consequences. He is willing to risk speaking with Jehovah, and make his appeal to him. If he were a hypocrite, as his friends supposed, he would be afraid to make an appeal [vs. 16].
 - b. His statement about taking his flesh in his teeth may be an ancient proverb somewhat akin to our maxim, "taking our life in our hand." This view fits the context in which Job announces his intention of making an appeal directly to God. It may be dangerous for him to do so, but he is pressed by the circumstances to take this action.
2. Verses 15-16: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him."
- a. Job thinks that he may be placing his life at jeopardy by addressing the Almighty about his problems, but he is committed to doing it.
 - b. Even though God might decide by the nature of the case, that Job must be slain, yet the patriarch declares his determination to maintain his trust in him.
 - c. The ASV (and other modern versions) give a different rendition: "Behold, he will slay me; I have no hope: Nevertheless I will maintain my ways before him." This view of the verse makes Job's statement one of despair, which does not fit the context. The difference focuses on the word *trust*.
 - 1) "[Yet will I trust in him] The word used here *yaachal* (OT:3176) means properly to wait, stay, delay; and it usually conveys the idea of waiting on one with an expectation of aid or help. Hence, it means to hope. The sense here is, that his expectation or hope was in God; and if the sense expressed in our common version be correct, it implies that even in death, or after death, he would confide in God. He would adhere to him, and would still feel that beyond death he would bless him" [Barnes' Notes, Biblesoft].
 - 2) "Nothing can well be more awkward, or out of place, than the rendering adopted by many modern critics, 'Lo, He will slay me, I do not hope.' It is directly opposed to the statement in the very next clause [This also shall be my salvation...], and to the certainty which Job never loses, that his integrity will be recognized at last. On the whole the rendering of our A.V. [KJV] should be retained, or with a very slight change of the clause may be translated, as above, 'Lo, He may slay me, I will wait for Him,' i.e., 'abide hopefully the issue of His judgment'" (F.C. Cook, quoted by Jackson, p.43).
 - 3) "Job is saying that when he presents his case before Jehovah, even though he should do so at the cost of his life, he would still trust in Him. The fact that he would speak to the Almighty and that he desired to reason with Him (v.3), implies trust. So, whatever may come, Job will continue to maintain his ways before the Lord; he will wait for and trust (or hope) in him" (Hailey, p.126).
 - d. Verse 16 shows that our conclusion on the preceding verse is correct. Job's trust and hope in God will result in his eventual deliverance; he desires and expects salvation from his present problems; he has full trust in God for this deliverance.
 - e. A hypocrite shall not come before God. The very fact that Job is willing to make an appeal to Jehovah is evidence that he is righteous, for no hypocrite would dare approach God. In that ancient time, before cynicism and unbelief had corrupted mankind, the believers in the true God would not try to approach him if they knew they were insincere; even idolaters of the time operated out of fear for their gods. Job's argument would have carried weight in that setting.
3. Verses 17-19: "Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears. Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified. Who is he that will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost."
- a. These comments are directed to his friends. He asks them to listen carefully to his words. A jury is
-

expected to listen to the testimony given by both the prosecutor and the defense, weigh the evidence diligently, and arrive at the conclusion demanded by the information presented. That is what we ask of those we try to teach—listen, examine, and learn the truth. Religious error, indifference, sin, and materialism have so corrupted the majority that it is difficult to find an open and honest heart.

- b. Job has set his cause in an orderly arrangement. He knows his own heart, that he has operated with integrity before God. He is convinced that a fair evaluation of his case will result in his vindication.
- c. He calls on someone to try to convict him of wickedness based on the evidence. He knows that he is innocent of wrongdoing, therefore no one would be able to prove he is guilty. If they could do so, he would not be unwilling to suffer the proper punishment. Paul made a similar point in Acts 25:11: “For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.”
- d. “One thing is certain, he could not bear being treated as a sinner, condemned without a cause” (Hailey, p.127).

D. Job 13:20-28: Job Makes His Appeal To God.

1. Verses 20-22: “Only do not two things unto me: then will I not hide myself from thee. Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid. Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.”
 - a. In directing these remarks to God, the patriarch asks that God do not do two things to him. “These two things are the following: 1. Withdraw thine hand far from me—remove the heavy affliction which thy hand has inflicted. 2. Let not thy dread make me afraid—terrify me not with dreadful displays of thy majesty. The reasons of this request are sufficiently evident: 1. How can a man stand in a court of justice and plead for his life, when under grievous bodily affliction? Withdraw thy hand far from me. 2. Is it to be expected that a man can be sufficiently recollected, and in self-possession, to plead for his life, when he is overwhelmed with the awful appearance of the judge, the splendour of the court, and the various ensigns of justice? Let not thy dread make me afraid” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
 - b. “Although the two things are not clearly distinguished, for Job asked several things in this and the following verses, probably the two are: 1) ‘Withdraw thy hand far from me.’ The root from which ‘withdraw’ is derived expresses the idea of being far from, and ‘hand’ is a metonymy for God’s power and force, which Job believed was against him. 2) ‘And let not thy terror [dread] make me afraid’; the dread or terror is that which emanated from the greatness and majesty of God, ‘He is terrible in his doing toward the children of men’ (Ps. 66:5)” (Hailey, p.128). [It is clear that these are indeed the two items Job had in mind].
 - c. If God will remove the afflictions Job is presently suffering, the patriarch will be able to put forth a better defense; the pain of his present distress is so great that it would limit his ability to defend himself properly.
 2. Verses 23-25: “How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?”
 - a. Job makes a proper request: He wants to know the charges and the specifications that are brought against him. This is a major feature of the criminal justice system in this country. Clear charges must be alleged and the specifications of the charges delineated; our system does not allow the charges to be vague.
 - b. Since Job has suffered so many harsh experiences (the loss of his children, the removal of his flocks and herds, and the physical affliction of the boils), then his sins must have been many and great! What
-

- are they? Of course, Job knows that he is innocent.
- c. The terms iniquity, sin, and transgression are used.
 - 1) Iniquity—moral evil, perversity; living as if God had no law [lawlessness].
 - 2) Sin—missing the mark; not living up to God’s law.
 - 3) Transgression—rebellion; trespass; living in open rebellion to God’s law.
 - d. Job wants to know why God has hid his face from him, ignoring his disasters and ailments. Before his troubles commenced, the patriarch enjoyed the full measure of God’s bounties, but now all these have been removed. Many times, good people suffer cruel experiences. There may be many causes, one of which may be as a test of our faith and trust in God.
 - e. Job also asks why God is now treating him as though he were an enemy. Many things have been going on behind the scenes, unknown to Job and his friends, things of which we were told in the first two chapters. Job’s faith is being tested, for his benefit and for ours; his friends are likewise being tested, a test that they failed. They made many true and even great statements, but they erred in their conclusion that their friend was being punished for sinful conduct.
 - f. In verse 25, Job uses two figures which describe his own insignificance. No one would waste his time chasing after a leaf that is being blown by the wind; no one would expend his energy in a foolish pursuit of dry stubble. Would you want to collect dead leaves or dry stubble? Why? What value would they have? Job does not comprehend why God would take such an interest in one who is insignificant; why should God use his great power to punish an unimportant man, one who is not even guilty of the sins of which his friends have accused him.
3. Verses 26-28: “For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth. Thou putttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet. And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth eaten.”
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) “For thou writest bitter things against me, And makest me to inherit the iniquities of my youth: Thou putttest my feet also in the stocks, And markest all my paths; Thou settest a bound to the soles of my feet: Though I am like a rotten thing that consumeth, Like a garment that is moth-eaten” (ASV).
 - 2) “For You write bitter things against me, And make me inherit the iniquities of my youth. You put my feet in the stocks, And watch closely all my paths. You set a limit for the soles of my feet. Man decays like a rotten thing, Like a garment that is moth-eaten” (NKJV).
 - b. Job believes that God has recorded some bitter [poisonous, harsh] things against him. This appears to be a reference to God’s heavenly records of the earthly activities of his offspring. If Job’s friends are correct, then the patriarch is in sin—and God has a record of his evil deeds—to which he will be held accountable. Those who die in sin must meet those transgressions in the Judgment.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
 - 2) Matthew 12:36-37: “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”
 - 3) Galatians 6:7-8: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”
 - 4) John 5:28-29: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life;
-

- and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
- 5) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
- c. The Bible often speaks of this theme. When we meet the conditions shown in the gospel, we can know by that inspired revelation that our names are recorded in the Lamb’s Book of Life.
- 1) Malachi 3:16: “Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.”
 - 2) Exodus 32:32-33: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."
 - 3) Psalms 69:28: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."
 - 4) Luke 10:20: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."
 - 5) Revelation 3:5: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."
 - 6) Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
 - 7) Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
 - 8) Revelation 20:15: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
- d. The patriarch also speaks in verse 26 about God bringing up against him the iniquities he committed in his youth. He apparently acknowledges that he was guilty of sinful conduct during his early years, and that these may be the ones for which God is now punishing him. If that is the case, we would wonder why did God wait so long? And why did he bless Job with such prosperity that he had possessed for many years? The passage does not teach the devil’s doctrine of inherited sin, for this theory is fully discredited in many places in the Bible.
- 1) Genesis 8:21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for **the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth**; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.” [Sin does not start in our infancy, but in our youthful years].
 - 2) Ezekiel 18:20: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” [The sins of the parent are not imputed to the child; the righteousness of the parent is not conferred to the child].
 - 3) Ezekiel 28:15: “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.” [One is perfect when he enters this life, and remains in that condition until sin is committed by the individual].
-

- 4) Matthew 18:3: “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” [One who would be a follower of Christ must become as pure and innocent as little children; thus little children are free from sin].
- 5) Matthew 19:14: “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” [Those in the kingdom of Christ are like little children—pure and free from the contamination of sin].
- e. Job thinks that God has confined him in stocks. The affliction he now endures hinders his activities; he is unable to do what he was able formerly to do.
 - 1) “The word rendered ‘stocks’ *cad* (OT:5465), denotes the wooden frame or block in which the feet of a person were confined for punishment. The whole passage here is designed to describe the feet as so confined in a clog or clogs, as to preclude the power of motion. Stocks or clogs were used often in ancient times as a mode of punishment. Prov 7:22. Jeremiah was punished by being confined in the stocks. Jer 20:2; 29:2,6. Paul and Silas were in like manner confined in the prison in stocks; Acts 16:24.
 - a) “Stocks appear to have been of two kinds. They were either clogs attached to one foot or to both feet, so as to embarrass, but not entirely to prevent walking, or they were fixed frames to which the feet were attached so as entirely to preclude motion. The former were often used with runaway slaves to prevent their escaping again when taken, or were affixed to prisoners to prevent their escape. The fixed kinds—which are probably referred to here—were of different sorts. They consisted of a frame, with holes for the feet only; or for the feet and the hands; or for the feet, the hands, and the neck.
 - b) “At Pompeii, stocks have been found so contrived that ten prisoners might be chained by the leg, each leg separately by the sliding of a bar. ‘Pict. Bible.’ The instrument is still used in India, and is such as to confine the limbs in a very distressing position, though the head is allowed to move freely” [Barnes' Notes, Biblesoft].
 - c) The “print upon the heels of my feet” may be a reference to a mark caused by his feet being placed in the stocks. Of course, Job was not literally confined in stocks; this is a figurative description of his present hardships. “Barnes suggested that putting a print upon the heels of one’s feet probably referred to a custom of Job’s day now lost to us. Probably the phrase simply meant that God had set some kind of a bound about Job that limited his movements physically, or restricted him from finding God and the answers to his questions” (Hailey, p.129).
- f. Job describes himself (and other humans) in verse 28.
 - 1) “Job speaks of himself in the third person, thus forming the transition to the general lot of man (Job 14:1; Ps 39:11; Hos 5:12). The sense is, Wilt not thou, in the case of one so consumed and worn out by disease, grant some respite from constant narrowly watching, and from hedging me in with calamities?....
 - a) “The sincere believer, however sorely tried (Job 13:15) by God, never parts with his trust in God. Like Jesus, amidst afflictions he can still triumphantly cry (Job 13:19), ‘Who is he that shall condemn me? Behold, the Lord God will help me’ (Isa 50:9; Rom 8:33-35). Such faith, though exposed to a fiery ordeal for a time, will come forth the brighter and the more unalloyed at the last.
 - b) “Meanwhile, how it stings the conscience to have the iniquities of youth brought to remembrance! If the young would desire to escape a world of remorse and self-reproach hereafter, they must exercise a jealous watchfulness over their passions and ways now. Above all, they must enlist Almighty strength on their side against temptation, by unceasing prayer.

So shall they not be as a moth-eaten garment (Job 13:28) at the last, but as a bride adorned and beautified for her husband” [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].

- 2) It seems to be Job’s point in this last verse to describe himself as not being worth the attention and effort God has been directing to him, in the affliction he is undergoing. “He regarded it as unworthy of God, to be so attentive in watching over so worthless an object. This is closely connected with the following chapter, and there should have been no interruption here. The allusion to himself as feeble and decaying, leads him into the beautiful description in the following chapter of the state of man in general. The connection is something like this:—” I am afflicted and tried in various ways. My feet are in the stocks; my way is hedged up. I am weak, frail, and dying. But so it is with man universally” [Barnes’ Notes, Biblesoft].
 - 3) Job understands the temporary nature of man’s earthly life; his body will grow old, weaken, and die, and then disintegrate into the dust of the earth. A garment may be eaten by moths, and thus destroyed to further usefulness. So is it with man, as far as earthly life is concerned.
 - a) Deuteronomy 8:4: “Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.”
 - b) Isaiah 50:9: “Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.”
 - c) Isaiah 51:6: “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.”
 - d) James 4:13-15: “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”
-

Job 14

Job's Speech Continues

A. Job 14:1-12: The Mortality of Man.

1. Verses 1-2: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."
 - a. The patriarch here describes in a beautiful and graphic way both the shortness of man's life on earth and the hardships which accompany his sojourn. The passage corresponds to other statements in the Bible:
 - 1) Psalms 37:2: "For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb."
 - 2) Psalms 90:9-12: "For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - 4) James 4:14: "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
 - 5) 2 Corinthians 4:17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."
 - b. In the context, Job wonders why he is under such a heavy load of trouble, seeing that he is only a mere mortal. Why is such a creature as Job worthy of God's punishment? There is much more to God's plans than humans are able to perceive, unless God reveals his mind.
 - c. Job employs two figures of speech to depict a man's life—a flower and a shadow.
 - 1) A flower blossoms brightly and displays its beauty; it may be gathered into a bouquet and placed in water, but it will fade away in a few days. If the flower is left in its natural state, it will last only a short time. At best, a man's life is short and its end is inevitable.
 - 2) A shadow passes over the landscape and is gone, leaving no trace of its passing. A cloud moves over us, casting a brief shadow on the land; a large bird flies overhead, casting a shadow on us as it continues its flight. The shadow is pictured as "fleeing"—as though being pursued by an enemy. A shadow has no substance and leaves no mark on the land. A man's life is like a shadow—it is here only for a short space of time, and frequently leaves little to mark its presence.
 - d. The wise man used similar ideas:
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 1:11: "There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 2:16: "For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool."
2. Verses 3-6: "And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of

his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.”

- a. The patriarch wonders why God, who is infinite in every respect, brings an insignificant man into judgment. Why would God waste his time and effort in such a fruitless venture? God is so great and man is so trivial in comparison, why should the Almighty even open his eyes to look upon such an inconsequential being? Compare:
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”
 - 2) Psalms 8:1-9: “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”
- b. To further show his insignificance in contrast to God, Job describes himself as unclean. He is so unclean in contrast to the perfect holiness of God, that he is not worth cleaning up. Some garments can become so soiled and stained that they are beyond the effort and expense required to restore them to cleanness. This passage offers no support to the man-made doctrine of inherited sin. There is nothing in the text that suggests such a conclusion. Further, that doctrine is repudiated by many plain declarations of Scripture.
 - 1) Genesis 8:21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.” [Sin begins during a man's youth, not in his infancy or childhood].
 - 2) Ezekiel 18:20: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”
 - 3) Ezekiel 28:15: “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.”
 - 4) Matthew 18:3: “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” [The pure state of little children is the state which is returned to those who are converted to Christ].
 - 5) Matthew 19:14: “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - 6) 1 Corinthians 14:20: “Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.” [There are qualities that pertain to little children which must be cultivated and practiced by members of the Lord's family].
 - 7) Romans 3:12: “They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” [The spiritual condition described did not pertain to these men when they were infants or little children; they were not born in that condition; they *became* that

- way; they *went out* from their original condition of purity].
- 8) By way of contrast, consider the perfectly pure state of God's purity: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa. 6:1-5).
- c. God has determined the length of a man's life. This does not suggest that God has inscribed the very date (the year, month, day, hour, minute) of his death, but has determined the general limits of his earthly life. The Bible says that God has "appointed unto man once to die" (Heb. 9:27); that statement speaks of the fact of a man's death, not the date of his demise.
- 1) Ephesians 6:1-4: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The implication of this passage is this: If the young man obeyed his parents, his life on earth could be longer than if he were disobedient. This shows that God has not determined ahead of time the exact day of a man's death.
 - 2) Prayer in behalf of another person can have an effect on his health and life, even to the point of bringing about a longer life. John prayed that Gaius might be in health (3 John 2). If his health was maintained and extended, an obvious result would be a longer life. The brethren prayed for Peter when he was facing execution (Acts 12); he was released and lived for a good many more years. Epaphroditus was gravely ill (Phil. 2:25-30). Prayer was offered in his behalf, that his life might be spared—the prayers were answered. If the date of his death was already determined, why did Paul (an inspired apostle) pray to change that date? Evidently, no such date had been set.
 - 3) Hezekiah was told to set his house in order, because God had determined that he would die and not live. After praying about it, God granted him fifteen more years—the day of his death had not been so settled that it could not be changed (2 Kings 20).
 - 4) In the early generations of the race, men lived to be several hundred years of age. Over time, the length of life shrank. Abraham lived 175 years; Jacob lived 147 years; Joseph died at the age of 110; David was only 70 when he died. The general time frame for a man's life has been roughly seventy (with many exceptions). "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Ps. 90:10).
 - 5) Many unfortunate people have ended their lives prematurely by suicide, but no one can extend his days beyond the limitations God has set. In other words, we are all sure to die; we cannot forestall the cold hand of the grim reaper.
- d. In verse six, Job asks for a respite from his sufferings. It appears that the patriarch is asking for a day off from his suffering, like a hired man gets when he can cease his labors.
- 1) "Look away from him that he may rest, Till like a hired man he finishes his day" (Job 14:6, NKJV). As a hired man gets a day off for rest, Job desires that God look away from him (i.e., that he might get a break from his sufferings).
 - 2) Job perceives that as long as God fixes his eyes upon the patriarch, Job's sufferings continue.
3. Verses 7-9: "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in
-

the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.”

- a. Some trees which have been cut down can put out new growth from the stump. In such cases, cutting down the tree does not destroy its life.
 - b. “God's vegetable creation is better off, in respect of length of days, than man. Let a tree be cut down, it is not therefore of necessity destroyed. There is yet hope for it. The bare dry stump will sometimes put forth tender branches, which will grow and flourish, and renew the old life. Or, if the stump be quite dead, suckers may spring up from the root and grow into new trees as vigorous as the one that they replace (comp. Isa 11:1)...Some trees, as the Spanish chestnut, if cut down flush with the ground, throw up shoots from the entire circle of the stump, often as many as fifteen or twenty. And that the tender branch thereof will not cease. The vigour of such shoots is very great. In a few years they grow to the height of the parent tree. If they are then removed they are quickly replaced by a fresh growth...Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. After the stump is actually dead, suckers may be thrown up from the roots, if sufficient water be supplied to them; and these will put forth branches luxuriantly” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by BibleSoft].
 - c. Pepper trees were introduced into Florida many years ago for their beautiful flowers, but they are very difficult to kill; they continue to put out roots which produce other trees; in a short time, they spread to cover the available space. To kill them, the stumps must be treated with chemicals quickly after the trees are cut down.
4. Verses 10-12: “But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.”
- a. There is hope for a tree that has been cut down that it will again sprout from the stump, but there is no hope of a dead man returning to his erstwhile place on earth. As water from the sea evaporates and streams that dry up are seen no more, so also with man.
 - b. Job is not denying the fact of the resurrection of the dead. He is stating that a dead man will never again be raised back to his former life on earth; he forever leaves behind his former situation when he dies. The point is the same as the one made by Solomon: “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun...Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Eccl. 9:5-6,10). Notice that Solomon’s point is limited by the phrase, “under the sun” [i.e., on the earth].
 - c. Far from Job’s statement being a wail of despair, it forms the background for his affirmation in verse fourteen that the dead will be released from Sheol. Although the patriarch’s information regarding the resurrection of the dead is not as complete as ours, he still had a conception of this great event.
 - d. In verse twelve, notice the word *till*. When a man “lieth down” (when he dies), he will not rise again **till** the heavens are no more. The dead will not be raised up until the occasion when the heavens are destroyed, a fact clearly taught in the New Testament. When the Lord returns, the dead will be raised and the living will be instantly changed, the earth and all things material will be destroyed (2 Pet. 3:8-14; Matt. 24:35). We may not know how much of these great realities Job comprehended, but that he had a basic grasp of these matters is not to be denied. His immediate point is that those who die will never again be raised out of their sleep to take up their former affairs on earth. There were a few exceptions to this rule during the age of miracles; certain individuals were resurrected for specific purposes, but these all died again (except for our Lord).
-

- e. The New Testament offers many powerful statements about the resurrection, including these:
- 1) John 5:28-29: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:50-57: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - 3) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
 - 4) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
 - 5) Acts 24:15: “And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”

B. Job 14:13-15: Shall a Dead Man Live Again?

1. Verse 13: “O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!” (KJV). “Oh that thou wouldest hide me in Sheol, That thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, That thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!” (ASV).
 - a. Job is seeking for some kind of relief from the grievous suffering that has been thrust upon him; he does not comprehend the cause of this agony. In this passage, the patriarch wonders whether God could hide him in Sheol until the time of His wrath should pass. The KJV uses the word *grave*, but the term more properly refers to the place of the unseen dead; *Sheol* is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek term *Hades*.
 - b. “In this verse Job groped for a ray of hope that there may be life beyond the grave. From the reverie of his soliloquy, he turned to God with a plea that He would hide or cover him in Sheol until His wrath be past. Sheol (grave, KJV) in its original use probably referred to the grave (tomb), but in time it came to represent the unseen world of departed spirits (cf. Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27, 29). Instead of a place of darkness from which man does not return (7:10; 10:21), a place of gloom as suggested by tombs with their darkness, dustiness, and dead men’s bones, Job now appealed to Sheol as a place of temporary hiding from whence, in His own time, God would remember him, giving him a future opportunity in which to vindicate himself” (Hailey, p.134).
 - 1) Psalms 16:10: “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to

- see corruption.”
- 2) Acts 2:27, 29: “Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption....Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.”
 - 3) Job 7:10: “He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.”
 - 4) Job 10:21: “Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death.”
- c. Other comments from the scholars:
- 1) “Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the grave! literally, in Sheol' which here does not so much mean ‘the grave,’ as the place of departed spirits, described in Job 10:21,22. Job desires to have God's protection in that ‘land of darkness,’ and to be ‘hidden’ there by him until his wrath be past. It has been generally supposed that he means after his death; but Schultens thinks his desire was to descend to Sheol alive and there remain, while his punishment continued, hidden from the eyes of men. That thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past. Job assumes that, if he is being punished for his youthful sins (Job 13:26), his punishment will not be for long—at any rate, not for ever; God's anger will at last be satisfied and cease. That thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! How long he may have to suffer be does not greatly care. Only let it be ‘a set time’—a fixed, definite period—and at the end of it, let God ‘remember’ him” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by BibleSoft].
 - 2) “There is evidently a desire on the part of Job to be hid in some secret place until the tempest of wrath should sweep by, and until he should be safe. There is an expectation that he would live again at some future period, and a desire to live after the present tokens of the wrath of God should pass by. It is probably a wish for a safe retreat or a hiding-place where he might be secure, as from a storm. A somewhat similar expression occurs in Isa 2:19, where it is said that people would go into holes and caverns until the storm of wrath should pass by, or in order to escape it” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
2. Verse 14: “If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.” “If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my warfare would I wait, Till my release should come” (ASV).
- a. To enter Sheol (Hades), one must die. Job perceives this truth. He understands that if God should allow him to enter Sheol, thus to escape his current sufferings, he must die. But if he is dead, is there any possibility that he will live again. Job expresses this thought in the third person—if a man die (any man).
 - b. Once a man dies, will he ever live again? Job knew (as we know) that death ends all earthly ties; we will never be able to re-enter life on earth and take up where we left off. But he asks whether there will be life for anyone beyond death.
 - c. Job evidently understands that there is life beyond death. He states his determination to wait through to the appointed time [*warfare*, ASV] when his change would come. *Change* is rendered *release* in the ASV. In either case, there would be an occasion when he would be changed or released; he would come forth from Sheol (Hades) into a new life. This appears to anticipate Paul's statements about the resurrection:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:50-54: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when
-

this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”

- 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
- 3) At the Lord’s Second Coming, the dead will be raised, the living will be changed, the material universe will be destroyed, and all accountable humans will be brought before the Lord in the final Judgment. The Judgment will conclude with the appropriate destinies being meted out to us all.
- d. The *appointed time* [KJV] is called *warfare* in the ASV. This could be in reference to the time of the painful struggles through which he is presently going; it could have reference to the time in Sheol he must pass until the change (release) is brought about by the resurrection. This latter view is the one which appeals to this scribe. We understand that time as we know it in this life is not to be found in eternity.
3. Verse 15: “Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.”
 - a. The call [if our view of the previous verse is correct] is the summons for all the dead to come forth. Our Lord stood before the tomb of Lazarus and called for his friend to arise from the sleep of death [John 11]. He called him by name, lest all the dead ones should respond. This case of resurrection shows that our Lord has power over death; this was one of several cases listed in the Bible where certain dead persons were resurrected. But each of these [except Christ] was destined to die again.
 - b. At the Lord’s return, the trumpet shall be sounded and the archangel shall raise a great shout. The voice of the Lord will also we heard: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29).
 - c. Job declares his readiness to answer when the call comes. At that time, God will have deep interest in his creature [in this case, Job]; whereas in his present circumstance, Job was suffering immense discomfort and loss [which Job could not comprehend], which appeared to Job to be that God had no interest in his condition. But in this final event, God would have great interest in his people. What is true in Job’s case, will be true for all of the faithful—God will bless us beyond our greatest desires.

C. Job 14:16-22: Some Gloomy Words.

1. Verses 16-17: “For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.”
 - a. Job continues his lament, deploring his own present condition and the general wretchedness of man. He mentions the fact that God had numbered his steps and took keen notice of his sins. Job speaks of God having catalogued and listed his sins, and had preserved them in a bag for future reference; none of the sins would be forgotten or lost. He sees God as having sewn up his iniquities for safe keeping, lest any of them be misplaced or overlooked.
 - b. He speaks of his sin, his transgression, and his iniquity. God keeps account of everything that Job does [*he numbers his steps*]. Having considered Sheol and what happens later, the patriarch now returns to the reality of his present deplorable condition. His friends have constantly asserted that his sins have brought about his painful distresses. Job knows better, but at times he seems to be half

- convinced that his friends may be right.
- c. He seems on the brink of despair at this point, believing that God has preserved memory of his guilt and is bound to punish Job fully. The great man had admitted earlier [13:26] that he had committed sins during his youth, but had lived uprightly since then. Evidently, these are the sins to which he alludes in this passage.
2. Verses 18-19: “And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.”
 - a. Looking at nature, Job perceives (as we all do) that the mountains erode away gradually, the rocks fall from their places, and all nature is in a state of change and decay. The plants which grow from the soil are destroyed by floods; and under the best of circumstances, plant life will only survive for a season.
 - b. The hope of man, observes Job, is likewise doomed to come to nought—in this earthly life. Man’s days here are few and full of trouble.
 - c. But for the faithful child of God, there is great hope for eternity: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:19-20).
 - 1) Philippians 3:20-21: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”
 - 2) 1 John 3:1-3: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
 - 3) Colossians 3:1-3: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”
 3. Verses 20-22: “Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away. His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.”
 - a. When a man dies, he has no way to know what happens to his children, whether good or evil befalls them. “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun....Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Eccl. 9:5-6,10).
 - b. A man’s physical body changes as the years pass. When he reaches middle or old age, he scarcely resembles his appearance when he was ten years old. With the passing of years, the body grows older, and weaker; ailments appear; our physical abilities are eroded; and finally death wrenches our spirit from our mortal frame.
 - c. As we grow older, there are many heartaches and losses that cause us pain. Our parents die, we lose our siblings; our close friends are no more with us; our family and friends change even as the world around us continually changes.
 - d. These things have been so ordered by God’s infinite wisdom and power, so that no man can change these affairs. Life is composed of suffering in the body and anguish in the soul which is within us. If
-

this life was all that there was to our existence, our lot would indeed be desperate and full of despair. But there is hope in Christ! There is the hope of Heaven before us! There is the possibility of being reunited with our redeemed loved ones in eternity!

- 1) Matthew 8:11: “And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:14: “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.”
- e. We remember that our present frailties and troubles have their roots in sin. When Adam and Eve sinned (Gen. 3), they opened the door for pain, trouble, and death—which have become the common lot of all the sons and daughters of Adam. But all that was lost in Adam, is more than equaled, for those in Christ.
-

Job 15

Eliphaz Lodges a Strong Accusation Against Job

A. Job 15:1-6: Eliphaz Accuses Job With Filling His Belly With the East Wind.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said, Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind? Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?"
 - a. Eliphaz gets very harsh in his criticism of Job. He accuses him of being nothing but a "windbag." He asserts that Job's belly is filled with the east wind, which in Palestine spells disaster to the farmers, since it comes in from the hot desert, drying out and destroying the crops.
 - b. He says that a wise man will not speak vain words, therefore Job is not a wise man; he has nothing profitable to say; his speech is no good.
 - c. Of course, as with the other friends, Eliphaz errs in making these charges against Job; he does not understand the whole situation.
2. Verses 4-5: "Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God. For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty."
 - a. He charges the patriarch with having no reverence for the Almighty. "Fear here means the fear or reverence of God; and the idea is, that Job had not maintained a proper veneration or respect for his Maker in his argument. He had defended principles and made assertions which implied great disrespect for the Deity. If those doctrines were true; if he was right in his views about God, then he was not a being who could be revered. No confidence could be placed in his government; no worship of such a being could be maintained. Eliphaz does not refer here so much to what was personal with Job, as to his principles. He does not mean so much to affirm that he himself had lost all reverence for God, as that his arguments led to that. Job had maintained that God did not in this life reward and punish people strictly according to their deserts. If this was so, Eliphaz says, then it would be impossible to honor him, and religion and worship would be at an end" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - b. Eliphaz maintains that Job's arguments would undermine the need to pray. That is, if God treats the righteous and the wicked similarly, why should anyone be religious? Why should anyone pray? Why should anyone expect any help from God? We learn from the Bible that the righteous often face many hardships in this life, and the unrighteous often seem to have an easier life. It is clear that God does not always reward righteousness or punish wickedness in this life. Eliphaz had not learned this great truth.
 - 1) Job 9:23-24: "If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?"
 - 2) Psalms 73:12-18: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction."
 - c. Job's friend accuses him of speaking iniquity and that he used a crafty tongue. He thinks that Job cannot be believed.
3. Verse 6: "Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee."
 - a. He claims that Job has proved his own guilt by his own words. A man's words are an index to his

character and can either justify or condemn him.

- 1) Proverbs 23:7: “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.”
 - 2) Matthew 12:34-37: “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”
- b. But Job is innocent of the charges his friends allege against him. This we know by the fact that God spoke so highly of him at the outset of the story and by the great blessings he bestowed upon him at the end of the ordeal. God is pleased with the humble and obedient: “For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isa. 66:2).

B. Job 15:6-13: Has Job Heard the Secret of God?

1. Verses 7-8: “Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?”
 - a. Sarcastically, Eliphaz asks Job whether he is the oldest man on earth. His argument is based on the notion that the older a man is, the greater is his wisdom. He wonders whether Job is older than the hills, which seemingly are the least changed with the passing of the ages. “Job, are you as old as the hills (mountains)? Have you been around since the creation?”
 - b. He then asserts by his question that Job thinks he is privy to all of God’s secrets, and that He has not shared that information with anyone else.
 - c. Eliphaz’s rhetorical questions are intended as ridicule. They form an emotional argument. They are not logical. This is the kind of rhetoric we hear from some politician, liberals, and religious false teachers. They will not meet the issue squarely and honestly.
2. Verses 9-10: “What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us? With us are both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father.”
 - a. “If you think you know something, we know as much or more.” Sounds like the juvenile claim that “my father can beat your father!” Eliphaz continues his emotional arguments.
 - b. We have some old, grayheaded ones on our side, who are older even than your father. In other words, “we have access to greater knowledge and wisdom than you.”
 - c. Job had earlier stated the general truth that wisdom comes with age and experience. “With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding” (Job 12:12). This does not make one infallible who had reached an advanced age; in fact, a younger person might have far greater wisdom and knowledge than an aged person. Eliphaz twists Job’s statement to make an illogical argument: “There are more old, grayheaded men who agree with us than with you!”
 - d. Truth is not to be determined by the number of people who support a given tenet.
 - 1) Exodus 23:2: ‘Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.’
 - 2) Matthew 7:13-14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”
3. Verses 11-13: “Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee? Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at, That thou turnest thy spirit against God,

and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?”

a. Other versions:

- 1) “Are the consolations of God too small for thee, Even the word that is gentle toward thee? Why doth thy heart carry thee away? And why do thine eyes flash, That against God thou turnest thy spirit, And lettest words go out of thy mouth?” (ASV).
- 2) “Are the comforts of God too small for you, or the word that deals gently with you? Why does your heart carry you away, and why do your eyes flash, that you turn your spirit against God and bring such words out of your mouth?” (ESV).
- 3) “Are the consolations of God too small for you, And the word spoken gently with you? Why does your heart carry you away, And what do your eyes wink at, That you turn your spirit against God, And let such words go out of your mouth?” [NKJV].

b. “By ‘the consolations of God’ Eliphaz probably means the hopes which he and his friends had held out, speaking in God's Name, that if Job would humble himself, and confess his guilt, and sue to God for pardon, he would be restored to favour, recover his prosperity, and live to a good old age in tranquil happiness (see Job 5:18-27; 8:20-22; 11:13-19). He wishes to know if Job thinks lightly of all this, regards it as of small account, will make no effort to obtain the blessings held out to him. This is all reasonable enough from his standpoint, that Job is conscious of secret heinous guilt; but it can make no impression on Job, who is conscious of the reverse” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].

c. The three friends thought very highly of themselves, but belittled Job. They thought surely that God was speaking through them, offering comforting words to Job. But they were miserable comforters!

d. Eliphaz demanded to know why Job had allowed his own heart to carry him away from God—he thus assumed the point that must be proved [that Job was guilty of sin]. He says that Job’s emotions [his flashing eyes] have given rise to his rash words.

e. “His heart and spirit were turned against God, and the flash of his eyes and the words of his mouth expressed his true feeling. But what Job had turned away from was not God, although in his frustration he had said some harsh things about God that made Eliphaz’s charge plausible. It was their traditional concept of God that he opposed” (Hailey, p.141).

f. They assumed that God rewarded all righteousness and punished all iniquities speedily in this life. But—“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him” (Eccl. 8:11-12).

C. Job 15:14-19: What is Man That He should be Clean

1. Verses 14-16: “What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?”

a. Other versions:

- 1) “What is man, that he should be clean? And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his holy ones; Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight: How much less one that is abominable and corrupt, A man that drinketh iniquity like water!” (ASV).
- 2) “What is man, that he can be pure? Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous? Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in his sight; how much less one who is abominable and corrupt, a man who drinks injustice like water!” (ESV).
- 3) “What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous?”

- If God puts no trust in His saints, And the heavens are not pure in His sight, How much less man, who is abominable and filthy, Who drinks iniquity like water!" (NKJV).
- b. "The object of Eliphaz in this is to overturn the positions of Job that he was righteous, and had been punished beyond his deserts. He had before maintained (Job 4:7), that no one ever perished being innocent, and that the righteous were not cut off. This was with him a favorite position; and indeed the whole drift of the argument maintained by him and his friends was, to prove that uncommon calamities were proof of uncommon guilt" [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. Job had maintained his innocence. Eliphaz believed that Job was guilty. He states that all who are born of women are guilty; he had alleged in chapter four that no one is pure before God. "The meaning is, 'What are all the pretensions of man to purity, when even the angels are regarded as impure and the heavens unclean?'" [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - d. According to Eliphaz, God can place no trust in his saints (*holy ones*—ASV). The context indicates that he has angels in mind. Even the heavens were contaminated by the rebellion of certain angels [this is Eliphaz's thought]. The Bible speaks of the fact that angels had sinned:
 - 1) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
 - 2) Jude 1:6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
 - 3) The ancients may have known about this angelic rebellion.
 - e. Eliphaz then states that since God could not place trust in his angels, how much less trust can he place in man. This statement would include the three friends as well as Job; since they were not suffering, but Job was suffering, the reason must be that Job's sins were of an especially heinous nature [according to Eliphaz].
 - 1) When he refers to man in verse 14, he means mankind in general; when he speaks of a man in verse 16, he is pointing an accusing finger at Job.
 - 2) He describes man [Job especially] as abominable and corrupt, and one who imbibes iniquity as readily as a thirsty man drinking water.
2. Verses 17-19: "I will show thee, hear me; and that which I have seen I will declare; Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it: Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them."
- a. Eliphaz now calls on Job to listen carefully while he reports some things which he has observed about the wickedness of man. He thinks that he knows more than Job has learned. In a condescending tone, he calls on the patriarch to listen and learn.
 - b. "Before proceeding with what he has seen concerning the wicked, Eliphaz appealed in a parenthetical statement to what wise men had received from their fathers, who had received and dwelt in the land as it was given to them, had preserved the traditions and truths uncontaminated by strangers who might otherwise have perverted their teachings (v.10). Of course this overlooked the fact that the ancients themselves could have reached faulty conclusions as is likewise often the case with 'wise' men of today" (Hailey, p.143).
 - c. "The remainder of this chapter is a violent declamation, designed to overwhelm Job with the proofs of personal guilt. Eliphaz professes to urge nothing which had not been handed down from his ancestors, and was the result of careful observation. What he says is made up of apothegms [a short saying stating a general truth—bw] and maxims that were regarded as containing the results of ancient wisdom, all meaning that God would punish the wicked, or that the wicked would be treated according to their deserts. The implied inference all along was, that Job, who had had so many proofs of the divine displeasure, must be a wicked man" [Barnes' Notes, Biblesoft].
-

D. Job 15:20-31: The Wicked Man Travaieth With Pain All his Days.

1. Verses 20-23: “The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor. A dreadful sound is in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him. He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword. He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, Even the number of years that are laid up for the oppressor. A sound of terrors is in his ears; In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him. He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, And he is waited for of the sword. He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand” (ASV).
 - 2) “The wicked man writhes in pain all his days, through all the years that are laid up for the ruthless. Dreadful sounds are in his ears; in prosperity the destroyer will come upon him. He does not believe that he will return out of darkness, and he is marked for the sword. He wanders abroad for bread, saying, 'Where is it?' He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his hand” (ESV).
 - 3) “The wicked man writhes with pain all his days, And the number of years is hidden from the oppressor. Dreadful sounds are in his ears; In prosperity the destroyer comes upon him. He does not believe that he will return from darkness, For a sword is waiting for him. He wanders about for bread, saying, 'Where is it?' He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his hand” (NKJV).
 - b. Eliphaz describes a wicked man as one who spends all his life in pain, as a woman in the travail of childbirth. Our English word “travail” grows out of our word “travel.” Through the ages, travel has usually been a painful ordeal, as one who has crossed America in a bus will agree. The life of a wicked man has been reserved for an oppressor, who will bring pain and suffering upon him throughout his days. At the very time of this comment, Job was suffering intensely from the affliction of sore boils which covered his body.
 - c. He will hear dreadful [terrifying] sounds as he makes his way laboriously through life. Even when a time of prosperity seems to elevate his sorrowful lot, these bounties are only for the destroyer who will violently deprive him of his possessions. This is a heavy-handed blow, intended as an insulting slap at Job.
 - d. The wicked man lives without hope. He does not believe that his lot will ever be improved. He is forlorn, dejected, depressed, despondent, miserable, and feels deserted by man and God. He expects some violent assault around every corner—the sword is waiting to fall upon him.
 - e. The wicked man even has trouble getting food [according to Eliphaz]. He searches for food without success. We may wonder where Job obtained his food, since his flocks and herds had been taken from him. Nothing is said about his crops being destroyed by the invaders [or whether he even had crops]. Being destitute of food and hope, and with the enemies assaulting him on every hand, the wicked man perceived that the day of darkness [an evident reference to death] was nearing. It is obvious that Eliphaz has Job in mind by these dire statements.
2. Verses 24-27: “Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle. For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers: Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.”
 - a. Other versions give these renditions:
 - 1) “Distress and anguish make him afraid; They prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle. Because he hath stretched out his hand against God, And behaveth himself proudly against the Almighty; He runneth upon him with a stiff neck, With the thick bosses of his bucklers; Because

- he hath covered his face with his fatness, And gathered fat upon his loins” (ASV).
- 2) “Trouble and anguish make him afraid; They overpower him, like a king ready for battle. For he stretches out his hand against God, And acts defiantly against the Almighty, Running stubbornly against Him With his strong, embossed shield. Though he has covered his face with his fatness, And made his waist heavy with fat” (NKJV).
 - 3) “Trouble and anguish make him afraid; They overpower him, like a king ready for battle. For he stretches out his hand against God, And acts defiantly against the Almighty, Running stubbornly against Him With his strong, embossed shield. Though he has covered his face with his fatness, And made *his* waist heavy with fat” (ESV).
- b. His distresses, troubles, and anguish destroy his courage and confidence; he lives in fear and gloom. A mighty king with a powerful army, making ready to do battle, engendered terror on the intended victim; so it is with the trouble and anguish hovering above the wicked man.
 - c. The wicked man is in these dire straits because he has set himself against Almighty God. He defies his Maker. In effect, he shakes his fist at God. Many years ago, an atheist made a speech before a large audience, in which he vilified God. He shook his fist toward heaven and demanded that God strike him dead, if there was truly a God in Heaven. In breathless silence, the shocked assembly awaited the verdict. After a few moments, the infidel declared that the absence of any action on God’s part was proof that there is no God. This is like a group of beetles listening to an arrogant fellow-insect declare that there was no such person as George W. Bush, President of the United States; and to prove his non-existence, he shook his fist toward Washington and defied Mr. Bush to come and stomp on him; if he did not, then he did not exist!
 - d. In Eliphaz’s illustration, he depicts the wicked man charging at God, having a stiff neck and armed with embossed shields. Thus, he wages war against the Almighty. The implication of this description is to portray Job as fighting against God.
 - e. “[Because he covereth his face with his fatness] That is, he not only stretches out his hand against God (Job 15:25) and rushes upon him as an armed foe (Job 15:26), but he gives himself up to a life of luxury, gluttony, and licentiousness; and therefore, these calamities must come upon him. This is designed to be a description of a luxurious and licentious person—a man who is an enemy of God, and who, therefore, must incur his displeasure” [Barnes' Notes, Biblesoft].
 - f. Eliphaz depicts the wicked man as having become fat in his sinful lifestyle. [We are made to wonder why he thus describes the man who is earlier pictured as in a state of starvation—vs. 23].
 - 1) Psalms 17:10: “They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.”
 - 2) Psalms 73:7: “Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.”
 - 3) Psalms 119:70: “Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.”
 - 4) Jeremiah 5:28: “They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.”
 - 5) Matthew 13:15: “For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”
3. Verses 28-31: “And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps. He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth. He shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away. Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompense.”
 - a. Other versions:
-

- 1) “And he hath dwelt in desolate cities, In houses which no man inhabited, Which were ready to become heaps; He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, Neither shall their possessions be extended on the earth. He shall not depart out of darkness; The flame shall dry up his branches, And by the breath of God's mouth shall he go away. Let him not trust in vanity, deceiving himself; For vanity shall be his recompense” (ASV).
 - 2) “He dwells in desolate cities, In houses which no one inhabits, Which are destined to become ruins. He will not be rich, Nor will his wealth continue, Nor will his possessions overspread the earth. He will not depart from darkness; The flame will dry out his branches, And by the breath of His mouth he will go away. Let him not trust in futile *things*, deceiving himself, For futility will be his reward” (ESV).
 - 3) “He dwells in desolate cities, In houses which no one inhabits, Which are destined to become ruins. He will not be rich, Nor will his wealth continue, Nor will his possessions overspread the earth. He will not depart from darkness; The flame will dry out his branches, And by the breath of His mouth he will go away. Let him not trust in futile things, deceiving himself, For futility will be his reward” (NKJV).
- b. The wicked man, in Eliphaz’s description, dwells in cities which are desolate, in houses where no one else lives. “Instead of living in affluence and in a splendid city, he shall be compelled to take up his abode in places that have been deserted and abandoned. Such places—like Petra or Babylon now—became the temporary lodgings of caravans and travelers, or the abodes of outcasts and robbers. The meaning here is, that the proud and wicked man shall be ejected from his palace, and compelled to seek a refuge far away from the usual haunts of men” [Barnes' Notes, Biblesoft].
 - c. Not only are the places he lives uninhabited by other people, they are on the verge of becoming heaps of rubble. God’s wrath will come upon these abodes.
 - d. Eliphaz states that the wealth the wicked man has amassed will not be continued; he will lose what he has gained. This is obviously directed against Job, for he has lost his possessions in a series of harsh blows. What miserable comforters his friends are! The fact stated by Eliphaz is correct, but does not fit Job’s case.
 - e. The wicked man will not be able to depart from the darkness that is coming near. This darkness is probably a reference to death. There will be no escape either from death or from its grasp once it has come.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 9:10: “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”
 - 2) Hebrews 9:27: “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”
 - 3) Revelation 22:11-12: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”
 - f. “As the fire consumes the green branches of a tree, so shall punishment do to him. This comparison is very forcible, and the idea is, that the man who has been prospered as a tree shall be consumed—as the fire consumes a tree when it passes through the branches. The comparison of a prosperous man with a tree is very common, and very beautiful....The aged Skenandoah—a chief of the Oneida tribe of Indians, said, ‘I am an aged hemlock. The winds of an hundred winters have whistled through my branches. I am dead at the top. My branches are falling’” [Barnes' Notes, Biblesoft].
 - 1) Psalms 1:1-6: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the
-

rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

- 2) Psalms 37:35: “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.”
- 3) Psalms 92:12-13: “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.”
- g. “Eliphaz pointed out that one who trusts in vanity (emptiness) deceives himself and in exchange for his trust ends with nothing but emptiness for his portion. He has shame instead of glory, he bears no fruit (v. 31)” (Hailey, p.146).
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 2:9-11: “So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.”
 - 2) John 6:27: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

E. Job 15:32-35: The Congregation of the Hypocrites Shall be Desolate.

1. Verses 32-33: “It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green. He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.”
 - a. According to Eliphaz, the wicked man will meet with an untimely end. “A similar idea occurs in Psalm 55:23. ‘Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.’ As a general fact this is all true, and the observation of the ancient Idumeans was correct. The temperate live longer than the intemperate; the chaste longer than the licentious; he that controls and governs his passions longer than he who gives the reins to them; and he who leads a life of honesty and virtue longer than he who lives for crime. Pure religion makes a man temperate, sober, chaste, calm, dispassionate, and equable in his temper; saves from broils, contentions, and strifes; subdues the angry passions, and thus tends to lengthen out life” (Barnes, *ibid.*).
 - b. Eliphaz uses figures taken from the familiar enterprise of farming:
 - 1) The wicked will be like a plant in a farmer’s field that dies before it can produce its intended fruit.
 - 2) Continuing the figure, Eliphaz describes the untimely end of the wicked man as a vine which is shaken so as to cause the grapes to fall, before they had time to ripen.
 - 3) He will be like the olive tree that loses its flower before the olive can be produced.
2. Verse 34-35: “For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery. They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.”
 - a. Eliphaz says that the congregation [the company, the group, the gathering] of the hypocrites will come to nothing. A hypocrite is one who pretends to be what he is not. Not many pretend to be evil when they are in fact good; the very act of pretending to be wicked would spoil any goodness he might have had. The hypocrite is one who is evil but pretends to be good.
 - b. Whatever the cause of his hypocrisy, whether by bribery or in some other evil act or scheme, the hypocrite will be consumed by the wrath of God—at the appropriate time.
 - c. “Job was a Sheik, an Emir, a head of a tribe, and, therefore, a magistrate; see Job 29:7, seq. Yet a part

of his possessions and servants had been cut off by fire from heaven (Job 1:16); and Eliphaz means probably to imply that it had been because he had been guilty of receiving a bribe. This ancient proverb declared that the dwellings of the man who could be bribed would be consumed by fire; and now he presumes that the fact that Job had been visited by the fire of heaven was full proof that he had been guilty in this manner. It was about on principles such as these that the reasoning of the friends of Job was conducted" [Barnes, *ibid.*].

- d. Eliphaz concludes this speech by stating that wicked men conceive mischief, which produces iniquity; in their belly [i.e., in their heart] they prepare deceit.
-

Job 16

Job Responds to Eliphaz

A. Job 16:1-6: Job Asks His Friends if There is an End to Vain Words.

1. Verses 1-3: “Then Job answered and said, I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all. Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?”
 - a. Job describes his friends as “miserable comforters.” They had offered no encouraging words; they had attacked him by making many charges, sometimes vehemently. The patriarch would like to know when their unkind words will cease; he wonders what has emboldened Eliphaz to give such a response to what Job had earlier said.
 - b. All he had heard from them were vain words—words without real meaning. They made some very fine statements, but were consistent in misapplying the charges to Job’s case. Their philosophy was that if a man was experiencing harsh conditions, that meant he was being punished for some sin he had committed against God. They could not conceive that there were deeper forces at work, especially in Job’s situation.
2. Verses 4-6: “I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you. But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief. Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: and though I forbear, what am I eased?”
 - a. While he had needed their support and encouragement, they had given him a constant stream of criticism. Anyone can tear down; it takes no special talent to attack another. If their situations were reversed, Job could have done to them what they were doing to him. But knowing Job, we would not expect him to treat a friend ruthlessly. A consoling word can relieve much of the agony of inner grief or physical pain.
 - b. “Job had not denied the principle that man reaps as he sows (see 4:7; 13:7-8), but he denied their charge that his suffering, which was an exception to their traditional view, was punishment for sin” (Hailey, p.149).
 - c. His statement suggests that they had shaken their heads at him, as they scalded him with their hot words. To shake the head in such circumstances ordinarily is an indication of contempt and ridicule. Gospel preachers have had looks of amused contempt directed toward them as they presented some truth which a member of the audience considered unpleasant.
 - 1) Matthew 27:39-44: “And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.”
 - 2) Mark 15:29-32: “And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.”
 - d. Job could have spoken to them with such cruel words that they used against him, had their situations been reversed, but he would not have done so. Compare:
 - 1) Matthew 7:12: “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even

so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

- 2) Luke 6:31: “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”
- 3) 1 Peter 2:21-25: “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

B. Job 16:7-15: Job Says He has Been Filled With Wrinkles.

1. Verses 7-9: “But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company. And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face. He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.”
 - a. Job appeared to be in a no-win situation. If he spoke of his afflictions, he was rebuffed by his friends; if he had remained silent, they would take that as a tacit admission of guilt. What mortal could have remained completely silent while in the cruel grasp of the grievous torments Job was suffering? His children were dead, his great wealth had been violently taken from him, his wife suggested that he curse God (and invite destruction), and his friends were “miserable comforters.”
 - b. His “company” which had been made desolate is doubtless a reference to his family clan and household. His ten children were now dead, and virtually all of his servants had been slain. In quick succession, devastating news came, reporting the loss of his flocks and herds, the death of his servants, and the death of his beloved children.
 - c. These remarks Job makes are in reference to what God has done to him. “Since he was not eased by keeping silent, Job gave vent to his grief; he broke forth charging God with being his enemy and the cause of his troubles” (Hailey, p.150).
 - d. Job, who was a firm believer in God, could not conceive of any other way this great amount of trouble could be upon him without God allowing it, or perhaps sending it upon him directly. He knows that he has lived his life in purity and obedience to God. He could not comprehend why God would either allow or cause these distresses. Is there any mortal who would not have reacted as Job did under these painful circumstances? It is easy for one who is not suffering the anguish of the patriarch’s torment to complain against Job’s complaint.
 - e. How could he logically explain why God had allowed or brought upon him these great losses and pain? It is as though God had become his enemy, tearing at him in his wrath and gnashing upon him with his teeth.
 - f. The patriarch describes his physical condition as being wrinkled and lean. In his wretched state, he is in too much physical pain and mental anguish to eat properly. Again, we wonder, what was the source of his food? His household and property had been taken away. Of course, God takes care of his people:
 - 1) Psalms 37:25: “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”
 - 2) Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
 - 3) Philippians 4:11: “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”
 - 4) Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

- 5) Philippians 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
2. Verses 10-11: "They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me. God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked."
- His friends have gaped upon him in his pitiful condition. They were no doubt shocked at the wretched condition under which he had fallen, but they offered him no comforting words. Compare:
 - 1) Psalms 22:13: "They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion."
 - 2) John 18:22: "And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?"
 - 3) John 19:3: "And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands."
 - His friends did not literally slap Job on the face, but they certainly were not supportive. Their words formed a verbal assault against him, and God did not intervene in his behalf. In his own mind, it indeed appeared that he had been forsaken by wife, friends, and God.
 - The assaults directed against him have come from the ones who stole his animals, from the elements which destroyed other parts of his property and the house where his children were feasting, from the painful physical condition he was suffering, the lack of support from his wife, and now the vicious attacks by his friends. God has turned him over to the ungodly. Has God become his enemy? If so, why?
3. Verses 12-14: "I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a giant."
- These are figurative descriptions of the troubles Job has encountered. He presents these thoughts to depict how God has afflicted him. He is not charging the Almighty with hatred or wickedness; he is simply stating his view of how these problems had come upon him. He was at ease, living in comfort and happiness until these dreadful events broke forth upon him.
 - Job sees himself as having been broken apart; as having been taken by the neck and shaken into many pieces. Picture this as a giant taking a small man by the neck, lifting him from the ground, shaking him violently, and then throwing his body down.
 - He envisions God as having placed a target upon his body, and directed archers to shoot their arrows at him.
 - The "reins" Job mentions in verse thirteen is a reference to his vital organs. The term is used in Revelation 2:23 to describe the innermost part of our being: "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." The arrows has penetrated to his innermost parts, causing the gall to pour out upon the ground. "The gall that God poured out upon the ground symbolized the essence of bitterness that was poured as God's arrows penetrated his vital organs" (Hailey, p.152).
 - As Job describes it, God has broken many breaches in his defenses, as an assaulting army creates breaches in the wall of a city, in order to break through and reach the inhabitants and their property. Gradually, Job's defenses are being destroyed; he does not know how much longer he can endure.
 - "Like a giant, mighty man, a warrior of strength and valor, God overran him. This exhausted for the present Job's description of God's enmity against him: 1) God had come at him like a raging beast (man's treatment because of what God had done or allowed), 2) He had betrayed him into the hands of wicked men, 3) He had crushed him like a monster 4) He had used him as a target for his archers to shoot at; and 5) He had besieged him as an army would a wall, breaking it gap by gap" (Hailey,
-

p.153).

C. Job 16:15-22: Job's Face is Foul With Weeping.

1. Verses 15-17: "I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust. My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death; Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure" (KJV). "I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, And have laid my horn in the dust. My face is red with weeping, And on my eyelids is the shadow of death; Although there is no violence in my hands, And my prayer is pure" (ASV).
 - a. Job speaks first about having clothed himself in sackcloth. This was a coarse, rough cloth made of an animal's skin (goat or camel), and was worn next to the skin. The sackcloth itself would add a measure of discomfort.
 - b. In those ancient days, people who were in mourning donned sackcloth and sat in ashes, symbolic of their sorrow and pain. To sit down in ashes or to cover one's self with ashes was a symbol of deep mourning. To eat ashes is a figurative expression of mourning; it suggests having mourning as one's food. To feed on ashes is to serve the soul with that which is humiliating and does not satisfy.
 - 1) Job 2:8: "And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes."
 - 2) Job 42:6: "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."
 - 3) Esther 4:1: "When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry."
 - 4) Isaiah 61:3: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."
 - 5) Matthew 11:21: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."
 - 6) 2 Kings 6:30: "And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh."
 - 7) Job 42:6: "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."
 - c. Job's reference to defiling his horn in the dust symbolizes the desolation of his manhood and honor. Compare: "For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted....But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted" (Ps. 89:17,24). The word horn is used to depict one's strength, as the horn of a beast is its most significant weapon [cf. rhinoceros; water buffalo]. The patriarch has been deeply humiliated; he sees no hope of recovery.
 - d. His face was red from his much weeping; there is a shadow of death upon his eyes. This is not to be construed as an indication that Job was feeling sorry for himself. Rather, the patriarch is expressing his heart-felt grief over his predicament. His losses have overwhelmed him, his pain is almost too difficult to be borne, and his sorrow is oppressive—especially from his belief that he has been forsaken by the Almighty.
 - e. Job asserts that he had done no violence to others and his prayers have been pure. He knows his own history and his own heart; he is convinced that he is innocent of wrong-doing. Therefore, he is at a loss to explain his troubles. His friends have charged him with grievous sinful conduct, a charge which Job knows is untrue. His innocence makes his ordeal all the more difficult to bear.
2. Verses 18-22: "O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place. Also now, behold, my

witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God. O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour! When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

- a. He calls on the earth [personified] to leave his blood uncovered, but open for all to see. As the innocent blood of Abel called out to God for vindication (Gen. 4:10), so Job wants his blood to displayed for God to see—and vindicate the patriarch. If that happens, then there will be no reason for Job to cry out for exoneration.
 - b. "Under the law the blood of anything taken in hunting was to be poured out on the ground and covered with dust (Lev. 17:13); and in the case of murder, the blood of the murdered person could be expiated or cleansed only by the blood of him that shed it (Num. 35:33); otherwise, it remained in view to be expiated by divine judgment. In God's punishment of earth's inhabitants, He said, 'The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain' (Isa. 26:21)" (Hailey, p.154).
 - c. Job speaks of a witness he has in Heaven. That witness is God himself. While his friends on earth scorn the patriarch, his faithful and true witness in Heaven is certain to exonerate him. He wants to be held in proper esteem with God and before his neighbors.
 - d. At this point, we do not know the patriarch's age. That he had grown sons and daughters indicates he is not a young man. In verse twenty-two, Job acknowledges the fact that he can expect to have only a few more years on earth (at the most); at which time, he will be going to a place from which he will not return. At the end of the book (Job 42:16-17), we are told that he lived one hundred and forty years more, following his ordeal.
-

Job 17

Job's Response to Eliphaz Continues

A. Job 17:1-8: My Days Are Extinct.

1. Verses 1-4: “My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me. Are there not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?” “My spirit is consumed, my days are extinct, The grave is ready for me. Surely there are mockers with me, And mine eye dwelleth upon their provocation” (ASV).
 - a. The scholars are divided over how the Hebrew word *ruah* should be translated—as *breath* [KJV] or *spirit* [ASV]. In various contexts, the term can mean *wind*, *breath*, *mind*, and *spirit*. If Job is speaking of his breath, his reference is to the foul odor of his breath, brought on by his physical condition.
 - b. If he has in mind his spirit, then his point is that his days are winding down, his life is nearly over. This is the very point in the second part of the verse. However, the foulness of his breath fits the same line of thought.
 - c. Job appears sorely depressed, with the terrible losses he has suffered, and the equally horrible physical condition that has fallen upon him. Added to this is the uncertainty of the future; he can see no way of coming out of the painful state; death seems to be the only alternative to his present suffering. Thus, he speaks of the “graves” awaiting him. The plural form of the word likely has reference to the place of the dead, the cemetery.
 - d. In company with this predicament, he is assailed by mockers. These who mock him are his erstwhile friends; he has already described them as “miserable comforters.” They have continually bombarded him with their accusations; his eyes have had nothing else to look at except these mocking words from his friends. Job is not expressing despair and bitterness against God; rather, he is expressing the pain of an overburdened heart. In his sorrow and pain, he can see no escape except by death.
2. Verses 3-4: “Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me? For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt them.” “Give now a pledge, be surety for me with thyself; Who is there that will strike hands with me? For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: Therefore shalt thou not exalt them” (ASV).
 - a. In this statement, it appears that Job addresses God, asking the Almighty to deal directly with his case. Compare: “Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God” (Job 13:3). He wants assurance from God that he will exonerate Job, since the evidence will surely demand such.
 - b. Is there anyone else who could “strike hands” on such a matter? Job’s friends had already found him guilty of sin, for they did not know how else to explain why he was under such harsh conditions. To strike hands is equivalent to our shaking hands. In a manner of speaking, Job is asking God to shake hands with him [figuratively] and assure him that the patriarch’s case will be dealt with fairly.
 - c. “The whole passage here is obscure, because we are in a great measure ignorant of the ancient practices in courts of law, and of the ancient forms of trial. The general sense seems to be, that Job desires the Deity to enter into a judicial investigation....The phrase ‘lay down now’ means, lay down a pledge, or something of that kind; and may have referred to some ancient custom of giving security on going to trial, that no advantage would be taken, or that the parties would abide by the decision in the case....Here the idea seems to be, that Job wished the Deity to give him some pledge or security that justice would be done, or that he would not take advantage of his power and majesty to overawe him....Such a pledge Job desired in this case. All this is language taken from courts, and should not be pressed too much, nor should Job be hastily charged with irreverence” [Barnes' Notes, BibleSoft].
 - d. Job realizes that his friends have clouded minds toward his situation, so that they were incapable of rendering a just verdict. Job perceives that perhaps God, for some purpose hidden from Job’s

- knowledge, has not allowed them to grasp the truth on this matter, that he has in effect concealed from his friends an understanding of the patriarch's true status.
- e. This being the case, Job knows that God would not exalt them, which would imply that their verdicts about Job were accurate. Since we have the complete report of the patriarch's story, we know that God exalted Job, and vindicated him completely at the end. But at this point, in Job's mind, the outcome was still very much in doubt. But Job knows that the Almighty will do the right thing.
3. Verse 5: "He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail." "He that denounceth his friends for a prey, Even the eyes of his children shall fail" (ASV).
 - a. The American Standard Version shows that the "flattery" was in fact a denunciation. Job expresses it at a general point, but the application is obvious—his friends had unfairly attacked his character. By their unfounded charges against Job, they showed their willingness to sell him out for a price. Compare: "Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your friend" (Job 6:27).
 - b. "Here it [*flattery, denunciation*] is synonymous with plunder or spoil; and the idea is, that he who betrayeth his friends to the spoil or to the spoiler, the eyes of his children shall fail. The meaning in this connection is, that the friends of Job had acted as one would who should announce the residence of his neighbors to robbers, that they might come and plunder them. Instead of defending him, they had acted the part of a traitor" [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - c. Such evil conduct would bring certain consequences upon their own children. [Job speaks in a general way, but his argument obviously points to his friends]. The children of a wicked man would suffer certain harsh effects as a consequence of the father's sins. This fact was spelled out in the Mosaic Law; we are also shown that, though the consequences may fall upon the children, the guilt of the father is his own; the only ones who acquire the guilt of sin are those who participate in sin.
 - 1) Exodus 20:5: "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 24:16: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin."
 - 3) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - 4) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - d. We remember that Job is giving a response to Eliphaz. The statement of this passage was intended as a subtle warning to Eliphaz and the others—to speak or act wickedly against another is to invite trouble for their own families.
 4. Verse 6: "He hath made me also a byword of the people; and aforetime I was as a tabret." "But he hath made me a byword of the people; And they spit in my face" (ASV).
 - a. The "he" of this verse is evidently the same "he" of verse four. God had kept Job's friends from seeing the truth of the patriarch's true situation; and here God has caused Job to be a byword among the people [so Job thinks]. To be made a "byword" is to be held in contempt, reproach, ridicule, or scorn.
 - b. Job correctly understands that his dreadful condition could only have come upon him by some direct action or permission from God. Since God has not removed these distresses, it is apparently God's will that they continue. Therefore, Job reasons, these troubles are God's doing. Job had offered "pure" prayers to God—obviously asking for the removal of his afflictions. Compare: "Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure" (Job 16:17).
-

- c. Further, when Job's friends [and others] speak reproachfully of Job, not correctly discerning the real situation, Job is made an item of derision. We should not read into his statement any irreverence on the part of the patriarch; he is crying out in pain and desperation; he is simply trying to express his evaluation of his present distress in the best way he can discern it.
 - d. Concerning the word *tabret*: "This is an unhappy translation. The true meaning is, 'I am become their abhorrence,' or am to them 'an object of contempt'....The Hebrew word *topet* (OT:8611)—or 'Tophet,' is the name which is often given in the Scriptures to the valley of Hinnom—the place where children were sacrificed to Moloch....But there is no evidence or probability that the word was so used in the time of Job. It is never used in the Scriptures in the sense of a 'tabret,' that is a tabor or small drum; though the word *toph* is thus used" [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - e. "To spit in one's face was an act of scorn or contempt and could indicate defilement. Job was the victim of such loathsome conduct" (Hailey, p.159).
5. Verses 7-8: "Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow. Upright men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite."
- a. Job speaks of some of the symptoms he is suffering. His eyes have become dim because of the sorrow he is enduring. Tears becloud his vision. Various members of his physical body are growing weaker and wasting away; he is "only a shadow of his former self." Being covered with sore boils over his entire body would have various side-effects. There would likely be a loss of appetite; he might have infections to break out from the boils; sleeping would be difficult; he would be in constant misery.
 - b. Those who were upright in the sight of God would be shocked at Job's condition. Such a righteous man would be willing to evaluate the situation with discernment, and perceive that Job was an upright man himself who was suffering without a cause. Job's statement here carries an implied charge against his friends: an upright man would correctly discern the case and be shocked and sympathetic; his friends were not sympathetic, and the only shock they felt was from the heinous crimes which they assumed Job had committed.

B. Job 17:9-16: The Righteous Shall Hold On To His Way.

1. Verse 9: "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."
 - a. A current parallel expression that states the thought succinctly is "stay the course." A righteous man will always do the right thing, unlike Job's friends. As for himself, Job (a righteous man) will keep on the right way. Despite the faulty charges of his friends, Job knows he is innocent of wrong-doing.
 - b. Job describes the righteous man in the second part of the verse as one who has clean hands. Such a man will become stronger and stronger.
 - c. The New Testament gives words to this effect:
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:5-11: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - 3) 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To

- him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
- 4) Hebrews 5:12-14: “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”
 - 5) Hebrews 10:39: “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”
2. Verse 10: “But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you.” “But as for you all, come on now again; And I shall not find a wise man among you” (ASV).
 - a. The patriarch turns to his friends now, and issues a challenge to them. They had tried to assault his character, accusing him of evil conduct; their charges were general, false, and unsupported by real evidence.
 - b. They had not shown much wisdom in their previous attacks; he does not expect to find that they had increased in their wisdom since.
 3. Verse 11: “My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.”
 - a. Returning in his thoughts to his present ailments, Job is again overcome by his state of seeming hopelessness. He can see no reason to hope for an improved situation; death appears to be the only alternative. Thus, his days are past—his life is virtually over (so he thinks).
 - b. He has completed his life’s work; he filled the purposes he was given to accomplish. There does not appear much else he can do, for lack of time, strength, and health. He is on the verge of giving up.
 - c. Many Christians, especially preachers and elders, reach a point when their efforts seem to be void of success. They can see no bright spot on the horizon. They are inclined to give up. But often something happens, or a situation changes, and suddenly the future is rosy.
 4. Verse 12: “They change the night into day: the light is short because of darkness.”
 - a. The first question to be answered in understanding this verse is to identify the meaning of “they.” Does it refer to his friends? Or to Job’s own thoughts? The friends are not in the immediate context of this verse. The thoughts of his heart is the last point in the preceding verse. It appears then that this is the reference by the pronoun “they.”
 - b. This being the case, then we perceive Job to be saying that his thoughts can turn from gloom to hope (turn night into day). But even then, the light is shortlived; the gloom returns quickly. When his heart is uplifted with a glimmer of hope, the harsh reality of his present condition forces itself back into his consciousness.
 - c. On the other hand, if “they” is in reference to his friends, the patriarch’s point would be this: They offer hope to me if I will repent; but of what am I to repent? What is my sin? If he could be convinced that he is guilty of sin, knowing Job as we think we know him, he would quickly repent. But no one can scripturally repent unless he is fully convicted of guilt.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 7:8-10: “For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”
 - 2) Acts 26:20: “But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.”
-

- 3) Repentance is not sorrow for sin; godly sorrow produces repentance; and repentance results in a reformed life.
- d. Barnes gives a different slant: “The meaning may be, that the night was to him as the day. He had no rest. The period when he had formerly sought repose, was now made like the day, and all was alike gloom and sadness. [The light is short because of darkness] Margin, near. The meaning is, probably, ‘even the day has lost its usual brilliancy and cheerfulness, and has become gloomy and sad. It seems to be like night. Neither night nor day is natural to me; the one is restless and full of cares like the usual employments of day, and the other is gloomy, or almost night, where there is no comfort and peace. Day brings to me none of its usual enjoyments. It is short, gloomy, sad, and hastens away, and a distressing and restless night soon comes on’” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
5. Verses 13-14: “If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.” “If I look for Sheol as my house; If I have spread my couch in the darkness; If I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; To the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister” (ASV).
- a. Hailey suggests that the idea of “if I look” carries with it an eager anticipation. In other words, Job is saying that he eagerly anticipated death, that then he would be free from his present afflictions, and would enter into Sheol [the KJV has *grave*]. The patriarch has reference to the Hadean Realm, the place of the departed spirits. The story of Lazarus and the wicked rich man pulls back the curtain of death, giving us a brief glimpse into what lies beyond (Luke 16:19-31). The statement of verse thirteen speaks of the intermediate destiny of his soul.
- b. The statements of verse fourteen have to do with the physical body in death.
- 1) In the tomb there is no knowledge of what is going on back on earth; we know nothing then of the affairs being conducted under the sun.
- a) “Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Eccl. 9:9-10).
- b) “Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away. His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them” (Job 14:20-21).
- 2) The statement regarding corruption and the worm is a reference to the decay of the physical body following death.
- 3) In the darkness and corruption of death, there is no hope. The physical body shall no more roam about the earth as it was once able to do.
6. Verses 15-16: “And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.”
- a. If all there is to a man’s existence is life on earth followed by the darkness of death, where is his hope? There is none! The phrase “bars of the pit” is a reference to the binding nature of the Hadean Realm (cf. prison bars).
- b. While it is obvious that Job had at least a limited conception of the resurrection and of life beyond the grave, his understanding was not nearly what we know today. The New Testament sheds much light on the subject of the resurrection and life in the next world.
- 1) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that
-

- Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
- 2) 1 Peter 1:3-5: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
 - 3) Romans 5:2: “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”
 - 4) Colossians 1:5: “For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.”
 - 5) 2 Peter 3:8-14: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”
 - 6) 1 Corinthians 15:50-57: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- c. It is the unfailing appointment of all men to die (Heb. 9:27). The common experience of all people is to know that we shall die. But the Bible enlightens us as to what lies beyond death. It tells us how to live to be pleasing to the Creator; it tells us what awaits us in the Great Beyond. It reveals to us that faithful Christians may live in great hope and happy anticipation of a better world in Eternity.
-

Job 18

Bildad Addresses Job

A. Job 18:1-10: Bildad Asks Job How Long Will He Keep Talking.

1. Verses 1-4: "Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak. Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight? He teareth himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?" (KJV). "Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, How long will ye hunt for words? Consider, and afterwards we will speak. Wherefore are we counted as beasts, And are become unclean in your sight? Thou that tearest thyself in thine anger, Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? Or shall the rock be removed out of its place?" (ASV).
 - a. Bildad cannot hold back his harsh words for Job. He demands to know how long it will be before Job makes an end to his words, which Bildad considers nothing more than gainsaying. He accuses the patriarch of merely searching out words, any words, to use as a reply. This "friend" has a right to his opinion, but he ought to examine all the evidence himself before he judges Job to be wicked, a man God has already declared to be an outstanding example of righteousness.
 - b. Bildad warns Job to pay attention to what he and the others are telling him; if he will listen carefully, and mark their words, then perhaps they can do their friend some good. It appears that Bildad does not think Job has been listening.
 - c. He asks Job whether he thinks that Bildad and the others are vicious beasts which have torn at their friend. Furthermore, he wants to know if Job considers them to be vile. It is clear from the statements and charges of the three friends, that they have done more to tear down their friend, than to help him. In a sense, they had truly tried to rip Job to shreds.
 - d. In Bildad's view, Job had torn himself. An animal caught in a trap might gnaw off its foot or leg in order to get free; a wild beast might bite and tear at itself, in trying to remove an arrow that is causing it pain. In a similar manner, Bildad describes Job as tearing at himself, doing himself much harm and no good, by denying his guilt.
 - e. The speaker wants to know whether God should forsake the earth for Job's benefit. In Bildad's view, God's established arrangement is for every sin to be punished directly in this life; he thinks that Job is guilty of wickedness; but Job denies being guilty; so Bildad asks whether God should abandon his principle of punishing sin just for Job's sake. In a parallel thought, he asks whether the rock should be moved out of its place—as a special dispensation to Job. Does Job expect God to turn the world upside down and rearrange everything just to accommodate Job?
2. Verses 5- 6: "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him."
 - a. Beginning here, Bildad gives a list of several troubles which inevitably come upon the wicked. Since he and his companions had judged Job to be guilty of wickedness, he applies these adversities to the patriarch.
 - b. The wicked man's light will go out. He will live in darkness—his wealth, possessions, and good health will be removed. He will exist in spiritual ignorance and darkness; he will not be able to discern good and evil.
 - c. The reference to "the spark of his fire" may allude to the loss of his life. This certainly does not offer any hope or comfort to Job, who is in desperate need of encouragement. [Barnes thought that this expression may have been in reference to the Arabian practice of burning a light for the benefit of strangers passing by, to indicate they would be welcomed to share the owner's hospitality].
 - d. His tabernacle (tent, house) will be left dark; his candle will be extinguished; his house will be left

desolate.

- e. What Bildad says is a fitting depiction of the wicked; his error was in applying these descriptions to Job.
3. Verses 7-8: "The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down. For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare."
 - a. Bildad states that the wicked man will proceed into a straitened way; his road will be constricted; it will grow more narrow and difficult. But this is the natural end of his own foolish counsel. He will have been led into this condition by following his own misguided wisdom. The implication of this remark is to say that Job is now in this terrible situation because he has lived in sin.
 - b. In this passage, Bildad describes Job's condition as being one in which he had set a trap for his own feet. He set a trap and fell into it himself. The Bible says much about the great truth that a man reaps what he sows:
 - 1) Esther 7:9: "And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon."
 - 2) Psalms 7:15-16: "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."
 - 3) Psalms 9:15-16: "The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The LORD is known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion."
 - 4) Habakkuk 2:10: "Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned *against* thy soul."
 - 5) Matthew 26:14-16; 27:3-5: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him....Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."
 - 6) Proverbs 26:27: "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him."
 - 7) Psalms 9:15: "The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken."
 - 8) Psalms 57:6: "They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves."
 - 9) Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
 - c. Again, these assessments of a wicked man's future are correct, but Bildad applied them to a man who was not wicked; his measurement of Job was inaccurate.
 4. Verses 9-10: "The gin shall take him by the heel, and the robber shall prevail against him. The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way."
 - a. In these statements, Bildad speaks more about Job being entrapped. In the earlier remark, he had

spoken of the wicked [Job] being ensnared in his own trap; here he alleges that the wicked [Job] will be caught in traps set by others.

- b. Whereas God aids the righteous man by overshadowing him with his providence, the wicked man has no such protection. He would be ensnared; robbers would overcome and victimize him.
- c. We may learn much from Bildad's remarks, as long as we understand that his application of these afflictions to Job is incorrect. The Bible speaks much about the protective hand of God over his faithful people.
 - 1) Psalms 23:1-6: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."
 - 2) Hebrews 13:5-6: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 13:11: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."
 - 4) Philippians 4:9: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."
- d. As Bildad incorrectly applied the penalties he lists to Job, so many who have never obeyed the Gospel apply God's great promises to themselves.
- e. Barnes gives some interesting information about the ancient methods of catching wild animals:
 - 1) "Independently of the interest of the entire passage (Job 18:8-10) as a part of the argument of Bildad, it is interesting from the view which it gives of the mode of securing wild animals in the early periods of the world. They had no guns as we have; but they early learned the art of setting gins and snares by which they were taken. In illustrating this passage, it will not be inappropriate to refer to some of the modes of hunting practiced by the ancient Egyptians. The same methods were practiced then in catching birds and taking wild beasts as now, and there is little novelty in modern practices. The ancients had not only traps, nets, and springs, but also bird-lime smeared upon twigs, and made use of stalking-horses, setting dogs, etc. The various methods in which this was done, may be seen described at length in Wilkinson's Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, vol. iii. pp. 1-81. The noose was employed to catch the wild ox, the antelope, and other animals.
 - 2) "This seems to be a self-acting net, so constructed that the birds, when coming in contact with it, close it upon themselves. This trap appears as if in a vertical position, although, doubtless, it is intended to represent a trap lying upon the ground.
 - 3) "There are other traps very similar to this, except that they are oval; and probably have a net like the former. They are composed of two arcs, which, being kept open by machinery in the middle, furnish the oval frame of the net; but when the bird flies in, and knocks out the pin in the center, the arcs collapse enclosing the bird in the net. One instance occurs, in a painting at Thebes, of a trap, in which a hyaena is caught, and carried on the shoulders of two men. It was a common method of hunting to enclose a large tract of land by a circle of nets, or to station men at convenient distances, and gradually to contract the circle by coming near to each other, and thus to drive all the wild animals into a narrow enclosure, where they could be easily slain. Some idea

of the extent of those enclosures may be formed from the by no means incredible circumstance related by Plutarch, that when the Macedonian conquerors were in Persia, Philotos, the son of Armenio, had hunting-nets that would enclose the space of an hundred furlongs. The Oriental sovereigns have sometimes employed whole armies in this species of hunting. Picture Bible” [Biblesoft].

B. Job 18:11-21: His Strength Shall be Hunger-bitten.

1. Verses 11-13: “Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet. His strength shall be hungerbitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side. It shall devour the strength of his skin: even the firstborn of death shall devour his strength” (KJV). “Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, And shall chase him at his heels. His strength shall be hunger-bitten, And calamity shall be ready at his side. The members of his body shall be devoured, Yea, the first-born of death shall devour his members” (ASV).
 - a. As Bildad says, terrors pursue the wicked man, driving him to take to his feet in panic. A criminal fleeing and hiding from the law can seldom get any peaceful sleep. Every sudden sound, the sight of a policeman, the sounding of a siren—all of these startle the culprit. So it is with a wicked man who realizes that he is in rebellion to the Almighty.
 - b. His strength soon becomes weakened. Fear can sap his strength in a short time; he can operate on adrenaline only for a limited time. If the wicked man is fleeing from God or the law, his money is apt to run out soon; no money, little food; little food, little strength. The wicked man soon is at the mercy of his enemy. To be hunger-bitten is to be eaten up by hunger—thus weakened by lack of food.
 - c. Calamity [destruction—KJV] would be at his side. He would have danger always nearby—at his side—as a constant companion. The picture is of a wicked man who is in danger and knows he is in danger. However, there are many wicked men, men who are over-confident or who live in ignorance of their peril, who show little or no indication of fear or shame.
 - d. The dangers faced by the wicked man are described as consuming his skin (the member of his body—ASV). Afflictions, diseases, and injuries would assault his physical body. This is a thinly-veiled charge against Job; the whole point of Bildad’s tirade is to assault Job, declaring that his problems were caused by his wicked conduct.
 - e. The “first-born” of death is a graphic portrayal of death. The firstborn in a family possessed the greatest standing with his father; he stood in line to receive half of the property and money (in the ancient customs). The firstborn of death would an allusion to the most grievous kind of death. Job was in the grasp of a severe degree of affliction; it did not appear that he could survive. Job had almost given himself up to death; and Bildad figured his end was approaching. Job gets no comfort from his friend, but a continuing stream of verbal assaults.
2. Verse 14: “His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.”
 - a. The confidence of the wicked man will be rooted out, pulled out by the roots, and thrown away. He will live in dread and fear; there would be no peace or safety in his own tent [in his home]. The place where we usually feel the greatest peace and safety is in our home, with our family and familiar possessions.
 - b. Bildad is describing the case of many wicked men, but there are many others who are so hardened by sin that they scoff at danger, especially of that awaiting them in the next world. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him” (Eccl. 8:11-12).
 - c. The wickedness of a sinful man will bring the guilty one into the clutches of “the king of terrors.”

Bildad has described the wicked man as being surrounded by terrors (vs. 11). The king of terrors would be the greatest terror of all—death itself.

- 1) “There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the phrase, ‘the king of terrors.’ Death is a fearful monarch. All dread him. He presides in regions of chilliness and gloom. All fear to enter those dark regions where he dwells and reigns, and an involuntary shudder seizes the soul on approaching the confines of his kingdom. Yet all must be brought there; and though man dreads the interview with that fearful king, there is no release. The monarch reigns from age to age—reigns over all. There is but one way in which he will cease to appear as a terrific king—It is by confidence in Him who came to destroy death; that great Redeemer who has taken away his ‘sting,’ and who can enable man to look with calmness and peace even on the chilly regions where he reigns. The idea here is not precisely that of the Roman and Grecian mythologists, of a terrific king, like Rhadamanthus, presiding over the regions of the dead but it is of death personified—of death represented as a king fitted to inspire awe and terror” [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - 2) “Rhadamanthus, in Greek mythology, the son of Zeus and Europa and the brother of Minos, king of Crete. According to Homer, Rhadamanthus dwelt in Elysium. Later legends report that, respected for his judgment and probity, he was made one of the three judges of the underworld” [Encarta, © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation].
 - 3) Isaiah 28:15: “Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.”
 - a) This passage gives a picture seven-hundred years ahead of time of the enemies of our Lord conniving to put Him to death.
 - b) Under this passage, Barnes made this comment: “We are not to suppose that they had formally said this, but that their conduct was as if they had said it; they lived as securely as if they had entered into a compact with death not to destroy them, and with hell not to devour them. The figure is a very bold one, and is designed to express the extraordinary stupidity of the nation. It is most strikingly descriptive of the great mass of people. They are as little anxious about death and hell as if they had made a compact with the king of terrors and the prince of darkness not to destroy them. They are as little moved by the appeals of the gospel, by the alarms of God's providence, by the preaching of his word, and by all the demonstrations that they are exposed to eternal death, as though they had proved that there was no hell, or had entered into a solemn covenant that they should be unmolested.”
 - 4) Psalms 49:15: “But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.”
 - 5) Hebrews 2:14-15: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”
 - 6) John 14:1-3: “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”
 - 7) John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
 - 8) John 11:25: “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”
-

3. Verse 15: “It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation” (KJV). “It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation” (ASV).
 - a. Bildad now turns to describe what will happen to the wicked man’s house following his death. Its inhabitants will be someone other than him and his family. Others will take over his property. “Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity” (Eccl. 2:18-19).
 - b. It is disturbing to realize that our possessions, some of which are highly important to us, may some day fall into the hands of strangers. We all have certain items, keepsakes, mementos, and pictures, which may be discarded or destroyed by those who do not share our love for these items.
 - c. Bildad describes the destruction of the wicked man’s house as brimstone being scattered upon it, thus to burn and destroy it.
 - d. The wicked man’s eternal fate is even worse—he is to be consigned to the lake of fire which burns with fire and brimstone unendingly.
 - 1) Mark 9:43-48: “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
 - 3) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
 - 4) Revelation 21:8: “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”
 4. Verses 16-17: “His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off. His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.”
 - a. Using a different figure, Bildad describes the fate of a wicked man as a tree; the roots have been caused to dry up, and branches have been cut off. The death of the tree is certain. It can gain no sustenance from the soil and its branches cannot produce leaves or fruit.
 - b. The figure fits not only the wicked man as an individual, but also can describe his posterity. In the ancient days, a man’s descendants were extremely important to him. Even in our day, we often see a man’s family name to cease, when he has no male heir to carry on that name.
-

- c. How long does the memory of a wicked man remain alive in the minds of mankind after he is dead? Unless his crimes were of an especially heinous nature, he is soon forgotten. The same is generally true of righteous people also. How many names do you know of the millions who lived on earth from the twelfth century [eight hundred years ago]? How many graves of those folks are still identifiable?
 - d. The idea in the last part of the passage may have primary reference to the lineage of the wicked man, but it is true also with the memory of his own personal identity. He will not be talked about by people on the street for long after his death—they will simply not know about him!
 - e. By way of contrast, God has a book of remembrance in which is recorded the names of his people; they will not be forgotten by the One who is most important—our Heavenly Father.
 - 1) Psalm 56:8: "Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?"
 - 2) Psalm 69:28: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."
 - 3) Philippians 4:3: "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."
 - 4) Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
 - 5) 2 Timothy 2:19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his...."
 - 6) Hebrews 6:10: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."
 - 7) Revelation 14:13: "... Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
 - 8) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - 9) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
5. Verse 18: "He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world."
- a. The wicked man will be pushed out of the light and into the darkness. In many cases, the righteous will withdraw their fellowship and contact from such a person. Convicted criminals are taken from the light and cast into the darkness of prison.
 - b. In eternity, the wicked will be driven from the Judgment scene and cast into the place of "outer darkness."
 - 1) Matthew 25:24-30: "Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall
-

- be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
- 2) Matthew 8:12: “But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
 - 3) Matthew 22:13: “Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
- c. The figure for "outer darkness" may have been taken from the inner dungeons the Romans used as places of confinement and punishment. "'Outer darkness' is an expression which denotes 'blackness of darkness' (Jude 13; 2 Pet. 2:17)" (Boles, *Commentary on Matthew*, p.191).
- 1) 2 Peter 2:17: "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever."
 - 2) Jude 13: "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."
- d. Bildad states that the wicked man will be chased out of the world. He would be forced to leave his world, and would become a wanderer in the earth. “The wicked person becomes a wanderer, groping in darkness; he is chased or expelled from the world where men live. Sometimes the word ‘driven’ refers to a nation (Josh. 23:5; Jer. 46:15). It is true that man’s wickedness may cause him to be driven into the solitude of a lonely and isolated life, but this is far from being universal” (Hailey, p.167).
6. Verse 19: “He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings” (KJV). “He shall have neither son nor son's son among his people, Nor any remaining where he sojourned” (ASV).
- a. “All his family shall be cut off. He shall have no one to perpetuate his name or remembrance. All this Job could not help applying to himself, as it was doubtless intended he should. The facts in his case were just such as were supposed in these proverbs about the wicked; and hence, his friends could not but conclude that he was a wicked man; and hence, his friends could not but conclude that he was a wicked man; and hence, too, since these were undisputed maxims, Job felt so much embarrassment in answering them” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - b. Notice that the word “nephew” (KJV) is rendered more accurately as “son’s son” in the ASV. Thus, Bildad is speaking of sons and grandsons. The wicked man would have no posterity; his name would come to an end. His entire family would cease to exist. This was a cruel reminder to Job of the death of his children.
 - c. This proverb was accurate insofar as it is applied to one who is genuinely wicked. That does not mean that when a man becomes wicked, that these penalties are immediately and directly applied. In many cases, the sinful are indeed punished in one or more ways during life; in every case, the wicked are to be punished in eternity.
 - d. Once more, although the proverb is true, Bildad erred in applying it to his friend Job. Bildad’s argument could be stated in this fashion:
 - 1) Wicked men are always punished in this life;
 - 2) Job is being punished;
 - 3) Therefore, Job is a wicked man.
 - e. Bildad had not proved (nor could he or anyone else prove) that Job was a wicked man. There were other factors involved in Job’s story which were at present unknown to Bildad and his companions. Job did not know all the details at this time. When the rest of the story is unfolded, then the picture is presented in full. Bildad did not comprehend the truth that sufferings may be intended for a good purpose.
 - 1) Hebrews 12:4-12: “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten
-

the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.”

- 2) Philippians 1:12-14: “But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:7-10: “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”
7. Verse 20: “They that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.”
- a. “The young shall be struck with astonishment when they hear the relation of the judgments of God upon this wicked man. As they that went before. The aged who were his contemporaries, and who saw the judgments that fell on him, were frightened...seized with horror—were horrified; or, as Mr. Good has well expressed it, were panic-struck” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by BibleSoft].
 - b. Some scholars think that the two ideas (after and before) are used as references to the East and the West. The ancients generally took the East as the primary reference point (we take the North); what lay before them was toward the east, and what lay behind them was toward the west. If this is the meaning of the verse, then Bildad is speaking of those who live toward the east would be astonished when they learned of the penalty imposed on the wicked man; and those to live toward the west would be frightened to learn of it.
 - c. The way the thought is expressed in the King James and American Standard Versions has the point of distinction to be in reference to those who live after the wicked man has been punished, and those who lived before his time.
 - d. The point in either case is the same—those who learn of the punishment imposed on the wicked man will be both astonished and frightened. In the next world, when we gain a more direct knowledge of the awfulness of Gehenna, the more greatly shocked and frightened we will be—and the more sorrowful for those who were assigned to that fate. And when we gain a more direct knowledge of the beauty and grandeur of Heaven, the more our amazement and happiness will be!
8. Verse 21: “Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.”
- a. “This is the close of this harsh and severe speech. It is no wonder that Job should feel it keenly, and that he ‘did’ feel it is apparent from the following chapter. A string of proverbs has been presented,
-

having the appearance of proof, and as the result of the long observation of the course of events, evidently bearing on his circumstances, and so much in point that he could not well deny their pertinency to his condition. He was stung to the quick, and gave vent to his agonized feelings in the following chapter” [Barnes, *ibid.*].

- b. The circumstances of the wicked man are not such that would generate happiness on his part. This is true of the wicked in this world (in some cases); in eternity, this condition will be universal and absolute. Every accountable person will be judged according to his works, with the word of God being the standard of the judgment.
 - 1) John 12:48: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”
 - 2) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
 - 4) Romans 14:10-12: “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - c. This is the condition of the wicked, who are described in this verse as those who “knoweth not God.” To know God is to know his word, believe what he says, and gladly follow whatever he requires.
 - 1) 1 John 2:4-5: “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”
 - 2) 1 John 5:2-3: “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”
 - d. “Much of what Bildad said in this speech was true; however, in other instances he overstated his case and went beyond truth. Also, his insinuation or indication that Job was a wicked man such as described is untrue. A conclusion based on the assumption that all suffering is punishment for wrong doing is false” (Hailey, p.168).
-

Job 19

Job Responds to Bildad

A. Job 19:1-12: I Cry Out of Wrong but I am Not Heard.

1. Verses 1-3: “Then Job answered and said, How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words? These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me” (KJV). “Then Job answered and said, How long will ye vex my soul, And break me in pieces with words? These ten times have ye reproached me: Ye are not ashamed that ye deal hardly with me” (ASV).
 - a. “In this chapter Job’s spirit sinks to a level that is probably the lowest in the entire book. In the discussion section it rises from that depth to its highest point of anticipation and hope. He does not respond to Bildad’s argument, but instead he voices a complaint against the harshness of his situation” (Hailey, p.169).
 - b. Job demands to know of his friends how long do they plan to vex his soul. To vex is to afflict, to cause grief, to make sorrowful. He describes the effect of their verbal assaults as breaking him in pieces. Words can sometimes be more painful than physical blows.
 - c. He accuses them of having reproached him ten times—a large number of times, frequently. He says that they have manifested no shame for treating him with such harshness (ASV). They had been his friends in the past, but now they had changed; they treated him as an enemy.
 - d. The phrase “ten times” is used in the Scriptures to indicate that the action at hand had been done fully.
 - 1) Genesis 31:7: “And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.”
 - 2) Numbers 14:22: “Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice.”
 - 3) Compare: “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).
2. Verses 4-5: “And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself. If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me, and plead against me my reproach.”
 - a. The three friends had accused Job of being guilty of sin, but they have not specified those sins. Job had asked them to identify them: “How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin” (Job 13:23).
 - b. If they would not point out a particular sin, it must be because there was no sin that could be identified. It must be the case, then (Job reasons), that the sin was secret, known only to himself (and to God). In this case, how could they know a sin had been committed? They only assumed his guilt, based solely on the fact that he was inundated with sorrows and pain brought on by the loss of his children, his property, and the agony of his physical malady.
 - c. They had magnified [vaunted, exalted] themselves to make accusations against Job, but they did not have the facts to prove their charges. They had acted in a superior manner toward their friend, exalting themselves to a position of a master talking down to a student. What charge would they bring against him; where were the specifications?
3. Verses 5-7: “Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net. Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment” (KJV). “Know now that God hath subverted me in my cause, And hath compassed me with his net. Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry for help, but there is no justice” (ASV).
 - a. Since his friends could find no specific charge, it must be the case that God had taken this action

- against Job for reasons known only to Himself.
- b. Job describes his grievous status as being overthrown [or subverted] by God, who has ensnared him with his net. He can see no other way to explain his predicament. He knows that he is not guilty, but his troubles cannot be denied. They must have come from God, but why? “In the following verses [7-22], Job hits the lowest point in the book, and in his honest heart he can see only God as the cause of his calamities” (Hailey, p.170).
 - c. Job issues a cry due to the wrong he perceives himself to be suffering. He sees himself under attack, but cannot discern the reason. His troubles continue, so he believes he cannot get justice.
4. Verses 8-12: “He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths. He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed like a tree. He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies. His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.”
- a. The patriarch laments his dreadful condition, describing his circumstances in various figures of speech. He perceives that the Lord has barred his way with a fence (a wall) so that he cannot proceed; darkness surrounds him so that he cannot see how to navigate.
 - b. He has stripped Job of his glory. All of his possessions and the status he enjoyed among men had been taken from him; in the patriarch’s eyes in this hour of depression he perceives that his respectability and honor are now gone; his health, his family, his self-esteem, his standing with his friends—these have now been removed. The only power that could have removed his possessions, his family, and his health was God’s [we remember that Job knew nothing about the meetings in which Satan had attacked Job and God had given him limited power to move against Job]. Therefore, he concluded God had done all these things. He cannot explain why God would do such a thing!
 - c. He describes these tragedies as God having removed the crown from Job’s head. Compare Job’s description about the crown with these verses:
 - 1) Proverbs 4:9: “She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.”
 - 2) Proverbs 17:6: “Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.”
 - 3) Ezekiel 16:12: “And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.”
 - 4) Lamentations 5:16: “The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!”
 - d. As Job sees it, God has destroyed him [broken him down] on every side. The figure could be that of the walls of a city being torn down so that the enemy could enter and spoil the city; or it could be that of the walls of a house which have been broken down, exposing the inhabitants to the enemy and the weather.
 - e. He further depicts his condition as one in which his hopes have been pulled up as a tree which has been uprooted. An uprooted tree has no hope of surviving. One who is without hope faces a very dim and dismal future. Hope is a mighty force which is able to sustain us through the darkest trials and afflictions. Hope is the anchor of the soul.
 - f. The patriarch thinks that God has kindled his wrath against him—and Job cannot discern the reason. It appears as though God now considers Job to be an enemy, one who is to be assaulted and destroyed. While this appears to be an indication of a loss of faith on Job’s part, we must remember that he knew nothing about the underlying purposes God had in mind. His lament is a natural result of these awful troubles and pain. How would we react under similar circumstances? Even our Lord asked the Father to spare him from the ordeal he was facing: “And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and
-

prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39).

- g. In verse twelve, Job continues the thought introduced in the previous verse. He describes his situation as the soldiers of God assaulting him; they have put themselves in battle array; they have set their encampment around his tent; there is no avenue of escape. He must endure the siege and the final attack. He will be weakened by the siege and easy prey when the attack comes.

B. Job 19:13-19: All My Inward Friends Abhorred Me.

1. Verses 13-16: “He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me. They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight. I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I entreated him with my mouth.”
 - a. In the ordeal through which Job is going, he visualizes the situation to be one where even his closest of family and friends have turned away from him. His brethren [brothers, relatives, fellow-citizens] have pulled away; he can get no comfort or help from them. His friends are estranged from him, and offer no assistance.
 - b. In verse fourteen, he speaks of his kinsfolk [close family members, including his wife] having failed to come to his aid. His familiar friends have forgotten him. He may have more friends in mind than the three who came ostensibly to comfort him [Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar]. These three had at least come to Job’s place, but they were described by the patriarch as “miserable comforters.” We have no record of any of his other friends showing an interest. There was a fourth man, younger than the others who was present; we are introduced to Elihu in Job 32:2.
 - c. There were other people who dwelled in Job’s house who did not offer him any encouragement. These appear to be people who were there temporarily, travelers who stopped to sojourn under the warm hospitality shown by the patriarch. In those days when inns were few, it was common for people like Job and Abraham to offer food and shelter to travelers.
 - 1) Genesis 18:1-8: “And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.”
 - 2) Genesis 19:1-3: “And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.”
 - d. Even the maids [servant girls], who worked for Job and his wife, counted Job as a stranger; they would have little or nothing to do with him. There was no encouragement or aid to come from them. They considered him as an alien. He had another servant, a male servant, who ignored his call for help.

Though Job entreated (pleaded) with him, he would not answer. The servant would not respond out of obedience to his master; nor would Job's pleas move him to assistance.

- e. Perhaps these relatives, friends, so-journers, and servants were repulsed by Job's disease. Certainly, one who was covered with sore boils would not be a pleasant sight; perhaps also there was an odor that was unbearable.
2. Verses 17-19: "My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's sake of mine own body. Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me. All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me" (KJV). "My breath is strange to my wife, And my supplication to the children of mine own mother. Even young children despise me; If I arise, they speak against me. All my familiar friends abhor me, And they whom I loved are turned against me" (ASV).
 - a. "Due to his disease, Job's breath may have been offensive or even repulsive to his wife. The text implies that she kept herself away from her husband, treating him like a stranger" (Hailey, p.173). Will Durant relates an interesting story about a man who had bad breath: "'Gelon of Syracuse, says Lucian, 'had disagreeable breath, but did not find it out himself for a long time, no one venturing to mention such a circumstance to a tyrant. At last a foreign woman who had a connection with him dared to tell him; whereupon he went to his wife and scolded her for never having, with all her opportunities of knowing, warned him of it; she put in the defense that as she had never been familiar or at close quarters with any other man, she had supposed all men were like that.' He was disarmed" (*The Life of Greece*, p.173, footnote).
 - b. Job speaks of having entreated the children of his own mother [i.e., his brothers and sisters], but they would offer him no help; they despised him.
 - c. Even young children looked on him with contempt. The word "young" in Hebrew is used to denote those who are very young up to young adulthood. These children treated him no better than the older people. Sometimes young children can be more vicious than adults, especially in their speech.
 - d. His close, trusted friends abhor him; those he loved dearly turned against him. It may be that these two classes of close associates are the same; his familiar friends, whom he loved, no longer wanted anything to do with Job.

C. Job 19:20-29: I Know That My Redeemer Liveth.

1. Verses 20-21: "My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."
 - a. Job offers a pitiful plea for understanding and compassion to his friends. This is the point in the passage. He bases his appeal on the belief that God's hand had touched him. The *touching* is a word indicating a severe affliction. No one who reads of the troubles of the patriarch, or those who saw firsthand the troubles he bore, would deny his need for compassion. But his three friends, and those he has spoken of in the preceding verses, were still hardened against him.
 - b. The first part of this passage is difficult to interpret. The sense of the statement is clear enough: he is describing his ghastly physical condition and appearance. "[My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh] The meaning of this probably is, 'my skin and flesh are dried up so that the bone seems to adhere to the skin, and so that the form of the bone becomes visible.' It is designed to denote a state of great emaciation, and describes an effect which we often see" [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. Job speaks of having escaped "with the skin of my teeth." In our language, the expression is a proverbial statement indicating a close escape from some dangerous or unpleasant situation. It may be that it carried the same usage in the Hebrew. His point seems to be that the skin of his teeth was all that stood between him and death.
2. Verses 22-24: "Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh? Oh that my words

were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!”

- a. Job has asked for compassion from his friends; here, he asks a question of them. Why do you bring persecution upon me as God is able to do? God has the right to punish evildoers and to bring hardship upon others; you [my friends] do not have that right.
 - b. His friends could readily see the hideous nature of his physical appearance, brought on him by the sore boils with which he was covered. He asks them why can they not be satisfied with this harsh condition, without adding to his woes their equally harsh accusations.
 - c. He cries out that his words be inscribed in a book, for others to read and understand his woes. Since it appears that God would not heed his cries for help, and it was manifest that his friends were not going to offer him any encouragement, perhaps others of later generations would have compassion on him, thus he wishes that his situation was properly recorded in written form.
 - d. Not only does he wish his circumstances be inscribed in a book, but that this information be more permanently recorded with an iron pen and lead, in stone—thus to last through the ages. “Let an iron chisel be the pen and a stone slab or rock ledge be the tablet. The mention of lead indicates that after inscribing his words in stone the incisions should be filled with lead” (Hailey, p.176).
3. Verses 25-27: “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me” (KJV). “But as for me I know that my Redeemer liveth, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; Whom I, even I, shall see, on my side, And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger. My heart is consumed within me” (ASV).
- a. Although some scholars see difficulty in grasping the meaning of these three verses, the intent of the passage seems clear. Job here expresses great hope that his case will be vindicated at the appropriate time.
 - b. The redeemer must be the Lord. The term [*ga'al*—redeemer] is used in the Old Testament in reference to a kinsman who had the right and authority to redeem a relative from some danger or trouble. God is spoken of in the Old Testament as Israel’s Redeemer. Of course, in the New Testament, Christ is prominently presented as the Great Redeemer. “Throughout the discussion Job has emphasized his conviction that God is his accuser, persecutor, and witness to his life and innocence. The logical conclusion is that God is the redeemer to whom he looks for vindication of his cause” (Hailey, pp.176f).
 - c. Job states the fact that his redeemer *liveth*. He is not dead; he will not die; he will always live. Thus, the patriarch is firmly convinced that he will be redeemed and vindicated at the proper time.
 - d. In verse 25, the word “day” is supplied by the translators. The ASV renders the expression as “at last” [at the right time; at the time when God deemed it appropriate]. At that time, the Redeemer would stand upon the earth. This seems to be a very clear reference to the time when Christ would be on earth, performing his earthly mission. “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4).
 - e. In verse 26, Job speaks of the eventual destruction of his physical body; the skin and the entire body will disintegrate; it will return to the elements of the earth from which it was originally made.
 - 1) He says that “in his flesh” (KJV) or “without my flesh” (ASV) he shall see God. “It may mean either being in the flesh and looking out, or being out of the flesh. The context favors the latter meaning...I am inclined to think it is an emphatic way of saying, ‘in my truest self’” [Genung, quoted by Hailey, p.177). The Hebrew term can mean “without my flesh” or “in my flesh.”
 - 2) Notice that “worms” is supplied by the translators. The term is unnecessary for the sense of the
-

- verse to be grasped. Job's point is to say that even after his physical body had been destroyed by the natural processes, he is confident that he will see God.
- f. Since the benefits of the blood of Christ flowed backward in time to cover the obedient ones of earlier ages, then Job would be saved; the blood of our Lord flows forward in time from the cross, to the very end of time itself, benefitting those who obey the gospel. In eternity, all the faithful ones thus covered will see the Father and the Son in peace.
- 1) Romans 3:25-26: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
 - 2) Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
 - 3) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
- g. In verse 27, the patriarch declares that he would see the redeemer himself; he will not depend on some one else to tell him; he will have personal knowledge. Even though his body will have been utterly destroyed, he will nevertheless see Him. He will not be as a stranger to the redeemer; and the redeemer will not be a stranger to him [see ASV]. At the resurrection of the last day, all the dead will be raised to life, given new spiritual bodies, and meet before the Judgment Seat of Christ. The righteous will be ushered into Heaven and the unrighteous will be condemned to Gehenna.
- 1) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - 3) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 4) Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
 - 5) Acts 14:15: "And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."
 - 6) Romans 14:10-12: "...For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 7) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
4. Verses 28-29: "But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?"
-

Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment" (KJV). "If ye say, How we will persecute him! And that the root of the matter is found in me; Be ye afraid of the sword: For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, That ye may know there is a judgment" (ASV).

- a. Job speaks from the view point that his friends have taken: Why should we persecute him seeing that the fault for his condition is his alone?
 - b. Job warns them to beware of the sword of punishment that will fall upon them for their harsh treatment of their friend. The wrath that they have directed toward him, may be turned against them.
 - c. "The idea is, that wrath or anger such as they had manifested, was proper for punishment; that such malice as they had shown was a crime that God would not suffer to escape unpunished. They had, therefore, everything to dread. Literally, it is, 'for wrath the iniquities of the sword'; that is, wrath is a crime for the sword. [That ye may know that there is a judgment] That there is justice; that God punishes injuries done to the character, and that he will come forth to vindicate his friends. Probably Job anticipated that when God should come forth to vindicate 'him,' he would inflict exemplary punishment on 'them'; and that this would be not only by words, but by some heavy judgment, such as he had himself experienced. The vindication of the just is commonly attended with the punishment of the unjust; the salvation of the friends of God is connected with the destruction of his foes. Job seems to have anticipated this in the case of himself and his friends; it will certainly occur in the great day when the affairs of this world shall be wound up in the decisions of the final judgment' [Barnes, Biblesoft].
-

Job 20

Zophar Responds to Job

A. Job 20:1-7: Zophar Gives a Hasty Reply to Job's Previous Statement.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste. I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer" (KJV). "Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, Therefore do my thoughts give answer to me, Even by reason of my haste that is in me. I have heard the reproof which putteth me to shame; And the spirit of my understanding answereth me" (ASV).
 - a. It appears that Zophar was stirred up by Job's last words in chapter 19: "If ye say, How we will persecute him! And that the root of the matter is found in me; Be ye afraid of the sword: For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, That ye may know there is a judgment" (19:28-29, ASV). Zophar and his two companions had viciously and unfairly attacked Job; Job warns them that they can expect the same in retribution when God vindicates Job.
 - b. Zophar could not stand still and let that statement pass unanswered. His anger was aroused; Job, now considered an enemy, must be attacked and his argument destroyed. The general facts stated by Zophar are basically correct, but his application of them to Job is wrong; Job was not the kind of man depicted by Zophar.
 - c. "Like a slumbering volcano, Zophar erupts in a caustic railing against Job, sparked by the patriarch's warning of judgment upon his antagonists. In response to the 'reproof that putteth [him] to shame,' he hastily sought to collect his 'thoughts' and so to supply Job with his 'understanding' (2,3). Remember, he is not speaking by divine revelation but by subjective speculation!" (Jackson, p.53).
 - d. He had heard the "check of my reproach." This phrase is rendered, "I have heard the reproof which putteth me to shame," in the ASV. Zophar felt insulted by Job's last statement; he and his friends had been offended. The "spirit of his understanding" (wisdom) required him to respond to Job.
2. Verses 4-7: "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?" (KJV). "Do you not know this of old, Since man was placed on earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment? Though his haughtiness mounts up to the heavens, And his head reaches to the clouds, Yet he will perish forever like his own refuse; Those who have seen him will say, 'Where is he?' (NKJV).
 - a. Zophar asks Job whether he knows the age-old truth that the success of the wicked is short-lived. He thinks Job would be well aware of this *fact* since it has been true since the beginning of mankind. "The question posed by Zophar was based upon a traditional theory or philosophy rather than fact" (Hailey, p.180). The point assumes that all wicked people can be successful for only a short period of time; that during their lifetime on earth, God will see to it that they are properly punished. His argument is a universal proposition—that all the wicked are thus penalized in this life. His argument can be answered by a single case of a wicked man who is not fully punished here.
 - b. The wicked man, at best, has a short triumph on earth; the hypocrite's joy is only for a moment [in Zophar's thinking]. His thinly-veiled remarks were intended to charge Job with wickedness and hypocrisy.
 - c. Job's erstwhile friend alleges that the wicked man would perish forever, even though he might for a time be exalted to the sky. Men might honor and promote him to the heavens; his head might be in the clouds—but his downfall is a foregone conclusion. Zophar states that he will be gone just as the body's refuse is quickly gone.

- d. Since Zophar does not place any limitation to his statement about the wicked perishing forever, that his very existence cannot be seen, does he mean to say that evil men are annihilated at death? He may have held the same erroneous belief with the Watchtower Witnesses (and other materialists), who assert that wicked men will go out of existence when they die, that they will not be resurrected, and that there is no place of eternal punishment. The Bible, of course, teaches the opposite:
- 1) John 5:28-29: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
 - 2) Acts 24:15: “And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
 - 5) Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
 - 6) There cannot be any punishment without conscious awareness.
- e. Zophar may simply be saying that the wicked man will no longer be seen on earth when God brings punishment upon him.

B. Job 20:8-14: The Wicked Will Fly Away Like a Dream.

1. Verses 8-10: “He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him. His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods.”
 - a. God shall remove the wicked man; he will vanish like a dream in the night. A vivid dream seems very real while we are experiencing it, but it vanishes once we wake up. If it had a terrifying effect on us while we slept, it will disappear and the fear quickly fades when we come back to reality. So the wicked man will be gone as a dream in the night. Notice that *dream* and *vision* are used as parallels in the passage.
 - b. Those who knew him (the wicked man) will behold him no more; his place [his home, his business, his entire worldly situation] will see him no more. His place will be empty.
 - c. He will leave behind his children, who will soon be in desperate need. They will be obliged to seek to please the poor, from whom they must find their necessities. After the wicked man’s departure, the wealth he had obtained by evil means from others, would be re-acquired by those he had defrauded. The lot of his family and those who had been deprived of their goods, will now be reversed.
2. Verses 11-14: “His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust. Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth: Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him” (KJV).
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “His bones are full of his youth, But it shall lie down with him in the dust. Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, Though he hide it under his tongue, Though he spare it, and will not let it

go, But keep it still within his mouth; Yet his food in his bowels is turned, It is the gall of asps within him” (ASV).

2) “His bones are full of his youthful vigor, But it will lie down with him in the dust. Though evil is sweet in his mouth, And he hides it under his tongue, Though he spares it and does not forsake it, But still keeps it in his mouth, Yet his food in his stomach turns sour; It becomes cobra venom within him” (NKJV).

- b. The meaning of verse eleven seems to be that his death will be somewhat premature; he will die when his youthful vigor is still with him; he is in the prime of life. Notice that the phrase “*of the sin*” [of his youth] is italicized, indicating that these words are not in the original. To “lie down in the dust” is a reference to death; the body dies and is interred in the earth.
- c. Zophar describes the wicked man as relishing his wickedness. It is sweet in his mouth; he draws all the flavor he can from it—as one does who holds a tasty morsel of food in his mouth, wanting to get all the taste he can obtain before swallowing it.
- d. But the effect of this delicious meal on his internal system will be quite another matter. It was very enjoyable to the taste buds, but it would bring great distress to him internally. It becomes like the venom of a deadly serpent.
- e. In Zophar’s analogy, the tasty dish of wickedness will become the poison that kills him. Once more, we note, that his application of the principles to Job is in error; the depiction is truly graphic, but it does not fit Job’s case.

C. Job 20:15-23: God Will Deprive the Wicked Man of His Wealth.

1. Verses 15-18: “He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly. He shall suck the poison of asps: the viper's tongue shall slay him. He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down: according to his substance shall the restitution be, and he shall not rejoice therein.”
 - a. The wicked man being described by Zophar has swallowed his riches; he has obtained this wealth from others by less than godly means. God will cause him to disgorge these riches.
 - b. “As a baby suckling its mother’s breast, so the wicked man nurses on wickedness (vv. 12-13), which poison his well-being. Evidently Zophar thought of the poison as coming from the serpent’s forked tongue rather than from its ‘tooth’ or fang. His point was that the poison of wickedness will slay him” (Hailey, p.182).
 - c. Zophar speaks of the bounties of a fruitful land, and says these will not be for the wicked man any longer. He may have enjoyed these benefits for a while, but his wickedness will deprive him of it. His access to these bounties has been gained by dishonest means, for he must restore them; he will be required to make restitution; he will not be able to enjoy them any more.
 - d. “Mr. Good has the following judicious note on this passage: ‘Honey and butter are the common results of a rich, well-watered pasturage, offering a perpetual banquet of grass to kine, and of nectar to bees; and thus loading the possessor with the most luscious luxuries of pastoral life, peculiarly so before the discovery of the means of obtaining sugar. The expression appears to have been proverbial; and is certainly used here to denote a very high degree of temporal prosperity.’ See also Job 29:6. To the Hebrews such expressions were quite familiar. See Ex 3:8; 13:5; 33:3; 2 Kings 18:32; Deut 31:20, and elsewhere. The Greek and Roman writers abound in such images” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by BibleSoft].
 - 1) Exodus 3:8: “And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.”

- 2) Exodus 33:3: “Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way.”
 - 3) 2 Kings 18:32: “Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.”
 - 4) Deuteronomy 31:20: “For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.”
2. Verses 19-23: “Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not; Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired. There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods. In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him. When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating.”
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) “Or he has oppressed and forsaken the poor, He has violently seized a house which he did not build. Because he knows no quietness in his heart, He will not save anything he desires. Nothing is left for him to eat; Therefore his well-being will not last. In his self-sufficiency he will be in distress; Every hand of misery will come against him. When he is about to fill his stomach, God will cast on him the fury of His wrath, And will rain it on him while he is eating” (NKJV).
 - 2) “For he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor; He hath violently taken away a house, and he shall not build it up. Because he knew no quietness within him, He shall not save aught of that wherein he delighteth. There was nothing left that he devoured not; Therefore his prosperity shall not endure. In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: The hand of every one that is in misery shall come upon him. When he is about to fill his belly, God will cast the fierceness of his wrath upon him, And will rain it upon him while he is eating” (ASV).
 - b. Zophar continues his tirade against Job. In his view, Job is aptly described by the harsh descriptions he is presenting of the wicked. The wicked he has in mind has oppressed the poor. He has ignored the needs of the poor; he has forsaken them—left them, abandoned them. He has even deprived the poor of their house, a house which does not belong to the wicked man.
 - c. “Zophar’s charge is that the wicked man violently took away houses that he had not built, turning the occupants out to wander about without a shelter. Zophar’s indirect charge was that Job cared not for the poor. Rather, he robbed them of their lands or houses, but did not profit from his thievery” (Hailey, p.183).
 - d. It is certain, Zophar observes, that this evil treatment of the poor will have a painful, distressing effect on the oppressor. The principle of reaping what one’s sows comes into play. “Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly; rather, because he knew no quietness in his belly or within him (see the Revised Version); i.e. because his greed and his rapacity were insatiable—he was never at rest, but continually oppressed and plundered the poor more and more (see the comment on ver. 19). He shall not save of that which he desired; or, he shall not save aught of that wherein he delighteth (see the Revised Version). For his oppression, for his violence, for his insatiable greed, he shall be punished by retaining nothing of all those delightful things which he had laid up for himself during the time that he was powerful and prosperous” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - e. Hailey gives this thought on verse twenty-one: “The experience of men and nations testify to the truth
-

of this principle. Living luxuriously, concerned only for the flesh and the gratification of its desires and motivated by greed for material possessions, one will eventually see the end of his prosperity. This can also be applied to our own nation today. We have lived for the flesh, emphasized the material, consumed our resources, lived in a 'fool's paradise'; and are we not now coming to the end of our prosperity, standing on the brink of destruction! Zophar may have spoken more than he realized" (p.183).

- f. "Even while his wealth and prosperity remain, he shall find himself in difficulties, since every hand of the wicked (or rather, the hand of every one that is wretched) shall come upon him; i.e. all those who are poor and miserable, especially such as he has made poor and miserable, shall turn against him, and vex him. When he is about to fill his belly (comp. vers. 12-18); i.e. 'when he is on the point of making some fresh attack upon the weak and defenceless.' God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him.... And shall rain it upon him while he is eating..." [Pulpit Commentary].
 - 1) Psalms 78:30-31: "They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel."
 - 2) Psalms 11:6: "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup."

D. Job 20:24-29: The Wicked Will Be Forced to Flee.

1. Verses 24-25: "He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through. It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him."
 - a. The wicked man shall flee when confronted by the iron weapon; he will have reason to be fearful of the bronze bow, which would strike him through. The use of such bows is reported in the Scriptures:
 - 1) 2 Samuel 22:35: "He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms."
 - 2) Psalms 18:34: "He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms."
 - b. The Pulpit Commentary offers the following:
 - 1) "Iron was in use in Egypt at a very early date. A thin plate of it was found by Colonel Howard Vyse embedded in the masonry of the great pyramid; and iron implements and ornaments, iron spear-heads, iron sickles, iron gimlets, iron keys, iron bracelets, iron wire, have been found in the early tombs not infrequently (see the author's 'History of Ancient Egypt,' vol. 1. p. 505). That they are not more common is accounted for by the rapid oxidization of iron by exposure to the air, and its rapid decay in the nitrous soil of Egypt.
 - 2) "The inhabitants of South-Western Asia were at no time much behind the Egyptians in their knowledge of the useful arts: and iron appears as a well-known metal in the Jewish Scriptures from the time of the Exodus (see Num 35:16; Deut 3:11; 4:20; 8:9; 28:23; Josh 8:31). It is true that the principal weapons of war continued to be made ordinarily of bronze, both in South-Western Asia and in Egypt, till a comparatively late period; but Zophar may mean to assign to the slayer of the wicked man weapons of a superior character. And the bow of steel shall strike him through. It is uncertain whether steel was known in the ancient world.
 - 3) "But, whether or no, 'steel' is not meant here. The word used in the original is *nehushtah*, which undoubtedly means either 'copper' or 'bronze.' As copper would be too soft a material for a bow, we may assume bronze to be intended. The bronze used in Egypt was extremely elastic, and there would have been little difficulty in fashioning bows of it..."
 - c. The weapon used against the wicked man would pierce his body, coming out of his gall. It appears that Zophar is speaking of the gall-bladder; to cut the gall-bladder would release the bitter fluid to spread through the body. The terrors of death would accompany the wound, and the spread of the gall would add to the terror.

2. Verses 26-27: "All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle. The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him" (KJV). "All darkness is laid up for his treasures: A fire not blown by man shall devour him; It shall consume that which is left in his tent. The heavens shall reveal his iniquity, And the earth shall rise up against him" (ASV).
 - a. Zophar makes his graphic description of the wicked man's fate as dark and unpleasant as he can. He speaks of darkness encompassing his treasures [secret places, KJV]. A man would conceal his money in secret locations]. The point seems to be that he would lose his treasures.
 - b. A fire that did not need to be fanned would consume him and what is left of his possessions. This point would be especially painful to Job, for he lost his sheep to a great fire from the sky: "While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee" (Job 1:16).
 - c. The wicked man would have punishment coming upon him from the heaven and the earth; the heaven would expose his sinfulness and the earth would assault him. Zophar used language that would bring agonizing memories back to Job: "And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee" (Job 1:14-19).
3. Verses 28-29: "The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God."
 - a. Zophar makes it clear that the wicked man he especially has in mind is none other than Job himself. He is entirely wrong in making the application to Job, despite the fact that much of what he says about wicked men being accurate.
 - b. The wicked man would lose his possessions; they would be taken away from quickly. Such happened to Job, but not because he was a wicked man.
 - c. Hailey gives this insightful comment:
 - 1) "In this writer's opinion, many of Zophar's observations are true, or express an element of truth, yet one feels that his speech is fanciful, and that many charges were exaggerated....If Zophar is looking to the final eternal end of the wicked, which is doubtful, much of what he says can be accepted. If he is speaking of the present life and end of the wicked generally, his conclusions are highly magnified. If he had Job in mind, which is possible, and what he said was directed to him, then to that extent the speech was false, and his discussion was cold, cruel, and heartless.
 - 2) "One point stands out clearly in the chapter; Zophar saw God as a God of vengeance who exercises His wrath against the wicked man in a fierce and final manner. There is not a flicker of love, mercy, or compassion in the entire twenty-nine verses. However, let us not revolt from the picture; for in spite of the fanciful and exaggerated assumptions with respect to the wicked as if all come under his wrath in this present life, Zophar succeeded in pointing up the danger and final end of the wicked and God's judgment on sinners. As said already, if Zophar described the end of the

incorrigible and stone-hearted sinner, he did a masterful job; but if he had Job in mind, it was all for nought” (p.186).

Job 21

Job Responds to Zophar

A. Job 21:1-6: The Patriarch Asks His Friends to Listen Diligently to His Reply.

1. Verses 1-3: "But Job answered and said, Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations. Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on."
 - a. "Each of the three friends has now made two speeches, but they have failed to solve the problems of Job's suffering without cause and God's failure to respond to his pitiful cry for help. In their refusal to grapple with the problem, they fell back on tradition that viewed all suffering as punishment for wrong doing" (Hailey, p.187).
 - b. "You came to me for the professed purpose of giving 'me' consolation. In that you have wholly failed. You have done nothing to sustain or comfort me; but all that you have said has only tended to exasperate me, and to increase my sorrow. If you will now hear me attentively, I will take that as a consolation, and it shall be in the place of what I had a right to expect from you. It will be 'some' comfort if I am permitted to express my sentiments without interruption, and I will accept it as a proof of kindness on your part" [Barnes].
 - c. Job asks his friends to carefully consider his words, and after he has spoken, he invites them to continue their mockery of him, if that was what they wanted to do. Their words to him have offered much scorn, but little if any comfort.
2. Verses 4-6: "As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled? Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth. Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh" (KJV). "As for me, is my complaint to man? And why should I not be impatient? Mark me, and be astonished, And lay your hand upon your mouth. Even when I remember I am troubled, And horror taketh hold on my flesh" (ASV).
 - a. Adam Clark observed: "Is it not with a man that I speak? And, if this be the case, why should not my spirit be troubled? I do not reply against my Maker: I suffer much from God and man, why then may I not have the privilege of complaining to creatures like myself?" [Biblesoft]. Clarke thought that Job meant he was speaking to men; but the verse seems to be saying the opposite—that he was not talking about what men were doing to him, but what God was doing. But verse four is difficult.
 - b. Pulpit Commentary states: "Do I address myself to man, pour out my complaint to him, and expect him to redress my wrongs? No; far otherwise. I address myself to God, from whom alone I can look for effectual assistance. And if it were so; rather, and if so, if this is the case, if my appeal is to God, and he makes me no answer, then why should not my spirit be troubled? or, Why should I not be impatient? (Revised Version). Job thinks that he has a right to be impatient, if God does not vouchsafe him an answer" [Biblesoft].
 - c. Job is a godly man; this we know because of the praise God heaped upon him in the first two chapters. Therefore, he does not show any irreverence toward the Almighty in any of his complaints. He does not comprehend why these harsh blows have been allowed to fall upon him. His only explanation is that Jehovah has permitted these things to happen. In his agonizing, many thoughts would pass through his mind.
 - d. With the bleak and painful circumstances which have been heaped upon him, Job believes he has been justified in offering the complaints about his condition. He is troubled in his spirit [KJV]; he has shown a measure of impatience [ASV]. This part of the verse "appears to be a defense for his shortness of temper and vexation of spirit charged by Eliphaz, 'Why do thine eyes flash?' (15:12-13). Under the circumstances, why should not his temper be short?" (Hailey, p.188).
 - e. In verse five, Job calls on his friends to look at him and be astonished. If Zophar will duly consider

Job's condition, before and after his troubles, he should be able to see that his charges against Job are empty; he should be astonished at what has occurred; he should put his hand over his mouth, to stifle any more unjust criticism.

- f. In verse six, Job speaks of the feeling of fright he has when he considers what has happened to him. He was in good health, he was prosperous, he had a fine family; his prospects were excellent for a long and happy life. But a series of sudden disasters fell upon him. "I have an internal shuddering and horror when I recall the scenes through which I have passed. I am myself utterly overwhelmed at the magnitude of my own sufferings, and they are such as should excite commiseration in your hearts. Some, however, have connected this with the following verse, supposing the idea to be, that he was horror-stricken when he contemplated the prosperity of wicked people. But there seems to me to be no reason for this interpretation. His object is undoubtedly to show them that there was enough in his case to awe them into silence; and he says, in order to show that, that the recollection of his sufferings perfectly overwhelmed 'him,' and filled him with horror. They who have passed through scenes of special danger, or of great bodily suffering, can easily sympathize with Job here. The very recollection will make the flesh tremble" (Barnes, BibleSoft).

B. Job 21:7-13: Why Do the Wicked Live, Grow Old, and Are Mighty in Power?

1. Verse 7: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?"
 - a. In earlier speeches, his friends had given a dark picture of the wicked, showing that their prospects were grim indeed. Zophar had asserted that they die young (Job 20:11). But Job states that the wicked live, grow old, and become mighty in power. [He does not mean that this is a universal rule; he means that this is frequently the case—just as it is in our own time].
 - b. This statement is a direct repudiation of what his friends had alleged about the wicked. Their point, of course, was to imply that Job was a wicked man, or else these troubles would not have come upon him. The same kind of troubles can come upon righteous men—such as Job.
 - c. No man can discern the deep workings of God's providence. Why do the wicked prosper? Why do the righteous often suffer reverses and ill-treatment? Much of these matters will always be beyond our comprehension in this world; some of them we may come to understand over a period of years; perhaps all of these will be made known to us completely in eternity.
2. Verses 8-10: "Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf."
 - a. Job points out here several items which illustrate his point. The wicked man has a family; instead of being without children, he has a family—and they are healthy and prosperous.
 - b. The home of the wicked man is free from fear; he is not directly afflicted by the punishing rod of God. Their outward circumstances are prosperous; their families are secure and happy; they do not live in obvious danger.
 - c. Even their livestock is healthy and productive; the bull produces offspring; the cows give birth to healthy calves; they do not lose their calves before their birth.
 - d. The patriarch shows that the wicked men are generally as well blessed in material prosperity as the righteous men. One cannot decide, based on outward circumstances only, whether a man is righteous or wicked. As the New Testament points out, God blesses all mankind with material needs.
 - 1) Matthew 5:45: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
 - 2) Acts 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
 - e. There is a need for some people to be rich and for others to be poor. "The rich and poor meet together:

the LORD *is* the maker of them all" (Prov. 22:2). God is the maker of both the rich and the poor. This does not say that he pre-programmed some to poverty and others to wealth; it says that God is the Creator of both. Most are in poverty through no fault of their own, and many are rich at the expense of others (through craftiness, graft, or crime). Many are poor through their own apathy, and many are rich through diligent effort and wisdom.

- 1) There is no difference between the rich and the poor as to (1) their Creator, (2) their worth before God, (3) their need for salvation, and (4) their need for protection and guidance.
 - 2) "The rich and poor meet together." A well-balanced, smoothly-running economy requires both the rich man and the poor man. If all were rich, who would do the labor? If all were poor, who would provide the jobs? If all were middle-class, who would establish factories and businesses for jobs? And who would fill the menial roles? The rich and the poor (and the middle-class) need each other!
 - 3) Also, in view of those unfortunate people who fall into such deep poverty that they are in danger of starvation, or have no place to live, how could they survive without the benevolence of those who have "this world's goods?" Compare: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas. 2:14-17).
 - 4) As the rich can bless the poor by providing jobs and sustenance, so the poor bless the rich in doing the work the rich man cannot do. Neither should despise the other.
 - 5) "By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, and honour, and life" (Prov. 22:4). Having humility before God and reverence for God lead to blessings. If we can come to understand God's nature, majesty, goodness and power, we will be humble and reverent before him. We will see our own relative insignificance. And these attitudes of humility and awe for God open the door for God's blessings upon us. He will give us sufficiency in this world's needs; he will give us spiritual riches; we can have honor from those in society who respect godliness; we will be blessed with life, natural and spiritual.
 - 6) Some righteous people die young, and some unrighteous live to be aged, but the obedient person has the aid of God in life and in death, however long or short his time on earth may be.
3. Verses 11-13: "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave."
- a. Because a man is wicked, does not mean that he cannot have a wife and children. Indeed, Job states that his little ones are as numerous as a flock. Not only does he have children, but they are happy and healthy; they dance and play. We should not read into this any wicked activities. Since Job is showing that wicked men have little children, and that these little ones frolic and play as the righteous man's children do, the playing we understand as the happy fun times so enjoyed by young people.
 - b. They are provided with musical instruments which they use in merry-making. The timbrel is like our tambourine; the harp was a stringed instrument, likely the same as the lyre. The organ would be a flute or some reed pipe.
 - c. "The image is one simply of health, abundance, exuberance of feeling, cheerfulness, prosperity. The houses were free from alarms; the fields were filled with herds and flocks, and their families of happy and playful children were around them. The object of Job was not to say that all this was in itself wrong, but that it was a plain matter of fact that God did not take away the comforts of all the wicked and overwhelm them with calamity....It refers to the playfulness and the cheerful sports of children,
-

and God has made them so that they ‘will’ find pleasure in such sports, and so that they are benefited by them. There is not a more lovely picture of happiness and of the benevolence of God any where on earth than in such groups of children, and in their sportiveness and playfulness there is no more that is wrong than there is in the gambols of the lambs of the flock” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].

- d. “What Job said about the wicked was totally opposite to the friends’ description of their fate (Eliphaz, 15:20-24; Bildad, 18:5-20; Zophar, 20:22-28). Instead of their goods flowing away as in a flood (20:28), the wicked shall live out their days in the comfort of their wealth. And rather than a lingering illness, suddenly they are snatched into Sheol...” (Hailey, p.190).
- e. Even evil people can live happy, prosperous lives on earth. God does not execute a man the moment he steps over the moral or spiritual line into sin. A wicked man may have all this world has to offer, enjoy a happy and long life, be surrounded by a loving family, and die a quiet death. The same can be true of a righteous man. Our material prosperity in this life does not depend on the kind of character we develop. Many times wicked men are cut off in the prime of life, or endure severe troubles, or live miserable lives; sometimes these same circumstances come upon the most righteous. Whether a man is righteous or wicked is determined by his life, his words, his motives, his attitudes, his morality [not by his material prosperity or poverty]—using God’s word as the standard.

C. Job 21:14-16: The Wicked Live in Open Rebellion to God.

1. Verse 14: “Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways” (KJV). “And they say unto God, Depart from us; For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways” (ASV).
 - a. A man who is classified by God’s word as wicked, has declared [by the way he lives] that he wants nothing to do with the Almighty. It could be the case that he has verbally stated his position; in the average case, the individual makes this declaration by his life-style. The wicked man shows in one or more ways that he is in open rebellion to the will of God.
 - b. The patriarch is not saying that they were wicked because they enjoyed their prosperity or allowed their children to engage in merry-making. They excluded obedience to God; they rejected or at least neglected his will; they are wicked because they were in disobedience. “This is the gist of what he is saying, that being thus wicked they were in fact prospered, and not punished as his friends had maintained” (Barnes).
 - c. The wicked do not want to live by the restrictions and requirements of God’s truth. “We have no wish to become acquainted with God. His ‘ways’ here mean his government, his law, his claims—whatever God does. Never was there a better description of the feelings of the human heart than is here expressed. The ways of God are displeasing to people, and they seek to crowd from their minds all respect to his commandments and claims. Yet, if this is the character of man, assuredly he is very far from being a holy being. What higher proof of depravity can there be, than that a man has no desire to know anything about a pure and holy God; no pleasure in becoming acquainted with his Maker!” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft]. [Barnes, being a Calvinist, had the erroneous idea that we are born into a state of depravity, inheriting the guilt of the sins of our ancestors. Such a doctrine is not taught in the Scriptures; we are guilty of sin only when we personally commit an act of sin—Ezekiel 18:20. One who plunges deeply into sin develops a depraved status].
 - 1) Genesis 8:21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.” [A man is guilty of evil (sin) from his *youth*—not from his infancy].
 - 2) Ezekiel 18:20: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”

- 3) Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."
 - 4) Matthew 18:1-3: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." [Little children are totally innocent of sin, or else they could not have been used as a pure example of citizens in God's kingdom].
2. Verse 15: "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"
- a. This verse states the attitude of the wicked. They can see no purpose in serving God; they perceive no profit to be derived from following God's will; they can discern no reason therefore to pray to him. They were prosperous, healthy, and happy; what could God offer to enhance their present status? The attitude evident in the statement is the belief that the greatest situation one can have in this life is one of wealth, health, and happiness. Solomon had much to say about the vanity of earthly concerns:
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 2:1: "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 2:11: "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 5:10: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity."
 - 4) Ecclesiastes 6:2: "A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease."
 - 5) Ecclesiastes 7:6: "For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity."
 - 6) Ecclesiastes 7:15: "All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness."
 - 7) Ecclesiastes 8:10: "And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity."
 - 8) Ecclesiastes 11:8: "But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity."
 - 9) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
 - b. "What profit, they ask, should we have, if we pray to him? Expediency is everything with them. Will serving God do them any good? Will it advance their worldly interests? Persuade them of that, and they will be willing to pay him, at any rate, a lip-service. But, having prospered so long and so greatly without making any religious profession, they see no reason to believe that they would prosper more if they made one" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by BibleSoft].
 - c. This attitude describes perhaps the majority in our land today. We are living in a time of general prosperity. More people have more of the bounties of this world today than at any other time in our history. There is a general interest in religious matters, but only to a nominal degree.
 - 1) Most people claim to believe in God, but there seems to be little interest in Biblical truth; many

want a modest amount of religion, but not enough to elicit deep conviction and dedication. Most people have some measure of prosperity, so they do not see a great need for profound commitment to God and his word.

- 2) To add to this problem, there are many “religionists” who are ready to offer whatever the citizens “want” [not, however, what they need]. The *mega-churches* started by asking people what they liked and did not like in organized religion. Based on their findings, they established religious groups which have grown into enormous gatherings. These *churches* are hardly more than social clubs with a religious atmosphere. The grave danger they represent is in convincing people that they are worshiping and serving God, but they are only following a carefully-scripted format, with just enough truth to make their concoction pleasant and believable, but the whole truth is missing.
 - a) They preach some truth, but not the whole, unadulterated truth: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:6-9).
 - b) They preach a *Jesus*, but not the Lord of the Bible: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him” (2 Cor. 11:3-4, ASV).
3. Verse 16: “Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.”
 - a. “Lo, their good is not in their hand; i.e. their prosperity is not in their own power, not the result of their own efforts. God's providence is, at least, one element in it, since he exalts men and abases them, he casteth down and lifteth up. Hence it would seem to follow that they are his favourites. Shall Job therefore cast in his lot with them? No, he says, a thousand times, No! The counsel of the wicked is far from me; or better, be the counsel of the wicked far from me! I will have nothing to do with it. I will cling to God. I will maintain my integrity. Satan had charged Job with serving God for the sake of temporal reward. Job had disproved the charge by still clinging to God, notwithstanding all his afflictions. Now he goes further, and declines to throw in his lot with the wicked, even although it should appear that the balance of prosperity is with them” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
 - b. “[The counsel of the wicked is far from me] Or, rather, ‘far be it from me!’ Perhaps the meaning is this, ‘Do not misunderstand me. I maintain that the wicked are often prospered, and that God does not in this life deal with them according to their deserts. They have life, and health, and property. But do not suppose that I am their advocate. Far be it from me to defend them. Far from me be their counsels and their plans. I have no sympathy with them. But I maintain merely that your position is not correct that they are ALWAYS subjected to calamity, and that the character of people can ALWAYS be known by the dealings of Providence toward them.’ Or, it may mean, that he was not disposed to be united with them. They were, in fact, prospered; but though they were prospered, he wished to have no part in their plans and counsels. He would prefer a holy life with all the ills that might attend it” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. Wayne Jackson offers this excellent comment on this passage: “Even though they are so blessed (in their evil), and he is ill-treated (in his righteousness), nevertheless, he repudiates their ‘wicked counsel’ [their way of life] (16b). What a man! No wonder God is proud of him. And what a rebuttal to Satan’s charge that men only serve Jehovah for profit!” (P.55).

D. Job 21:17-21: Who Can Question God’s Actions?

1. Verses 17-18: “How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon

them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away” (KJV). “How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out? That their calamity cometh upon them? That God distributeth sorrows in his anger? That they are as stubble before the wind, And as chaff that the storm carrieth away?” (ASV).

- a. The KJV renders this passage as exclamatory statements; the ASV gives it in the form of questions. Job’s three friends have alleged that the wicked are always on the verge of divine retribution, that their prosperity and well-being are only to last a moment. Job’s questions here apparently are given as a rebuttal to their contentions.
 - b. “Job did not deny that there may be cases in which these [calamities] befall a wicked man, but he denied that their statements have a universal application. ‘How oft’ (often) is the light put out? Is the principle to be applied without exception? Do these calamities befall every wicked man? Does God deliver sorrows to each of them in this life? Their charges were too inclusive; Job denied this. In line three Job asked, How often does God express his anger by rendering judgment upon the wicked commensurate with their sins” (Hailey, p.191).
 - c. When God punishes a man, sorrows accompany this demonstration of his anger. The wicked are as stubble in the wind—they cannot stand before God’s power any more than loose straw can resist the wind. These are exclamation in the King James, but are rhetorical questions in the American Standard Version.
 - d. His three friends thought that Job’s troubles came as divine punishment for his sinful conduct, and that this is the lot of every wicked man—in this life. In their view, Job had no reason to complain about his lot, and that he would be restored to his former status if he would repent. But it is impossible for one to repent of an offense he has not committed, or which he does not know he has done.
2. Verses 19-21: “God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it. His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?”
- a. Scholars see this passage as Job putting words in the mouths of his three friends; the ASV prefaces verse nineteen with “ye say.” With this in mind, the common interpretation of this passage is expressed in the following two quotes:
 - 1) “They had affirmed that not only did God, as a great law, punish the wicked in this life, but that the consequences of their sins passed over to their posterity; or, if ‘they’ were not punished, yet the calamity would certainly come on their descendants; see Job 18:19-20; 20:10,28. This is the objection which Job now adverts to. The statement of the objection, it seems to me, continues to Job 21:22, where Job says, that no one can teach God knowledge, or prescribe to him what he should do, and then goes on to say, that the ‘fact’ was far different from what they maintained; that there was no such exact distribution of punishments; but that one died in full strength, and another in the bitterness of his soul, and both laid down in the dust, together” [Barnes. Biblesoft].
 - 2) Job “anticipates an objection: ‘But God visits a man’s punishment upon his children,’ and he responds: ‘Let him [God] punish the man himself so that he will know it! Let his *own eyes* see his destruction, and let him drink of the Almighty’s wrath’ (19,20), for he [the evil man] will not care what happens to his family after he is gone [21]” (Jackson, p.55).
 - b. This view of the passage appears reasonable, but it requires the interpolation [*ye say*] to be inserted into the verse (19). What would the passage say without the interpolated words? A second view:
 - 1) Job would be saying that God stores up iniquity [punishment] for the wicked man’s offspring. This idea is found in other passages:
 - a) Exodus 20:5: “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and

fourth generation of them that hate me.”

- b) Numbers 14:18: “The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.”
 - c) But Ezekiel 18:20: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”
 - d) The guilt of the individual is from his own personal sin (Ezek. 18:20). But the consequences of one generation’s sins against God are often felt by following generations.
 - During the First World War, Germany pursued a terrible war with the Allies. When they lost the war, the Allies forced upon Germany many onerous penalties, which were felt by the next generation that had not been involved in fighting the war.
 - The father in a family might commit some heinous crime, be convicted and sent to prison for life or perhaps even be executed. His wife and children had nothing to do with his crime, but there are definite consequences which fall upon them because of his violations. The breadwinner is not there, so economic hardships may afflict them—through no fault of their own.
- 2) The wicked man will receive certain penalties; sometimes he is punished even in this life; in every case, he will receive the proper sentence in eternity.
 - 3) The penalty the wicked man will receive will be applied to him personally; he will experience it directly; he shall see it. It is described as drinking “the wrath of the Almighty.” Socrates was executed by being required to drink a cup of hemlock; presumably, others have also been executed in this fashion. God’s punishment is depicted here as to “drink of the wrath of the Almighty.” In Revelation, we are told of seven bowls [vials] of wrath that were poured out upon the earth: “And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth” (Rev. 16:1).
 - 4) When a wicked man is thus punished, he is not likely to be much interested in the fate of his children.
- c. If the words *ye say* are to be understood in verse nineteen, undoubtedly the view expressed by Barnes and Jackson is correct. If the words are not to be included, then perhaps the second view is more accurate.
 - d. Some versions include the interpolation:
 - 1) “Ye say, God layeth up his iniquity for his children. Let him recompense it unto himself, that he may know it: Let his own eyes see his destruction, And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty. For what careth he for his house after him, When the number of his months is cut off?” (ASV).
 - 2) “They say, 'God lays up one's iniquity for his children'; Let Him recompense him, that he may know it. Let his eyes see his destruction, And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty. For what does he care about his household after him, When the number of his months is cut in half?” (NKJV).
 - 3) “You say, 'God stores up their iniquity for their children.' Let him pay it out to them, that they may know it. Let their own eyes see their destruction, and let them drink of the wrath of the Almighty. For what do they care for their houses after them, when the number of their months is cut off?” (ESV).

E. Job 21:22-26: “God Does Not Need a Man to Tell Him What to Do.”

1. Verse 22: “ Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.”

- a. God cannot be taught anything by any man or angel; his knowledge is infinite.
 - 1) Isaiah 55:8-9: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - 2) Isaiah 40:13: “Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?”
 - 3) Isaiah 45:9: “Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?”
 - b. In the preceding passage, we are told of punishment God is able to bring upon the wicked. Mention is made of the consequences of a man’s sins which are felt by others, even innocent people. No one is able to say that God is wrong in whatever he does. We may be sure that Jehovah will never do anything that is wrong or which is inconsistent with his divine nature. Since his knowledge and wisdom are infinite, his actions will always be right.
 - c. “Instead of its being true, as they maintained, that wicked people would all be cut down in some fearful and violent manner, as a punishment for their sins, Job goes on (Job 21:23-26) to show that they died in a great variety of ways—one in full age and prosperity, and another in another manner. This, he says, God directs as he pleases. No one can teach him knowledge; no one can tell him what he ought to do....[Seeing he judgeth those that are high] Or rather, he judges ‘among the things’ that are high. He rules over the great affairs of the universe, and it is presumptuous in us to attempt to prescribe to him how he shall govern the world. The design of this and the following verses is to show, that, from the manner in which people actually die, no argument can be derived to determine what was their religious condition, or their real character. Nothing is more fallacious than that kind of reasoning” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
2. Verses 23-26: “One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them” (KJV). “One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them” (ASV).
 - a. Job shows his friends some facts of life regarding a certain type wicked man.
 - 1) Some men die in their prime, with their demise coming under quiet and peaceful circumstances.
 - 2) Some die with their milk pails full of milk—not in abject poverty as his friends had alleged.
 - 3) Some die while their bones are still comprised of moistened marrow; he is in good health and affluence right up to the end.
 - b. Job describes the end of another type of wicked man.
 - 1) Some die in bitterness of soul; he has had a series of experiences which have brought grief upon him; this grief has embittered him so that he is unhappy and filled with sorrow.
 - 2) “And unlike the first, he never experienced the delights and good things of life. However, both the prosperous and well favored man and the unfortunate and bitter individual come to the same end. In death both return to the dust to become the food of worms” (Hailey, p.194).
- F. Job 21:27-34: Job Knows the Schemes of His Companions.
1. Verses 27-28: “Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me. For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?”
 - a. Job was wise enough to perceive the intentions of his friends; he knew their purposes. Although they
-

- did not directly state their case, identifying him specifically, he understood their devices.
- b. Their questions about the house of the prince and the dwelling places of the wicked imply that they no longer can be found; they have been destroyed. The prince would be a wicked man, but though he had possessed power and authority, he would be eliminated, along with the other wicked men (according to Job's friends). The *house* of the prince may more directly refer to his family; this would bring up the painful memory of the destruction of Job's children.
2. Verses 29-31: "Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens, That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him what he hath done?" (KJV). "Have ye not asked wayfaring men? And do ye not know their evidences, That the evil man is reserved to the day of calamity? That they are led forth to the day of wrath? Who shall declare his way to his face? And who shall repay him what he hath done?" (ASV).
 - a. Job inquires whether his friends have asked a traveler who passes by about whether the wicked are always punished in this life. What testimony would they offer? A traveling man would have seen more than one who has always lived at the same place.
 - b. "Job does not deny sinners' future punishment, but their punishment in this life. They have their 'good things' now. Hereafter their lot, and that of the godly, shall be reversed (Luke 16:25). Job, by the Spirit, often utters truths which solve the difficulty under which he laboured. His afflictions mostly clouded his faith, else he would have seen the solution furnished by his own words. This answers the objection, that if he knew of the resurrection (Job 19:25), and future retribution (Job 21:30), why did he not draw his reasonings elsewhere from them, which he does not? God's righteous government, however, needs to be vindicated as to this life also, and therefore the Holy Spirit has caused the argument mainly to turn on it, at the same time giving glimpses of a future fuller vindication of God's ways" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Biblesoft].
 - c. In verse thirty-one, Job asks about telling the wicked man directly what his punishment will be—who will tell it to him to his face? And who will punish him for his offenses? The wicked men he has in mind are those who go through life with scarcely a problem; from outward circumstances, they get away with their evil deeds. No mortal can bring upon him the due penalty for his transgressions; and none will tell him to the face of his vileness.
 3. Verses 32-34: "Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb. The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him. How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?"
 - a. He was unreprieved in life, as powerful, rich men are, especially those who are known for being harsh and demanding. But in death, they will be accompanied to the tomb with pomp and ceremony by those who were friendly toward him (or who feared him) in life. His life was corrupt and his burial was lavish. They would stay long at the tomb in apparent mourning; and would see to it that his grave was undisturbed.
 - b. "The 'general' meaning is not difficult. It is, that he should be honored even in his death; that he would live in prosperity, and be buried with magnificence. There would be nothing in his death or burial which would certainly show that God regarded him as a wicked man" (Barnes, Biblesoft).
 - c. Large crowds of people would precede him to the burial site, and large crowds would follow. In a wider sense, great multitudes have preceded him in death, and great multitudes would follow later.
 - d. His body would be covered with clods of the earth. The grave is the inevitable goal of all humanity, for we were formed from the elements of the earth, and our bodies shall return to their original source. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19).
-

- e. Since Job's friends had a faulty understanding of God's operations, how could they consider themselves to be qualified to provide consolation to Job in his troubles? Encouragement and comfort for the soul and hope for eternity must be grounded in a knowledge of God's truth. Faulty knowledge of spiritual matters can give no genuine comfort. False teachers are widely known for their words of false comfort; even though an individual has died in rebellion to God's will, these errorists will invent some "comfort" for the bereft families.
-

Job 22

Eliphaz Responds to Job

A. Introduction.

1. The three friends had failed in their aim to convince Job he was a rank sinner, thus they make a last assault on Job. Job started out to curse his birth and life, but now seems calm. His friends were calm at the beginning, but now are upset. In the first cycle of speeches, they tried to bring him to his knees by impressing upon the patriarch certain sober thoughts concerning the nature of God (his goodness, his omniscience, his view of the world); in the second cycle, they tried to pressure Job by appealing to the providential operation of God in measuring out punishment to the wicked; in the third round, Eliphaz and Bildad directly accuse Job of great, specific sins (but Zophar fails to enter a charge).
2. “Eliphaz seems to reach the height of blasphemy in this discourse. God, he thinks, has no interest in or concern over human sufferings, except in so far as they vindicate His justice. Eliphaz then repeats Job’s own words and urges him to repent” (Edward J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, p.328).
3. “In this speech a different tone is observed from that of his first two. Eliphaz symbolized the suave, sophisticated, and apparently kind and sympathetic man who defended a false position and found himself in a corner, polemically bankrupt. With no solid evidence with which to defend his position, he made unfounded charges on the assumed premise that all suffering was punishment for wrong doing. Job was a great sufferer, therefore a great sinner. It appears that he fell into the fault of many: if one fails to meet the facts of truth and argument, leave these and attack the person, manufacture charges. At least, this is what Eliphaz did” (Hailey, p.197).

B. Job 22:1-4: Can A Man Be Profitable Unto God?

1. Verses 1-2: "Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said, Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?"
 - a. Job had pressed his friend to show him specifically what his sins were. He has admitted that he was not sinless in his youth, but implies that he has straightened up his life as well as any man could as he grew older.
 - b. In this chapter, Eliphaz points out some specific charges against Job, but he offers no specification to support the charges. It is one thing to make a charge, it is quite another to support the charge with specific evidence.
 - c. Eliphaz begins this speech by asking whether a man can be profitable to God. A wise man may be profitable to himself, but is any man profitable to God? He is saying that it does not matter whether a man is righteous or unrighteous—God is self-sufficient; he does not need any man; no man can be profitable to the Almighty. “A wise man’s wisdom may benefit himself and others, but not God. Eliphaz concluded, therefore, that God could have no personal, selfish, or ulterior motive in testing Job” (Hailey, p.198).
 - d. Job had argued that God sends punishments upon men generally, whether they are righteous or evil (21:23-26). Eliphaz now responds to this point, his object being to show that punishment does imply guilt. He asserts that since God is self-sufficient, no action on the part of a man can influence him; he is not strengthened by man’s righteousness (vv. 2-3); he is not in any danger from any man (vs. 4); but it is because of the wickedness of a man [in this case Job] that punishment is imposed.
 - e. Man’s wisdom promotes himself in this life, but it cannot enhance the nature of God; it might have been a great advantage to himself and others, but it does not make God any stronger, wiser, or greater in being. This is a general truth; it is supported by our own discernment and by the Scriptures. “God is too great to be benefited by man. He is infinite in all his perfections; he is the original fountain of blessedness; he is supremely wise; he has all resources in himself, and he cannot be dependent on his

creatures. He cannot, therefore, be deterred from punishing them by any dread which he has of losing their favor—he cannot be induced to bless them because they have laid him under obligation. Eliphaz meant this as a reply to what Job had said. He [Job] had maintained, that God did ‘not’ treat people according to their character in this life, but that, in fact, the wicked were often prospered, and suffered to live long. Eliphaz at once ‘infers,’ that if this were so, it must be because they could render themselves ‘serviceable’ to God, or because he must have something to dread by punishing them. In the general sentiment, he was right; in the ‘inference’ he was wrong—since Job had not affirmed that they are spared from any such cause, and since many other ‘reasons’ may be assigned” [Barnes, Biblesoft].

2. Verses 3-4: “Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect? Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?” (KJV). “Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect? Is it for thy fear of him that he reproveth thee, That he entereth with thee into judgment?” (ASV).
 - a. The first question of this verse implies a falsehood. Eliphaz’ rhetorical question calls for a negative response; according to him, God derives no pleasure from Job’s righteousness. God takes no pleasure in the wickedness or foolishness of men, but he is greatly pleased with the righteousness of his people.
 - 1) Psalms 5:4: “For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.”
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 5:4: “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.”
 - 3) Ezekiel 18:31-32: “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”
 - 4) Psalms 35:27: “Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.”
 - 5) Psalms 147:11: “The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.”
 - 6) Psalms 149:4: “For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.”
 - b. His second question in verse three asks whether God obtains gain when Job makes his ways perfect. Does God derive any gain [profit, enhancement] from a man’s [Job’s] spiritually mature and upright life?
 - 1) Of course, no one can so-live as to put God under obligation to bless him. Eliphaz appears to have misconstrued Job’s comments to mean that God had no right to punish him because he has lived an upright life, and that God was obligated to bless him throughout his life. God does not have to have the dedicated services of any man; he can indeed get along without man; we need God, but God does not have to have us in order for him to continue in a happy and prosperous condition. He got along without mankind before the creation of the world and humanity.
 - 2) But in order for God’s work on earth to get done, his people must do his will as fully as possible. Teachers and preachers of the gospel must do their work, if the truth is to be spread to the lost.
 - a) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - b) Acts 8:4: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”

- c) 2 Timothy 2:2: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”
- d) Romans 10:13-18: “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.”
- e) 2 Corinthians 6:1: “We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”
- f) We cannot enhance God power, presence, knowledge, or wisdom by our upright conduct, but this conduct is for our own good and for the good of others; it is also essential in order for the purposes of God to be fulfilled on earth.
- c. The question of verse four expresses Eliphaz’s conclusion about Job: “If a man cannot be profitable to God (v.2), or bring pleasure or gain to Him by his righteous or perfect ways (v.3), and God would not reprove or bring into judgment because of man’s fear or piety toward Him, then there is one answer: it is for wickedness and sin that he has brought him into judgment” (Hailey, p.198).
- d. “He claims that since God is self-sufficient, no action on the part of man is able to influence Him. The Almighty is not enhanced by man’s righteousness (22:2,3). He declares that it is not on account of Job’s piety (‘thy fear of Him’) that he is being punished; rather, the patriarch’s calamities are the result of his great and endless iniquities (4,5)” (Jackson, p.57).

C. Job 22:5-11: Is Not Thy Wickedness Great?

1. Verse 5: “Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?”
 - a. The evidence for the time Job lived points to the Patriarchal Age. During that time, God had no written law. God speaks of sin being present (even rampant) during that time.
 - 1) Since there can be no sin where there is no law, it is clear that God had some kind of law in effect then, to which he held men accountable.
 - a) Romans 4:15: “Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.”
 - b) Romans 5:13: “For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”
 - 2) Hailey offers these powerful thoughts: “The concept of ‘universal law’ rests on the writing of Paul. He wrote, ‘...where there is no law, neither is there transgression’ (Rom. 4:15). In discussing the relation of the law of Moses to the promise made to Abraham, he asked, ‘What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions’ (Gal. 3:19)—but, transgression of what? Not the transgression of Moses’ law, for it was added because of transgressions. Furthermore, Paul wrote concerning Adam’s trespass of the law God placed him under (see. Gen. 2:15-17), ‘And law came in besides [along side of]’ the trespass that it (the trespass) ‘might abound’ (Rom. 5:20; cf. vv. 12-13). In writing of the Gentiles and their condition under wrath because of ungodliness and unrighteousness, Paul said in the same letter, ‘...that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them’ (1:19). Therefore, the law that men were under from Adam to the present was God’s moral law that was manifested (made known, revealed) to them, whether codified or not. Violations of this moral law included ‘unrighteousness ...wickedness ...covetousness...deceit...covenant breakers...unmerciful’(Rom. 1:29-31), which embraced Eliphaz’s charges against Job” (p.199).

- b. In the questions of this verse, Eliphaz introduces a list of spiritual crimes which he alleges against Job. [Eliphaz is as evil as the Sabeans who stole Job's animals, for he seeks to steal Job's good name]. His charges are merely asserted; no proof is set forth to establish guilt.
- c. One is wicked if he acts contrary to the will of God. One commits iniquity if he shuns the law of God, and acts as though God had no law. We do not miss the meaning of iniquity if we understand it as "lawlessness." Wickedness is a broad term, including positive rebellion against God's word, as well as failing to do one's duty before God.
- d. Just who are the wicked? Have we ever met a wicked person?
 - 1) Criminals are wicked, including the robber, the murderer, the kidnapper, and the rapist.
 - 2) Atheists are wicked, for they deny not only the word of God, they repudiate God himself.
 - a) Psalms 10:4: "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts."
 - b) Psalms 14:1-3: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."
 - c) Romans 1:28: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."
 - d) Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
 - 3) The immoral person is wicked, including the fornicator and the drunkard:
 - a) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
 - b) Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - 4) The moral man out of Christ is wicked.
 - a) He is lost because of his past guilt, not by his present practices.
 - b) The New Testament says every accountable person needs salvation: "...Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:13-14; cf. Rom. 1-3).
 - c) If one is saved by living a good life, why did Christ have to die? We cannot earn way into heaven.
 - d) Only those in Christ are freed from guilt [these verses are from the ASV]:
 - Romans 6:17-18: "But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness."
 - Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."
 - Ephesians 2:12-13: "That ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made

nigh in the blood of Christ.”

- 5) The religious man who follows false teachings is wicked.
 - a) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”
 - b) Luke 6:46: “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”
 - c) Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
 - d) Matthew 15:13: “But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”
 - e) The truth makes free from sin (John 8:32; 17:17; 1 Peter 1:22).
 - 6) The unfaithful Christian is wicked:
 - a) Revelation 3:15-17: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”
 - b) Hebrews 10:38-39: “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”
 - 7) The neglectful saints are wicked:
 - a) Hebrews 2:1-3: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.”
 - b) Hebrews 11:25-27: “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”
 - c) James 4:17: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”
 - d) Matthew 25:24-30: “Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
-

- 8) The impure are wicked: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21).
- 9) The disobedient are wicked: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
2. Verses 6-9: “For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. But as for the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honourable man dwelt in it. Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.”
 - a. Eliphaz accuses Job [with no supporting evidence] of having taken pledges for nothing. An ancient custom was to take a certain garment from the man to whom money was lent; clothing was equal to money in those days. But Job is accused of taking a pledge for nothing lent; taking it for some unjust cause, leaving the individual without proper clothing. Under the Mosaic Law, certain restriction were given to prevent unnecessary suffering on the part of the borrower.
 - 1) Exodus 22:26: “If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down.”
 - 2) Deuteronomy 24:6: “No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh a man's life to pledge.”
 - 3) Deuteronomy 24:17: “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge.”
 - b. Eliphaz further accuses Job (again without proof) of failing to give water to the weary and refusing to provide food for the hungry. Especially in desert areas, giving water to thirsty travelers (and others) was an understood duty. To withhold water is likely to result in the death of the thirsty person; the same can be true with refusing to provide food for the hungry.
 - c. Honorable and powerful men control much of the earth; those with the most to give have greater responsibilities to aid the needy.
 - 1) Luke 12:47-48: “And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”
 - 2) James 3:1: “My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.”
 - 3) James 2:14-16: “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?”
 - 4) Proverbs 19:17: “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.”
 - d. Eliphaz accuses Job of having sent the widows away hungry, and he had done damage to the orphans. “This was probably the cruelest charge of all. It declared that Job acquired his vast estate by robbing

the widows and fatherless of what was rightfully theirs. In those days a widow left with children to care for faced almost insurmountable difficulties. To send away such empty was an expression of heartless cruelty” (Hailey, p.200). Eliphaz charges Job with stealing what was rightfully the property of widows and the fatherless, or else he refused to provide for them when he had the means to aid.

- 1) To “break the arms” of the fatherless was to deprive them of the means to live. It is a figure of speech, depicting a needy person whose arms have been broken, thus unable to provide for himself. Eliphaz is not saying that Job had broken their arms, but he is charging him with depriving them of the necessities of life.
 - 2) But again, Eliphaz makes a charge without giving proof that the accusation is true. He only made general charges.
3. Verses 10-11: “Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee; Or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.”
- a. The sins which Eliphaz had heaped upon Job had caused the troubles Job was suffering. This was Eliphaz’s unsupported opinion. He told the patriarch that he had brought all of these losses and agony upon himself by being such a gross sinner.
 - b. He described these troubles figuratively, depicting Job as being surrounded with snares, with sudden terrors all over him, with living in absolute darkness, and being covered with a great flood of waters. There was no way of escape; he had nothing but more fear to anticipate; there was not a ray of light to give him hope; the flood of troubles would carry him into oblivion.

D. Job 22:12-20: Is Not God in the Height of Heaven.

1. Verses 12-14: “Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are! And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.”
 - a. Eliphaz makes additional charges against Job, accusing the patriarch of saying that God is so far away and too busy with other affairs to take an interest in the affairs of men.
 - b. He puts words in Job’s mouth, words which the patriarch did not say or believe. He claims that Job believes God is ignorant of man’s activities on the earth. He charges Job with believing that since God is beyond the stars of the sky, in the height of the heavens, that he cannot see through the dark, thick clouds which cover the earth.
 - c. He alleges that Job believes God is so busy walking about the circuit of heaven that he takes no interest (at least, little interest) in the affairs of men.
 - d. These charges against Job are also baseless. Eliphaz has no way he could prove these claims.
 2. Verses 15-17: “Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood: Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?”
 - a. He asks Job whether he has noted (and kept) the old way evil men had traveled in the past. He asks if Job had studied out their history and tried to imitate their wicked way.
 - b. Eliphaz reminds Job that these wicked men of old times were cut down [snatched away] before their time; they did not succeed in rebelling against God. This may be a reference to wicked men in general but some scholars think that the flood of Noah’s time may be the subject. In either case, the point is the same: wicked men who rebel against God will be brought down. Eliphaz and his two companions think this is universal and absolute, even in this life; Job has shown the truth that evil men prosper, often times all the way through life, and good men suffer, many times, all the way through their life.
 - c. The attitude of the wicked men in question is expressed in verse seventeen. Let God do his worst; we do not believe in him; we do not have any fear of what he can do. “The unrighteous in the days of
-

Noah, who appear to have had an abundance of all temporal good, (Job 22:18,) and who surpassed the deeds of all the former wicked, said in effect to God, Depart from us. And when Noah preached unto them the terrors of the Lord, and the necessity of repentance, they rejected his preaching with, What can the Almighty do for us? Let him do his worst; we care not for him” (Clarke, Biblesoft].

- d. What is said in this passage certainly would fit the case of the evil generation which perished in the great flood; it would also describe many other wicked people at other times in history. Knowledgeable people would not deny that the words could describe the attitude of many of our own generation. What is said here by Eliphaz does not describe Job’s true condition.
3. Verses 18-20: “Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me. The righteous see it, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn. Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.”
 - a. In verse eighteen, Eliphaz refers to Job’s statement in 21:16, and sarcastically says, “Yet he filled their houses with good things.” And he quotes from Job’s statement (21:16), saying, “But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.” Eliphaz asserts that the righteous are glad when the wicked are punished, while the estate of the righteous prospers.
 - b. “[Yet he filled their houses with good things] This is undoubtedly a biting sarcasm. Job had maintained that such people were prosperous. ‘Yes,’ says Eliphaz, ‘their houses were well filled! They were signally blessed and prospered!’ [But the counsel of the wicked is far from me] This is the very language of Job, Job 21:16. It is used here sarcastically. ‘Far from me,’ you say, ‘be the counsel of the wicked. Thus you defend them, and attempt to show that they are the favorites of heaven! You attempt to prove that God must and will bless them! Far from me, say I, be the counsel of the wicked! With them I have no part, no lot. I will not defend them....I will not be their advocate!’ The object is, to show that, notwithstanding all that Job had said, he was secretly the advocate of the wicked, and stood up as their friend” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. Job had maintained that God does not punish or reward individuals on earth in strict accord with the way they live; it is common to see wicked men prosper in health and wealth and happiness; it is also common to see the righteous suffering from ill health, living in poverty, enduring afflictions of various kinds. But the patriarch is far from taking sides with the wicked; Job does not support the wickedness of men; he does not condone their evil ways; he simply recognizes, as we do, that God does not reward every good deed or punish ever evil deed in this life.

E. Job 22:21-30: Acquaint Thyself With Him.

1. Verses 21-22: “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.”
 - a. Eliphaz calls on Job to place himself in God’s service; if he will unite with God [again], then he will be granted peace—the sore boils will be removed and his prosperity will be restored. Good things will come to Job, if he will “acquaint” himself with the Almighty. He evidently means that good will come to him if he will genuinely repent and do right. We remember that he has only assumed that Job was guilty of sin; he has not proved it.
 - b. He asks his friend to receive God’s law, which proceeds from the mouth of the Almighty, and to lay up his words in his heart. This is good counsel for any sinner, but Job was not in rebellion against God; we have already been told that God held Job in the highest of esteem, and that Job did not turn from God, but retained his integrity (Job 1-2).
2. Verses 23-25: “If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.”
 - a. Eliphaz calls on Job to return to the Almighty. But one who has not departed from God cannot return

- to God. It is impossible for one who has not committed sin to repent and turn from sin. We wonder whether Eliphaz and his friends were aware that they had made false charges against Job; they had done so, whether they believed it or not, and it was they who needed to repent.
- b. He tells Job that he would be restored to health and wealth if he would only repent (return to the Almighty). He must put iniquity far from him. If he will do so, then Eliphaz promises the patriarch that he would be granted gold as dust (an immense amount of it), and he would have gold from Ophir to rival the stones in the brooks.
 - c. Not only would he be given great wealth, the Almighty would become his defense. And further, he would receive plenty of silver. It appears that Eliphaz has an inordinate interest in gold and silver.
3. Verses 26-28: “For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows. Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.”
- a. Painting a very bright picture, Eliphaz states that if he would return to the Lord, he would have the delight (the good pleasure) of God; he could lift up his face to him (without any shame).
 - b. He would be able to pray to God, and be assured that his prayers were heard. He would be able to pay whatever vows he would make to the Lord.
 - c. Whatever decree he should then make he would be able to bring it about; he would walk in light, not in darkness.
 - d. The only thing wrong with this beautiful scene is that Job did not need to repent; he had never left the Lord. He and his friends did not know the full story at the time, but we have been privy to it from the first chapter; God is testing Job, to prove his mettle; and to furnish mankind for all following time a wonderful picture of faithful endurance.
4. Verses 29-30: “When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person. He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.”
- a. Eliphaz has turned on the charm; he sends forth bitter and sweet in almost the same breath. He is trying to get Job to repent, but such vicious accusations as he has made are not likely to bring about any repentance, even if such is really needed. His plea is generally good, but he has not proved Job’s guilt.
 - b. When a sinful man (which Eliphaz assumes Job to be) repents, then good things result (verses 21-28); and the penitent one will then be able to intercede for others who are guilty (verses 29-30).
 - c. It is interesting to note that Job later intercedes for these three misguided friends: “And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before” (Job 42:7-10).
-

Job 23

Job Responds

A. Introduction.

1. It appears that Job now ignores the speeches of his enemies and makes his appeal directly to the Almighty. He has not been able to make a dent in the attitude the three associates have manifested toward him, so he addresses God.
2. “In the following two chapters Job practically ignored what Eliphaz said in his last speech, brushing it aside and continuing to lament that he could not reach God. He remained perplexed at the providence of God that permitted him to suffer and allowed the wicked to prosper (cf. Ch. 21 and chs. 23-24). He was innocent; and if he could present his cause before the Lord, he was confident that God would exonerate him by vindicating him before his enemies” (Hailey, p.207).

B. Job 23:1-10: My Stroke is Heavier Than My Groaning.

1. Verses 1-2: "Then Job answered and said, Even to day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning."
 - a. Job admits that his complaint has been bitter, but the stroke of divine punishment has been upon him; and the punishment has been heavier (greater) than his complaint. He thinks that he has kept his complaints lower than the stroke called for, that he has been restrained in expressing his pain. The stroke has been administered to him by the Lord [or at least with the Lord's permission] for reasons that are unclear to Job at this point.
 - b. Although he has uttered complaints about his conditions, that is, he has discussed them with his friends and has appealed to God about them, that does not rank him among the sinful. His groanings have brought him no relief, for the burden is truly great.
2. Verses 3-5: “Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.”
 - a. The patriarch says that if only he knew where to find the Lord, he would approach his judgment seat and argue his case. He would then be able to hear from the Lord the charges against him, and come to understand them.
 - b. Although God is omnipresent, and is not far from any one of us, where exactly is he located, and how can we find him? We cannot see him; he does not speak with audible voice to us today; we cannot write him a letter or send him an e-mail message. How could Job make contact with God? God was not speaking directly to Job at this point.
 - 1) Psalms 139:7-10: “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”
 - 2) Acts 17:27-29: “That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.
 - c. How can we make contact with God? In the age of the patriarchs, he sometimes communicated directly with such men as Abraham. He will later speak directly with Job. He communicated his will to Israel through Moses, and later by the prophets; he now has communicated with us through the message his Son gave (the New Testament).

- 1) Hebrews 1:1-2: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:4-5: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”
 - 3) John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
 - 4) Acts 4:12: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
3. Verses 6-9: “Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.”
- a. Job does not believe that God would exert his great power against him if he were given the opportunity of discussing his case before the Almighty’s judgment seat. God could destroy him in a flash, but he does not believe that would happen—he correctly perceives that God is merciful and loving to those who are righteous.
 - b. Would God destroy him for approaching him to discuss the problem? Of course, he would not. “The word ‘strength’ is not improperly supplied by our translators. It means that he would enable him to make a fair presentation of his cause. So far from taking advantage of his mere ‘power’ to crush him, and thus obtain an ascendancy in the argument, he would rather ‘strengthen’ him, that he might be able to make his case as strong as possible. He would rather aid him, though presenting his own cause in the controversy, than seek to weaken his arguments, or so to awe him by his dread majesty as to prevent his making the case as strong as it might be. This indicates remarkable confidence in God” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. The patriarch is convinced that he is innocent of wrongdoing; he does not claim absolute sinlessness, for has spoken of the sins of his youth: “For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth” (Job 13:26). But he knows of no sin he has since committed which would bring such divine displeasure upon him.
 - d. Therefore, Job is confident that God would release him from his present distress if he were given the opportunity to present his side of the case.
 - e. But he goes forward and does not find the Lord; he goes backward and does not find him; he cannot discover him on either his left or right hand. If he looks one way, God is not there; if he looks another direction, God conceals himself. He has not been able to have an open discussion with the Lord. Of course, he had the avenue of prayer, but that entails man’s pouring out his heart to God. And God has not responded to Job’s entreaties.
 - f. “From the beginning of his speeches Job had wished to speak with God, desired to know what his sins were, and had protested his innocence; but he had been unable to find Him” (Hailey, p.208).
 - 1) Job 9:1-3: “Then Job answered and said, I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.”
 - 2) Job 9:19-21: “If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead? If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.”
 - 3) Job 9:28-35: “I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent. If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never
-

- so clean; Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me: Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.”
- 4) Job 10:2-7: “I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked? Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth? Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days, That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin? Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.”
 - 5) Job 12:4: “I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn.”
 - 6) Job 13:3: “Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.”
 - 7) Job 13:15-19: “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him. Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears. Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified. Who is he that will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.”
4. Verse 10: “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”
- a. Job is fully convinced that God knows the way that he takes—that he has walked in the path of righteousness and godliness. Therefore, when God has examined his case carefully, he will be found innocent of iniquity.
 - b. It is clear that Job is now beginning to perceive somewhat of God’s purposes with him. He states that when his present trials are over, he will come forth as gold.
 - c. To come forth as gold is an allusion to the smelting process by which the impurities are burned away from the ore, leaving behind pure gold. Hardship and suffering can purify our lives, burning off the contaminating impurities.
 - 1) Trials can discipline us and make us stronger, for they give us greater humility.
 - a) James 4:10: “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”
 - b) Luke 14:11: “For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”
 - c) 2 Corinthians 12:7-10: “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”
 - 2) Trials test our mettle.
 - a) They reveal the changes we need to make, as well as the progress we have made.
 - b) Job 1:6-12: “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth,
-

and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.”

- c) Job 1:13-19: “And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”
 - d) Job 1:20-22: “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”
- 3) Several indirect benefits of sufferings and trials may develop.
- a) They often bring some to repentance.
 - b) They give opportunities for other to be of help (cf. Gal. 6:2, 9-10).
 - c) They can bring alienated brethren back together.
 - d) They can give God an opportunity to bless.
 - Ephesians 3:20-21: “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”
 - Job 42:12, 17: “So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses....So Job died, being old and full of days.”
 - Joseph was made second in authority in Egypt after his lengthy ordeal.

C. Job 23:11-17: My Foot Hath Held His Steps.

1. Verses 11-12: “My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.”
 - a. Job states positively that his foot had held to the steps God has mandated. He has stayed on the path mapped out by the will of God; he has not declined—he has not turned aside from the prescribed path. He has not turned back from the commandment as revealed by the Lord.
 - b. He affirms that he has had greater regard for God’s word than for the essential food to sustain his

physical body. Obedience to Job was more precious than food; he had rather serve God than eat. Contrary to the charges of his friends, he has not grasped after material wealth so as to deprive others (cf. 22:6-9).

- c. Barnes has an interesting note about Job's reference to his foot having held fast to the steps God has ordained: "[My foot hath held his steps] Roberts, in his *Oriental Illustrations*, and the Editor of the *Pictorial Bible*, supposed that there is an allusion here to the active, grasping power which the Orientals have in their feet and toes. By constant usage they accustom themselves to make use of them in holding things in a manner which to us seems almost incredible, and they make the toes perform almost the work of fingers. We bind ours fast from early childhood in our close shoes, and they become useless except for the purpose of walking. But the Orientals use theirs differently. They seize upon an object with their toes, and hold it fast. If in walking along they see anything on the ground which they desire to pick up, instead of stooping as we would, they seize it with their toes, and lift it up. Alypulle, a Kandian chief, was about to be beheaded. When he arrived at the place of execution, he looked round for some object on which to seize, and saw a small shrub, and seized it with his toes, and held it fast in order to be firm while the executioner did his office. (Roberts). So an Arab in treading firmly, or in taking a determined stand, seems to lay hold of, to grasp the ground with his toes, giving a fixedness of position inconceivable to those whose feet are cramped by the use of tight shoes. This may be the meaning here, that Job had fixed himself firmly in the footsteps of God, and had adhered tenaciously to him; or, as it is rendered by Dr. Good, 'In his steps will I rivet my feet'" [Biblesoft]. A television report [Jan., 2007] told about a young woman who had no arms, yet she was married and had a baby. She was very able to tend to her little one, changing its diaper and clothing, and feed it—using her toes. She could do these tasks as efficiently as anyone with arms and hands!
2. Verses 13-14: "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."
 - a. Job perceives that God is of one mind; he is unchangeable in his resolution; he does as he pleases. But that does not imply that God acts capriciously! [Since the word "mind" has been supplied by the translators, some scholars think the statement is one which affirms the sole sovereignty of God; that whatever God does is an expression of his sovereign will].
 - b. The patriarch attributes the things that he meets in life to God's wondrous workings. God gets the credit for every blessing and bounty; he does not get the blame for those things which go wrong. Job will come to see this better as his experience and reflections on the situation continue.
 - c. "If 'what his soul desireth' in afflicting Job was for his good, then Job remained ignorant of God's ways. This stated anew the old problem: if God is absolutely good, how can He decide to punish one for something that he has not done? The Lord's action would be inconsistent with Job's understanding of God's character. But if Job suffered for some other purpose, what was it? Furthermore, if 'many such like things are with [God],' then Job was not alone in his experience, and God's purpose and 'desire' must extend beyond Job and be world-wide in scope" (Hailey, p.210).
 3. Verses 15-17: "Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him. For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me: Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the darkness from my face."
 - a. Job is troubled at God's presence; when he considers the situation, how great God is and how little he is, Job is afraid. The awesome might of Jehovah is beyond our comprehension, but we can get an insight into its greatness when we look at the creation, and when we review God's dealings with men over the centuries.
 - b. The patriarch is wondering whether he has complained too much, as he remembers the greatness of the Almighty and the majesty of his being.
 - c. "Previously, Job had considered three specific aspects of God's exercise of power: (1) in the natural
-

world where His power is so violently demonstrated that no one would dare to ask God, ‘What doest thou?’ (9:4-12); (2) in the realm of men and nations whom He leads away to destruction (12:13-25); and (3) in prospering wicked men whom he allows to live out a life of prosperity and ease (21:22-24). Although Job earnestly desired to come before the Almighty and present his cause, the contemplation of God’s mighty power and the fear of death terrified him” (Hailey, p.211).

d. Barnes offers these comments:

- 1) [Because I was not cut off before the darkness] Before these calamities came upon me. Because I was not taken away in the midst of prosperity, and while I was enjoying his smiles and the proofs of his love. His trouble is, that he was spared to pass through these trials, and to be treated as if he were one of the worst of men. This is what now perplexes him, and what he cannot understand. He does not know why God had reserved him to treat him as if he were the chief of sinners.
- 2) [Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face] The word "neither" is supplied here by our translators, but not improperly. The difficulty with Job was, that God had not "hidden" this darkness and calamity so that he had not seen it. He could not understand why, since he was his friend, God had not taken him away, so that all should have seen, even in his death, that he was the friend of God. This feeling is not, perhaps, very uncommon among those who are called to pass through trials. They do not understand why they were reserved to these sufferings, and why God did not take them away before the billows of calamity rolled over them [ibid.].

e. Job now wonders why he had not died (been cut off) during the time of his prosperity and health, before the darkness (his sufferings and trials) came. He also wonders why God did not shield him from the thick darkness of his trials. There are many diverse emotions and thoughts which will run through the mind of one who is undergoing severe troubles and heartaches. Job was sufficiently a human to experience these internal turmoils.

Job 24

Job Continues His Speech

A. Job 24:1-12: Times Are Not Hidden From the Almighty.

1. Verse 1: "Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?"
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Why are times not laid up by the Almighty? And why do not they that know him see his days?" (ASV).
 - 2) "Wherefore from the Mighty One Times have not been hidden, And those knowing Him have not seen His days" (Youngs Literal Translation).
 - 3) "Since times are not hidden from the Almighty, Why do those who know Him see not His days?" (NKJV).
 - b. Job continues his reply to Eliphaz by describing some of man's mistreatment of his fellowman. He shows that many such violent people who live in open rebellion to the laws of justice, decency and honesty, still prosper even though they are unrighteous, and they are mostly unpunished.
 - c. "Mr. Good translates: 'Wherefore are not doomsdays kept by the Almighty, so that his offenders may eye their periods?' Doomsdays are here used in the same sense as term times: and the wish is; that God would appoint such times that the falsely accused might look forward to them with comfort; knowing that, on their arrival, they should have a fair hearing, and their innocence be publicly declared; and their detractors, and the unjust in general, meet with their deserts. But God reserves the knowledge of these things to himself" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
 - d. The patriarch asks why those who know Jehovah, do not see his days (times) when he punishes the sins of the unrighteous. If clear retribution were to be meted out against the wicked, their true character would be demonstrated; at the same time, if retribution were brought upon the unrighteous to expose their sins, vindication would be brought in the case of the righteous, to declare their innocence. This is a matter with which the innocent sufferers have long puzzled.
 - e. God has shown in his revelation that it is not his plan to punish instantly every transgression, but to patiently wait until the end of time, when the final Judgment will be held. In many cases, God brings punishment upon the wicked in this life; many time he also blesses and vindicates the righteous in this life. In the meantime, the godly ones are to remain loyal, and the guilty one are given time to repent.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 8:11-12: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him."
 - 2) Matthew 13:24-43: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn....Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the

- children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”
- 3) Romans 2:4: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
 - 4) 2 Peter 3:8-14: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”
 - f. The present hardships of the righteous, who suffer for righteousness’ sake, or who are called on to endure chastisements, are made stronger by these struggles; and the wicked who appear to be blessed despite their iniquities, are given time to learn the error of their way, or to accumulate more guilt for the horrors awaiting them in eternity. “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God” (Rom. 2:5-11).
2. Verses 2-4: “Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed *thereof*. They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge. They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together” (KJV). “There are that remove the landmarks; They violently take away flocks, and feed them. They drive away the ass of the fatherless; They take the widow's ox for a pledge. They turn the needy out of the way: The poor of the earth all hide themselves” (ASV).
 - a. Job enumerates some of the evil deeds of wicked men. The evil that men did in that ancient day is still being done by modern sinners. In this sense, there is nothing new under the sun.
 - b. Some back then would remove landmarks which marked the boundary of an owner’s property.
 - 1) Proverbs 22:28: “Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.”
 - 2) Proverbs 23:10: “Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless.”
 - 3) Deuteronomy 27:17: “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.”
 - 4) Deuteronomy 19:14: “Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time
-

- have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.”
- c. They violently take the flocks that belong to another and put them on their own pasture. The marginal reading of “feed thereof” is “feed them.” “The meaning is, that they drive off the flocks of others, and ‘pasture’ them; that is, they are at no pains to conceal what they do, but mingle them with their own herds, and feed them as if they were their own. If they drove them away to kill, and removed them wholly from view, it would be less shameful than to keep and claim them as their own, and to make the robbery so public” [Barnes, BibleSoft].
 - d. The wicked also drive away the donkeys of the fatherless and take the widow’s ox for a pledge. No doubt Job knew such cases.
 - 1) There are people who do anything that they believe they can get away with doing. Fortunately, we have a highly skilled and well-equipped police force in our land which frequently apprehends and punishes such thieves. Unfortunately, however, many rulings by the courts have made it easier for the criminal to avoid punishment and more difficult for the victims to get justice.
 - 2) These wicked people would rob the fatherless; in the case named, they took the donkeys that belonged to the fatherless. The fate of these unfortunate orphans would be desperate, unless someone had compassion on them, or they were old enough to fend for themselves somehow.
 - 3) In ancient societies, it was customary for a lender to take something of value from the borrower, such as a garment or an ox (in this case). But the ox was necessary to make a crop; if the wicked man took the widow’s ox, how could she produce a harvest? If she could not produce a harvest, she would go hungry, and how could she repay the loan? Evidently, the ox was of greater value than the loan.
 - 4) The Mosaic Law addressed this problem: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious” (Ex. 22:22-27).
 - e. The thieving wicked men Job describes were so evil that the poor and the needy had to avoid them and even hide themselves to avoid being deprived of their property or mistreated.
 - 1) For example, if the poor man was traveling and saw one of these wicked individuals approaching, he might have to hide himself until it was safe to continue; at the least, he would have to give way to the wicked man.
 - 2) The case may also be that the poor man might have to live in some secret place (in the rocks, or in a cave, or in a forest) to avoid the attention of these wicked men.
 - f. Keeping the text in focus, we recall that the patriarch is naming several cases of the wicked getting away with their crooked, thieving ways—God does not take direct action to punish these evil-doers.
3. Verses 5-6: “Behold, *as* wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey: the wilderness *yieldeth* food for them *and* for *their* children. They reap *every one* his corn in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.” “Behold, as wild asses in the desert They go forth to their work, seeking diligently for food; The wilderness yieldeth them bread for their children. They cut their provender in the field; And they glean the vintage of the wicked” (ASV).
 - a. One view of this passage is to understand Job to be describing the victims of the wicked; that they have to live like wild donkeys in the wilderness; as the food would be scanty, so they would at best
-

only be able to eke out a bare living. These victims of the evil men would scrape by, making-do with such as they could find in nature, and gleaning the fields and vineyards of the wicked rich men. Under the Mosaic Law, the rich farmer was told to leave part of the grain in the fields, so that the poor might glean these leavings, and so have something to eat.

- 1) “The corners of fields were not to be reaped, and the sheaf accidentally left behind was not to be fetched away, according to the law of Moses (Le. 19:9; 23:22; De. 24:21). They were to be left for the poor to glean. Similar laws were given regarding vineyards and oliveyards” [Easton’s Bible Dictionary].
 - 2) Leviticus 19:9: “And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.”
 - 3) Leviticus 23:22: “And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.”
 - 4) Deuteronomy 24:21: “When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.”
 - 5) Ruth 2:2: “And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.”
 - 6) The Mosaic Law was not in effect when Job lived, so the poor and needy were not protected by these requirements and provisions of the law.
- b. Another view of the passage is to see it as describing another kind of wicked men, those who wander in the wilderness, plundering the fields and taking their food by force.
- 1) “So Ishmael is called a wild donkey-man; Hebrew (Gen 16:12). These Bedouin robbers, with the unbridled wildness of the donkey of the desert, go forth there. Robbery is their lawless ‘work.’ The desert, which yields no food to other men, yields food for the robber and his children by the plunder of caravans. Rising betimes. In the East traveling is begun very early, before the heat comes on. Like the wild donkeys (Job 24:5), they (these Bedouin robbers) reap (metaphorically) their various grain....The wild donkey does not let man pile up in a stable his mixed provender (Isa 30:24); so these robbers find their food in the open air, at one time in the desert (Job 24:5), at another in the fields. The vintage of the wicked—the vintage of robbery, not of honest industry. If we translate ‘belonging to the wicked,’ then it will imply that the wicked alone have vineyards, the ‘pious poor’ (Job 24:4) have none” (Jamieson, Biblesoft).
 - 2) “Plundering bands of wicked marauders scour the desert, like troops of wild asses, going forth early to their work, and late taking rest—rising betimes for a prey, and generally finding it, since the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children. They are sure to find some plunder or other ere the day is over. They reap every one his corn in the field. When they have scoured the desert, the marauders approach the cultivated ground bordering on it, and thence carry off, each of them a quantity of ‘fodder,’ or ‘provender’ (Revised Version), for the sustentation of their horses. And they gather the vintage of the wicked; rather, as in the margin, and the wicked gather the vintage....Sometimes they burst into the vineyards, and rob them, carrying off the ripe grapes” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
- c. It is difficult to know which of these views is better. It seems to me that the first view fits the context, especially the next passage; it also fits the preceding section well.
4. Verses 7-10: “They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they have* no covering in the cold. They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter. They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor. They cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry.”
-

- a. The oppressors cause those without proper clothing [the poor and destitute] to dwell exposed to the elements; to be cold and wet, because they had no proper shelter. In desert areas, the temperature may be exceedingly hot during the day, but since there is no cloud cover to keep the heat from radiating back into the atmosphere, the temperature at night can be very cold.
 - b. “These mistreated sufferers, forced into poverty by the greed of their fellows, endured mountain rains and hugged the side of rocks for shelter. This was another picture of human wretchedness because of social mistreatment” (Hailey, p.215).
 - c. “Take refuge beneath a projecting rock. The robbers drive them away from their homes, or plunder them of their tents, and leave them to find a shelter from the storm, or at night, beneath a rock. This agrees exactly with what Niebuhr says of the wandering Arabs near mount Sinai: ‘Those who cannot afford a tent, spread out a cloth upon four or six stakes; and others spread their cloth near a tree, or endeavor to shelter themselves from the heat and the rain in the cavities of the rocks’” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - d. Job described the wicked as snatching the little children from their mother—perhaps to be sold into slavery.
 - 1) “That is, they steal away unprotected children, and sell them, or make slaves of them for their own use. If this is the correct interpretation, then there existed at that time, what has existed since, so much to the disgrace of mankind, the custom of kidnapping children, and bearing them away to be sold as slaves. Slavery existed in early ages; and it must have been in some such way that slaves were procured. The wonder of Job is, that such people were permitted to live—that God did not come forth and punish them. The fact still exists, and the ground of wonder is not diminished. Africa bleeds under wrongs of this kind; and the vengeance of heaven seems to sleep, though the child is torn away from its mother, and conveyed, amid many horrors, to a distant land, to wear out life in hopeless servitude” [Barnes].
 - 2) “[M]any who repeat the ‘giving back’ mantra would sneer at any such notion as patriotism or any idea that the institutions and values of American society have accomplished worthy things and deserve their support, instead of their undermining. Our educational system, from the schools to the universities, are actively undermining any sense of loyalty to the traditions, institutions and values of American society. They are not giving back anything except condemnation, often depicting sins common to the human race around the world as peculiar evils of ‘our society.’ A classic example is slavery, which is repeatedly drummed into our heads—in the schools and in the media—as something unique done by white people to black people in the United States. The tragic fact is that, for thousands of years of recorded history, people of every race and color have been both slaves and enslavers. The Europeans enslaved on the Barbary Coast of North Africa alone were far more numerous than all the Africans brought to the United States and to the 13 colonies from which it was formed. What was unique about Western civilization was that it was the first civilization to turn against slavery, and that it stamped out slavery not only in its own societies but in other societies around the world during the era of Western imperialism. That process took well over a century, because non-Western societies resisted... Those who want to ‘give back’ should give back the truth. It is a debt that is long overdue” [Thomas Sowell, Patriot Post].
 - e. The poor are required to give a pledge for a loan; they are so oppressed that they do not have proper clothing; being hungry, they are forced into the most humble of tasks. Though they bore the sheaves for some farmer, that wicked master would not allow them to eat the grain.
5. Verses 11-12: “Which make oil within their walls, *and tread their* winepresses, and suffer thirst. Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly *to them*” (KJV). “They make oil within the walls of these men; They tread their winepresses, and suffer thirst. From out of the populous city men groan, And the soul of the wounded crieth out: Yet God regardeth
-

not the folly” (ASV).

- a. The poor folks, no doubt of necessity, worked for the wicked rich, pressing out olive oil and treading out grapes. Though they were that close to these items, yet they were not allowed to partake. Under the Mosaic Law, even the oxen which treaded out the grain was allowed to eat the grain.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 25:4: “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 9:9: “For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?”
 - 3) 1 Timothy 5:18: “For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”
 - b. “They were taken away from their homes; compelled to toil for others; and confined for this purpose within enclosures erected for the purpose of expressing oil” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. Barnes comments on the groanings that arise from the cities: “The evident meaning of this is, that the sorrows caused by oppression were not confined to the deserts and to solitary places; were not seen only where the wandering freebooter seized upon the traveler, or in the comparatively unfrequented places in the country where the poor were compelled to labor in the wine presses and the olive presses of others, but that they extended to cities also. In what way this oppression in cities was practiced, Job does not specify. It might be by the sudden descent upon an unsuspecting city, of hordes of freebooters, who robbed and murdered the inhabitants, and then fled, or it might be by internal oppression, as of the rich ever the poor, or of masters over their slaves. The idea which Job seems to wish to convey is, that oppression abounded. The earth was full of violence. It was in every place, in the city and the country, and yet God did not in fact come forth to meet and punish the oppressor as he deserved. There would be instances of oppression and cruelty enough occurring in all cities to justify all that Job here says, especially in ancient times, when cities were under the control of tyrants” [ibid.].
 - d. From the various places where the oppressed poor were being mistreated by the wicked, cries are raised, yet God does not take action [so it seemed to Job]. We are reminded by this of the cries which arose from the Israelites who suffered in their Egyptian slavery. Also, when the sins of Sodom and her sister-cities afflicted so many, cries were raised toward Heaven.
 - 1) Genesis 18:20: “And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous.”
 - 2) Exodus 2:23-25: “And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.”
 - 3) Genesis 15:13-16: “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”
 - e. Job was operating without full knowledge of God’s activities and intentions. He could only perceive part of the overall picture. We wonder why God allows evil nations and wicked men to prevail. His patience is being shown; also his dealings are unbelievably complex; he plans for centuries; he has to calculate the effects of his actions on countless people, in many places, who will live at different times.
-

- 1) When the iniquity of the Amorites peaked, they lost their deed to Canaan; but so did Israel: "Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you" (Josh. 23:15-16).
- 2) We may be sure that God is still in charge of his universe; he gives man freedom to act as he pleases; he does not coerce any man's obedience; men often choose to do the wrong thing, which brings sufferings upon the innocent; in his own good time and way, the Almighty will take the right action. Perfect justice will be dispensed in the Judgment of the Last Day, and frequently his judgment is brought to bear upon the wicked even in this life.

B. Job 24:13-17: They Rebel Against the Light.

1. Verse 13: "They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof."
 - a. Job describes the wicked as being in rebellion against the light. The ones he now discusses include the murderer, the adulterer, etc. Any willful sinner rebels against the light.
 - b. The light is a reference to God's way of truth and holiness. One who lives in darkness is one who lives in ignorance and iniquity; one who lives in the light is one who lives in knowledge and wisdom, being guided by the word of God.
 - c. These rebels are unconcerned about the rights of others; they do not regard the will of Heaven; the moral rightness or the immoral wrongness of an action does not interest them.
 2. Verse 14: "The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief."
 - a. The murderer gets up in the morning and proceeds to take the life of the poor and needy. There are other ways to kill a man than by the use of a deadly weapon. A man can be worked or starved to death; when this is done deliberately, it might take longer, and a dangerous weapon may not be employed, but the result is the same.
 - b. Under the cover of darkness, the thief does his evil work. There are many ways to commit the act of stealing. Some have been robbed of their property by false charges brought against them in a court of law; on the face of the action, it may appear that the law has been carefully followed.
 - 1) When Hitler began the second world war in Europe, he disguised his actions under the cover of international law.
 - 2) When Ahab and Jezebel took the property of Naboth, they used some false charges against that godly man to cause his death and to steal his vineyard: "They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died" (1 Kings 21:12-13).
 - c. The right value on human life is often ignored by society. In times of war, certainly this is the case. In our present situation in America, little value is attached to the life of the unborn; more than a million of these precious little ones are slaughtered yearly in our great country. At the same time, great efforts and much expense are paid out to keep vicious murderers from execution. There have been reports that some older people in nursing facilities have been slowly starved to death.
 3. Verse 15: "The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth *his* face."
 - a. The adulterer waits until night begins to fall before going on his immoral mission. He disguises
-

himself, and under the cover of darkness, he believes he will be undetected.

- b. This sinful individual may get by with his spiritual crime, for it may not be known by others; but there is an all-seeing eye that never closes!
 - 1) Genesis 16:13: “And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?”
 - 2) Psalms 121:3-4: “He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”
 - 3) Psalms 33:18: “Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.”
 - 4) Proverbs 15:3: “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”
 - 5) Hebrews 4:13: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”
 - c. Such sinful men have plagued virtually every generation. Solomon describes one situation: “Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house, In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night” (Prov. 7:8-9).
4. Verses 16-17: “In the dark they dig through houses, *which* they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light. For the morning *is* to them even as the shadow of death: if *one* know *them*, *they are in* the terrors of the shadow of death” (KJV). “In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light. For the morning is to all of them as thick darkness; For they know the terrors of the thick darkness” (ASV).
- a. The wicked men described here are robbers of houses. In the daytime, they pick out a house to burglarize during the night. The houses then were often constructed of mud bricks (adobe), which could be dug-through rather easily.
 - b. They do not operate during the daylight hours; they know they would be discovered. As Job puts it, they “know not the light.” There is great danger to them if they should do their evil work in the open light of day.
 - c. But they are not afraid to do their evil under the cover of darkness. In former days, many people were fearful of the night; this was due in part to superstition. These criminals were not afraid of darkness, but used it to cover their evil.

C. Job 24:18-25: The Wicked May Enjoy Present Advantages.

1. Verses 18-19: “He *is* swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards. Drought and heat consume the snow waters: *so doth* the grave *those which* have sinned” (KJV). “Swiftly they pass away upon the face of the waters; Their portion is cursed in the earth: They turn not into the way of the vineyards. Drought and heat consume the snow waters: So doth Sheol those that have sinned” (ASV).
 - a. The wicked may enjoy present advantages and prosperity, but ultimately they must pay a severe price for their ungodliness. This is something that the wicked do not (or will not) admit to themselves. They live as though there will be no day of reckoning. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him” (Eccl. 8:11-12).
 - b. The passage is very difficult; some scholars have said this is the hardest passage in the book. The point of verse eighteen seems to be as Barnes described it: “It is a comparison of the thief with a light boat, or any other light thing that moves gently on the face of the water, and that glides along without noise. So gently and noiselessly does the thief glide along in the dark. He is rapid in his motion, but he is

- still. It is not uncommon to describe one who is about to commit crime in the night as moving noiselessly along, and as taking every precaution that the utmost silence should be preserved.”
- c. Another view is to understand Job to be describing the end of the wicked individual, as expressed by Hailey: “As a leaf, or a canoe or other light craft on the waters, they silently and swiftly vanish....If this concept is correct, then his portion was slippery, cursed, and leads to a fall. His escape upon the waters leads only to a fall, a destruction, because it is cursed” (pp.218f).
 - d. As drought and heat consume the snow waters, so *Sheol* [*Hades*] swallows up sinners. From the story of the wicked rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), we learn that guilty sinners pass from this life into a place of great torment, while the righteous are born into a place called “Abraham’s bosom” (also known as *Paradise*—Luke 23:34). In Paradise, the righteous dead are in a state of happiness and blessedness; in the other part of the Hadean realm, the wicked dead are already suffering the torments of the doomed.
2. Verses 20-21: “The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree. He evil entreateth the barren *that* beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow” (KJV). “The womb shall forget him; The worm shall feed sweetly on him; He shall be no more remembered; And unrighteousness shall be broken as a tree. He devoureth the barren that beareth not, And doeth not good to the widow” (ASV).
 - a. Job further describes the fate of the wicked dead. The womb shall forget him; the mother who bore him can do him no more good; the worms of the earth shall consume his physical body; his memory will soon perish from the earth; and his unrighteousness will be perfectly punished—which Job depicts as a tree that is broken off. It will be too late for him to change his ways!
 - b. Earlier in the chapter, Job had charged the wicked with mistreating the widow and fatherless. He did evil to these innocent and helpless ones. While he lived on earth, it appeared that he had gotten away with his evil deeds, but in the final analysis, God will compensate him for his wickedness.
 - c. The ASV shows that he mistreated the childless woman as badly as he did the widow with children. His punishment will surely be great.
 3. Verses 22-23: “He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and no *man* is sure of life. Though it be given him *to be* in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes *are* upon their ways” (KJV). “Yet God preserveth the mighty by his power: He riseth up that hath no assurance of life. God giveth them to be in security, and they rest thereon; And his eyes are upon their ways” (ASV).
 - a. “The idea here seems to be, that his acts of oppression and cruelty were not confined to the poor and the defenseless. Even the great and the mighty were also exposed, and he spared none. No one was safe, and no rights could be regarded as secure. The character here described is one that pertains to a tyrant, or a conqueror, and Job probably meant to describe some such mighty man, who was regardless alike of the rights of the high and the low” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - b. Hailey offers this: “True security is found only in the Lord, but even this is not a guarantee of safety from all harm; nor is a lack of trust in God the road to complete loss or ruin in this life (cf. 12:6, and Job’s own experience). There are general rules with exceptions. His eyes are upon the wicked; He determines their ultimate destiny” (p.220).
 - c. “God allows the escape of the wicked man from his trouble, and lets him live on, safe and secure, and the man himself rests on the security thus afforded him, quite contented with it. Yet his eyes are upon their ways. God’s eyes are still upon the ways of the wicked: they are, or seem to be, the objects of a special providential care” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
 4. Verses 24-25: “They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all *other*, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn. And if *it be* not *so* now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?” (KJV). “They are exalted; yet a little while, and they are
-

gone; Yea, they are brought low, they are taken out of the way as all others, And are cut off as the tops of the ears of grain. And if it be not so now, who will prove me a liar, And make my speech nothing worth?" (ASV).

- a. Job perceives the truth about the ultimate fate of the wicked; they may have prosperity and safety in this life for a time—even perhaps throughout their earthly sojourn; but God will see to it that true justice is done in the long run.
 - b. “Unlike the friends who spoke from tradition, Job spoke from observation—the facts of life. He concluded his speech by flinging into the teeth of his hearers the challenge to prove him wrong. Bildad and Zophar had failed to prove him false; the facts were against them” (Hailey, p.220).
-

Job 25

Bildad Speaks

A. Job 25:1-3: Bildad Begins His Short Speech.

1. Verses 1-2: "Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, Dominion and fear *are* with him, he maketh peace in his high places."
 - a. His speech is short; it appears that his desire for debate has been lost. He argues for the majesty of God and against the importance of man. He takes one last blow at Job, trying to prove he is a sinner, by alleging that all men are sinners. We must remember that Bildad (and his two friends) are not speaking by inspiration.
 - b. God possesses dominion which in turn ought to generate reverential fear within all members of his rational creation—both angels and men.
 - c. He establishes and maintains peace among those who dwell in his high places. Certainly this is true in Heaven; and today, in the church, peace is maintained among the faithful. Since Bildad is not an inspired spokesman for God, then his statements can only express his own personal knowledge, observation, and wisdom; he is unable to reveal eternal truth.
 - d. Can there be any turmoil, dissatisfaction, or rebellion among God's heavenly throng? Surely not! Although the Bible speaks about certain angels who rebelled, we know nothing more about it other than the bare fact.
 - 1) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
 - 2) Jude 1:6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
 - e. That God intends for peace to prevail among the members of the church of his dear Son is clear. [Bildad could know nothing about these matters; prophets of a later time provided some information of a prophetic nature, and the New Testament gives the fulfillment in detail].
 - 1) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - 2) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 3) Ephesians 2:12-18: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh

by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

- 4) Matthew 13:10-12: “And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.”
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:10-12: “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”
2. Verse 3: “Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?”
- a. In order to exalt the power of the Almighty, Bildad affirms by a rhetorical question that the number of his armies is truly great. His obvious point is to show that puny man is overmatched if he should try to enter into a contest against God. He has an innumerable host [army] of angels.
 - 1) Genesis 32:1-2: “And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.”
 - 2) 2 Chronicles 18:18: “Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left.”
 - 3) 2 Kings 6:16-17: “And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”
 - 4) Hebrews 12:22: “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”
 - 5) Revelation 9:16: “And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.”
 - 6) Matthew 26:53: “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”
 - 7) Jude 14: “And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones” (ASV).
 - b. His second rhetorical question points out that there is no place in all of creation where God’s light does not penetrate. His sun illuminates the entire surface of the earth, as it spins on its axis before the sun [Bildad did not know about the earth spinning on its axis and that it revolves around the sun; but he could perceive that the face of the whole earth was in the light of the sun by day, and by the moon at night]. He could also discern from information God had already revealed, which had been passed down through the generations, that God’s knowledge was unlimited; that nothing anywhere could be concealed from his knowledge and sight. The light of God’s presence is unlimited.

B. Job 25:4-6: Can man be justified with God?

1. Verse 4: “How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman?”
 - a. “In recognition of God’s greatness and under the light of His scrutiny, how can one be accounted sufficiently righteous to appear before Him? Can he claim to have adhered to God’s perfect standard? And being born of a woman, subject to the frailties inherited from her, how can he be sufficiently clean, morally speaking, to stand before God? Before responding, remember that in his description of the Almighty and His power Bildad missed a fundamental element in the character of God—His love, mercy, grace and readiness to receive and forgive. This argument used by Bildad could as logically have been used against himself” (Hailey, p.224).
 - b. Some have tried to use this verse to prove the doctrine of original sin. There is no doctrine that is more bereft of truth than this one! The doctrine alleges that each child born into this world brings with it all the guilt of Adam’s sin, plus all the sins accumulated by each member the child’s ancestry, from Adam to his own mother and father. There is much evidence which destroys this doctrine. [Note: see the item appended at the end of this chapter—a direct quote from *The Philadelphia Confession of Faith*, 1742].
 - 1) First, the mother and father only produce the physical body of the baby; it is God who creates the spirit of the child and places it within the body of the infant [this is done at the moment of conception]. If the child is born guilty of sin, from whom did it derive? It could not have come from the parents, for they produced only the body; and the spirit came from God. Sin pertains to the spirit; the physical body participates in sin, but it is the spirit that is held accountable to God.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
 - b) Physical bodies will not be present in the Judgment (cf. 1 Cor. 15:50ff); each of us will have been given a new spiritual body in which our spirit will operate.
 - c) If a baby enters this world contaminated by sin, he would have had to get that guilt from God, but that is impossible and unthinkable! God is entirely free from sin.
 - 2) The infant does not obtain the contamination of sin from his parents: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezek. 18:20).
 - 3) The nature of sin is such that it can only be accrued by personal involvement—the soul that sins, it shall die [be separated from God]. Sin is the transgression of God’s word (1 John 3:4); you cannot transgress God’s word for me, and I cannot transgress his word for you.
 - 4) An individual becomes guilty of sin during his youth (not when he is a baby).
 - a) Genesis 8:21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.”
 - b) Jeremiah 3:25: “We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.”
 - 5) Before we can be charged with sin and be held accountable for sin, we must have reached a level of maturity where we can comprehend the difference between good and evil, and choose to do evil.
 - a) Isaiah 7:15-16: “Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.”
 - b) Romans 9:11: “For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that
-

the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.” Notice that God's choice was made before either had done good or evil. If the false doctrine of "original sin" is true, Paul could not have made this argument, for both of these unborn infants would have already been contaminated by Adam's sin. Notice also that good and evil are things that are done; they are not inheritable qualities.

- 6) The pure nature of little children is set forth as the ideal for those who enter the kingdom of our Lord.
 - a) Matthew 18:3: “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”
 - b) Matthew 19:14: “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - 7) The speech in which the statement of verse four is given is poetic; poetic language must not be made to contradict plain, literal language.
 - 8) God is the Father of our spirits; our parents produce our bodies [by means of God's natural laws].
 - a) Zechariah 12:1: “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”
 - b) Hebrews 12:9: “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”
 - c) Ecclesiastes 12:7: “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”
 - 9) Each responsible individual must give account of himself in the Judgment; only Adam can give account for Adam; and only you can give account for you; the responsibility entirely belongs to the individual: “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12).
2. Verses 5-6: “Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, *that is* a worm? and the son of man, *which is* a worm?”
- a. To exalt the greatness and majesty of God, Bildad compares him to the moon and the stars. They pale in comparison to the Almighty!
 - b. Bildad states that the stars are *impure* in God's sight; in the parallelism of the verse, the moon is likewise impure. If verse four teaches that man is born of woman and is thus is contaminated by the guilt of sin, then this passage says that the stars (and moon) were also created with the impurity of sin. No man enters this world guilty of sin any more than any star was created in an impure condition. Bildad's point is to show that God far transcends the moon and stars, and everything else in this material world.
 - c. The physical body of man is destined to return to the elements of the earth; it was made from these elements and is destined to return to that state. In the natural process of decay, the body disintegrates; in the case of a fire, the body more quickly returns to those original elements. In the usual case, the body is buried in the earth where it falls into decay, with the aid of certain larvae.
 - d. Bildad has the ultimate end of a man's body in view when he made the statement of verse six. But there is another view of man: he is made in the image of God, made a little lower than the angels, but possessing the rational, intelligent, and pure nature of God.
 - 1) Genesis 1:26-27: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
-

- 2) Psalms 8:1-9: “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”
 - 3) Ezekiel 28:15: “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.”
- e. “So, whether or not we can be absolutely certain of the exact meaning of the symbols and metaphors in his speech, we can understand Bildad’s point: God is mighty and great, transcending all creation; and man is sinful, unclean, and insignificant to the point that he is presumptuous in even desiring to come before Him” (Hailey, p.225).
-

The Following is quoted directly from *The Philadelphia Confession of Faith* regarding the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin:

Of the Fall of Man, Of Sin, And of the Punishment Thereof

1. Although God created man upright and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, and threatened death upon the breach thereof, yet he did not long abide in this honour; Satan using the subtlety of the serpent to subdue Eve, then by her seducing Adam, who, without any compulsion, did willfully transgress the law of their creation, and the command given unto them, in eating the forbidden fruit, which God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory. (Gen. 2:16, 17; Gen. 3:12,13; 2 Cor. 11:3)

2. Our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and we in them whereby death came upon all: all becoming dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

(Rom. 3:23; Rom 5:12,etc; Tit. 1:15; Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-19)

3. They being the root, and by God's appointment, standing in the room and stead of all mankind, the guilt of the sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation, being now conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subjects of death, and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus set them free.

(Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22, 45, 49; Ps. 51:5; Job 14:4; Eph. 2:3; Rom. 6:20, 5:12; Heb. 2:14, 15; 1 Thess. 1:10)

4. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

(Rom. 8:7; Col. 1:21; James 1:14, 15; Matt. 15:19)

5. The corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and the first motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.

(Rom. 7:18,23; Eccles. 7:20; 1 John 1:8; Rom. 7:23-25; Gal. 5:17)

Job 26

Job Replies to Bildad

A. Job 26:1-6: Job Asks Bildad What Help Has He Offered.

1. Verses 1-2: "But Job answered and said, How hast thou helped *him that is* without power? *how* savest thou the arm *that hath* no strength?"
 - a. Bildad has offered only a very brief statement; Zophar apparently has nothing to say; but Job's remarks extends through chapter thirty-one, and is directed to all three of his critical companions. He contrasts Bildad's wisdom with God's (Job 26-27). "He concludes with a longing for his past glory (29), a survey of his present suffering (30), and an affirmation of his innocence (31)" (Jackson, p.61).
 - b. It is evident that Job has reference to Bildad in these remarks; the pronoun *thou* is singular in the Hebrew. "It is sarcastical. Bildad had come as a friend and comforter. He had, also, in common with Eliphaz and Zophar, taken upon himself the office of teacher and counsellor. He had regarded Job as manifesting great weakness in his views of God and of his government; as destitute of all strength to bear up aright under trials, and now all that he had done to aid one so weak was found in the impertinent and irrelevant generalities of his brief speech. Job is indignant that one with such pretensions should have said nothing more to the purpose" [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. The patriarch asks his friend how he has aided Job by his harsh words. Job was weakened by the loss of his property, family, and health; he needed encouragement but he got only complaints.
2. Verses 3-4: "How hast thou counselled *him that hath* no wisdom? and *how* hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is? To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?"
 - a. His friends have alleged that Job was without wisdom, or else he would repent and seek God's pardon. They assumed his guilt, and charged that he was without understanding. If that were the case, why had they not offered him good counsel?
 - b. Job also wanted to know the source of the words Bildad gave; whose spirit provided those words? We know it was not from God, for it did not match God's assessment of Job: "And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:7-10).
3. Verses 5-6: "Dead *things* are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof. Hell *is* naked before him, and destruction hath no covering" (KJV). "They that are deceased tremble Beneath the waters and the inhabitants thereof. Sheol is naked before God, And Abaddon hath no covering" (ASV).
 - a. "Bildad had said (Job 25) that the dominion of God extended to the heavens, and to the armies of the skies; that God surpassed in majesty the splendor of the heavenly bodies; and that compared with him man was a worm. Job commences his description by saying that the dominion of God extended even to the nether world; and that such were his majesty and power that even the shades of the mighty dead trembled at his presence, and that hell was all naked before him. The word [*rephaim*] (OT:7496), so feebly rendered 'dead things,' means the shades of the dead; the departed spirits that dwell in Sheol; see the word explained at length in the notes at Isa. 14:9. They are those who have left this world and who have gone down to dwell in the world beneath—the great and mighty conquerors and kings; the illustrious dead of past times, who have left the world and are congregated in the land of Shades"

(Barnes, Biblesoft).

- b. The Bible speaks of Hades [*Sheol* in the Old Testament] as being under the earth. From man's perspective, Heaven is always pictured as "up" and Hades and Gehenna are depicted as being "down" or beneath the earth. Compare: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10).
- c. Hailey offers these comments: "Sheol, though 'beneath the waters,' the subterranean world, and unseen and clothed in mystery to man, is naked, unclothed, before God. He sees and knows all; His omniscience reaches into the unseen realm of the dead. There is no escaping His presence (cf. Ps. 139:7-12). 'Abaddon' (destruction) is a companion of Sheol (v. 6; cf. Prov. 15:11; 27:20), of death (Job 28:22), of 'fire that consumeth' (Job 31:12), and of the grave (Ps. 88:11-12). It has no covering; it can neither be hidden from God's view nor covered in the sense of being removed from sight..." (p.229).
- d. Consider these passages:
 - 1) Psalms 139:7-12: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."
 - 2) Proverbs 15:11: "Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?"
 - 3) Proverbs 27:20: "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied."
 - 4) Job 28:22: "Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears."
 - 5) Psalms 32:1-2: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."
 - 6) Revelation 9:11: "And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

B. Job 26:7-14: The Greatness of God Illustrated.

1. Verse 7: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing."
 - a. The myths of the ancients show their conceptions of how the earth was situated in the universe. They thought the earth was flat, of course.
 - 1) The Egyptians thought the earth was supported by five great pillars, one under each corner and the fifth under the middle. Rimmer suggested that if that were so, then one should be able to peer over the edge and see the corner pillars. But what supported the pillars?
 - 2) The Greeks had a legend of Atlas who stood under the earth, and with head bowed, supported the it on his neck and shoulders. What supported Atlas?
 - 3) The ancient Hindu view was that the earth was balanced on the back of a great elephant, which stood on the back of a great turtle, which was swimming in a cosmic sea.
 - b. In contrast to these foolish explanations, God's word said the earth was hung upon nothing.
 - 1) Adding to Job's picture (26:7) the statement of Isaiah 40:22 ["*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth..."], we get the picture of the earth, as a great round structure, floating in space.
 - 2) Combining this picture with Job 38:14 ["It is turned as clay to the seal..."], we can see the earth depicted as a large ball, spinning in space.
 - c. The earth is suspended by gravity in space. An empty space toward the north has been established by astronomers (one must have a powerful telescope to determine that there are no stars toward the north

from the earth). Job knew this truth, but he had no telescope; the implication is that he was given this special information by God, the Creator.

- d. Some have changed their view of this passage, saying that there is some doubt about the area northward from the earth—that this area may not be void of planets and stars at different times in the earth’s orbit around the sun. While they used to use the passage to show Biblical foreknowledge of scientific information, they no longer do so. But the statement about the earth hanging upon nothing, suspended by gravity in space, appears too clear a statement to be disregarded. The picture Job paints of this comes readily to mind whenever we see a picture of the earth, taken from space—a big blue marble literally hanging upon nothing. Job is comprised of poetic language, but even poetic language can contain literal truth.
2. Verses 8-10: “He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, *and* spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end” (KJV). “He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end” (ASV).
 - a. God is here said to bind up the waters in his thick clouds. Huge amounts of water vapor are daily transported from over the oceans to pass over land regions. The vapor condenses and falls as rain or other forms of precipitation upon the earth. The cloud is not torn open by the heavy weight of the vaporized water. This is also from the same poetic book of Job as verse seven, but we have no reason to doubt the actual truth of the statement. Elsewhere in the Bible, the picture of the evaporation cycle is depicted.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 1:7: “All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.”
 - 2) Jeremiah 10:13: “When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.”
 - b. One of his friends had suggested that the thick clouds had concealed the earth from the sight of God (Job 22:12-14). Job was accused of holding this view, but the patriarch did not subscribe to this notion. Many times the sky is obscured by thick clouds, so that we cannot see the sun or moon, but that does not hinder God’s vision of the earth! It is also true that man is unable to peer into Heaven to see the Almighty in his eternal abode; his throne is ever hidden from human sight. We are able to perceive the reality of God’s person, but we cannot see him with our physical eyesight. Holding back the “face of God’s throne” speaks of God and his abode being concealed from man’s sight.
 - c. Hailey has this to offer on verse ten: “From the waters above, which God controls (v.8), Job pointed to the waters beneath, which He also controls and upon which He has set bounds. Whether one is in the midst of the sea or standing by the shore looking out toward the water, it appears as if God took a compass and set the boundary with a great circle (cf. Ps. 104:9; Prov. 8:27,29). The circle is the God-determined limit to all waters, those above, those beneath, and those beyond the horizon. Beyond the horizon’s bound, marked by the Lord, are ‘the confines of light and darkness’” (p.230).
 - 1) Psalms 104:9: “Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.”
 - 2) Proverbs 8:27-29: “When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.”
 - 3) Job 38:8-11: “Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the

- womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?"
- 4) God has so arranged it that the oceans do not overflow the earth; the basic limitations of the seas have been established and can be trusted. God is in charge of his creation! He controls it by the various natural laws which he devised and implemented.
3. Verses 11-12: "The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud" (KJV). "The pillars of heaven tremble And are astonished at his rebuke. He stirreth up the sea with his power, And by his understanding he smiteth through Rahab" (ASV).
 - a. The atmosphere is under divine control; it is described as having pillars which support it (of course this is a figurative of speech). These pillars may be a reference to the mountains, which could be viewed as supporting the atmosphere. The pillars are shaken when God reproves them. This reproof could be a poetic allusion to the great storms which break upon the mountains.
 - 1) Psalms 29:3-8: "The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters: The God of glory thundereth, Even Jehovah upon many waters. The voice of Jehovah is powerful; The voice of Jehovah is full of majesty. The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars; Yea, Jehovah breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild-ox. The voice of Jehovah cleaveth the flames of fire. The voice of Jehovah shaketh the wilderness; Jehovah shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh" (ASV).
 - 2) Psalms 104:32: "He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke."
 - 3) Habakkuk 3:10: "The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high."
 - 4) Nahum 1:5: "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein."
 - b. The King James speaks of God dividing the sea, whereas the American Standard renders the clause as God stirring up the sea. God is able to cause a great tempest in the sea and is equally able to quiet it by his power. The thought is effective whether we apply the problem to a storm caused by the pride of the sea or to a storm caused by the pride of arrogant men.
 4. Verses 13-14: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these *are* parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" (KJV). "By his Spirit the heavens are garnished; His hand hath pierced the swift serpent. Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways: And how small a whisper do we hear of him! But the thunder of his power who can understand?" (ASV).
 - a. Verse thirteen evidently describes the beauty of the heavens which God garnished through the work of his Spirit. The Holy Spirit was involved in the original creation (Gen. 1:1-2); Christ was also an active partner in that great work (Col. 1:15-17). We are able to see only a small portion of the vast universe, but what we see is very impressive! How much greater is the beauty of Heaven, which we cannot see with our human sight.
 - b. The reference to the crooked [or swift] serpent is clouded in mystery. Some scholars think it refers to some constellation of stars. It is not likely that Job employs the use of mythological monsters (as some scholars allege); there must be a more logical explanation, such as it referring to some constellation. "The figure of the Serpent, or 'the Dragon,' is still one of the constellations of the heavens, and there can be little doubt that it is the same that is referred to in this ancient book. On the celestial globes it is drawn between the Ursa Major and Cepheus..." (Barnes, Biblesoft).
 - c. Barnes gives this on verse fourteen:
-

- 1) “This is a small portion of his works. We see only the outlines, the surface of his mighty doings. This is still true. With all the advances which have been made in science, it is still true that we see but a small part of his works. What we are enabled to trace with all the aids of science, compared with what is unseen and unknown, may be like the analysis of a single drop of water compared with the ocean.
 - 2) “[But how little a portion is heard of him?] Or, rather, ‘But what a faint whisper have we heard of him!’ The word *sheemets* means a transient sound rapidly passing away; and then a whisper; see the notes at Job 4:12. A ‘whisper of a word’ means a word not fully and audibly spoken, but which is whispered into the ear; and the beautiful idea here is, that what we see of God, and what he makes known to us, compared with the full and glorious reality, bears about the same relation which the gentlest whisper does to words that are fully spoken.
 - 3) “[The thunder of his power who can understand?] It is probable that there is here a comparison between the gentle ‘whisper’ and the mighty ‘thunder’; and that the idea is, if, instead of speaking to us in gentle whispers, and giving to us in that way some faint indications of his nature, he were to speak out in thunder, who could understand him? If, when he speaks in such faint and gentle tones, we are so much impressed with a sense of his greatness and glory, who would not be overwhelmed if he were to speak out as in thunder? Thus explained, the expression does not refer to literal thunder, though there is much in the heavy peal to excite adoring views of God, and much that to Job must have been inexplicable. It may be asked, even now, who can understand all the philosophy of the thunder? But with much more impressiveness it may be asked, as Job probably meant to ask, who could understand the great God, if he spoke out with the full voice of his thunder, instead of speaking in a gentle whisper?” [Barnes, BibleSoft].
-

Job 27

Job's Speech Continues

A. Job 27:1-6: Job Declares His Integrity.

1. Verses 1-2: “Moreover Job continued his parable, and said, *As* God liveth, *who* hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, *who* hath vexed my soul.”
 - a. We would have expected Zophar to have offered a reply to Job's speech at this point; we might even suppose that a pause may have been made by Job at the beginning of this chapter to give him an opportunity to speak, since it was Zophar's turn. There is nothing offered by Zophar, so Job proceeds with his speech.
 - b. Job begins this section of his speech by affirming the rightness of what he is about to say; he bases his upcoming comments on the fact that God lives. The expression he uses is one by which he binds himself to tell the truth.
 - c. “In former speeches each of the friends had stated his position on the wicked and their destiny: Eliphaz, 15:13-35; Bildad, 18:5-21; and Zophar, 20:5-29, which they held to be the punishment for sin. Job had responded by pointing out exceptions to their position, making their claims false (21:7-26). In his next speech Job had complained that from his observation God appeared to be indifferent to man's wickedness (ch. 24). In this present speech Job affirmed his own innocence and righteousness before God, and his position regarding the ultimate end of the wicked; and as he does not fit into the pattern, such will not be his end” (Hailey, p.233).
 - d. The word parable denotes a comparison of one thing with another; here it is used to describe a terse discourse in which strong argumentation is made. It does not carry the same meaning that it has in Matthew 13, a chapter dealing with some of our Lord's prominent parables. The Hebrew word here [*maashaal*] usually means a similitude, parable, or proverb, but here it describes the kind of discourse which Job continued, one that Barnes calls “sententious [*wise sayings* or *proverbs*] and apothegmatical” [a terse, pointed saying...to utter a short, pithy saying].
 - e. In this passage, Job speaks of God having taken justice away from him and vexing his soul. He knows he is innocent of sin, but his afflictions continue; he has not gotten justice from the Almighty; God has not yet vindicated him. Rather, he has been vexed—by his constant feeling of agony and loss.
 2. Verses 3-4: “All the while my breath *is* in me, and the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils; My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit” (KJV). “(For my life is yet whole in me, And the spirit of God is in my nostrils); Surely my lips shall not speak unrighteousness, Neither shall my tongue utter deceit” (ASV).
 - a. He vows that he will not speak wickedness or utter deceitful words as long as his life remains in him. Compare: “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. 2:7).
 - b. “All the while my breath is in me. This verse is parenthetical. Job claims in it to be in possession of all his faculties, notwithstanding his sufferings. The right translation would seem to be, ‘For my life is yet whole within me’ (see the Revised Version). And the spirit of God is in my nostrils. The spirit of God, originally breathed into man's nostrils, whereby he became a living soul (Gen 2:7), is still, Job says, within him, and makes him capable of judging and declaring what is right” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
 3. Verses 5-6: “God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach *me* so long as I live.”
 - a. Part of his vow is to avoid justifying what his friends have said against him. He knows he has done no evil, as they have alleged; they have made false accusations against him, which he refuses to admit.
-

This does not mean that Job is unwilling to repent; knowing what we know of him, we are persuaded that if he learns he has sinned, he would repent quickly and fully.

- b. If he should justify their allegation or repudiate his own integrity, he would be violating his oath. “After protesting his innocence as he has, Job would never justify the friends by letting them extort from him a confession of wrong doing. And if he denied his own moral completeness and innocence, admitting to their charges of wickedness, that also would be a lie, a denial of the truth. He could not and would not do either” (Hailey, p.234).
- c. As long as Job lived, he vowed to speak the truth, not wickedness or deceit, and to maintain his integrity. He would not violate his conscience so that it would cause him additional pain.

B. Job 27: 7-10: What is the Hope of a Hypocrite?

1. Verse 7: “Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.”
 - a. His friends had tried to persuade him to confess to sins of which he was not guilty; but to do this would be hypocrisy, for how can one sincerely repent and confess when he does not believe he is guilty?
 - b. “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (2 Cor. 7:9-10). Only godly sorrow can produce repentance; repentance is the decision one makes in his own heart that he will turn from his sin; this commitment to do better is carried out in a reformed life. But godly sorrow for sin can be present only if a real case of sin is present.
2. Verse 8: “For what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?”
 - a. God will deal severely with the hypocrite. Perhaps he is referring to his “friends” in this passage, and is saying that they are acting more like enemies and hypocrites than sincere, helpful companions.
 - b. There will be no comfort for the hypocrite when God takes away his soul. To “take away” is said by some commentators to mean “to draw out”—an allusion to drawing out a sword from a scabbard, thus drawing life or the soul from the body.
 - c. Our Lord made some interesting comments that bear on this passage:
 - 1) Matthew 16:26: “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
 - 2) Luke 12:15-21: “And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”
3. Verses 9-10: “Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?”
 - a. A hypocrite has no real interest in serving God; he pays lipservice to him; he does not sincerely follow the will of Heaven. When some trouble comes upon such a man, will God hear and favorably respond to his cry? Job’s rhetorical question says that he will not.
 - b. When it is convenient and easy to put on an appearance of godliness, the hypocrite will do so; when there is no apparent profit in it, his true color will show through. There are many who find it to their

advantage to put on a face of righteousness; perhaps in a God-fearing town a merchant or businessman will wear a cloak of religion—to enhance his prosperity. But as Job suggests by his question, such a one will not long call upon God.

- c. To “call upon God” [or “to call on the name of the Lord”] is an Old Testament expression which means to obey the will of God. It is used in Joel 2:32: “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.” Peter quoted this passage in Acts 2:21, and shows in verse 38 how one calls on the name of the Lord: *Repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord for the remission of sins.*
- d. What Job is saying here and in the following verses may be to show that he, by denying the charge of sin brought against him, is not aiding and abetting the wicked; rather, as he shows, the wicked and hypocrite will surely be punished.

C. Job 27:11-23: I Will Teach You by the Hand of God.

1. Verse 11-12: “I will teach you by the hand of God: *that which is* with the Almighty will I not conceal. Behold, all ye yourselves have seen *it*; why then are ye thus altogether vain?”
 - a. In this section, Job gives a detailed affirmation of the short-lived prosperity of the wicked; they may prosper for a time, but eventually will receive divine retribution.
 - b. Job proposes to give his friends some instructions based on the hand of God—what God has done and revealed. They could depend on God’s reliability.
 - c. Barnes offers these comments:
 - 1) “The idea evidently is, that Job would instruct them by what God had done. He would appeal to his works, and to the dispensations of his providence; and by the indications of wisdom and skill which were to be found there, he would derive important lessons for their instruction on the great principles of his administration. Accordingly, in the remainder of this chapter, he makes his appeal to what actually occurs in the dispensations of Providence, and in the next, he refers to various scientific subjects, evincing the wisdom which God had shown in the mineral kingdom. The hand is the instrument by which we accomplish anything, and hence, it is used here to denote what God does....
 - 2) [Why then are ye thus altogether vain] Why is it that you maintain such opinions—that you evince no more knowledge of his government and plans—that you argue so inconclusively about him and his administration! Why, since you have had an opportunity of observing the course of events, do you maintain that suffering is necessarily a proof of guilt, and that God deals with all people, in this life, according to their character? A close observation of the course of events would have taught you otherwise.
 - 3) “Job proceeds to state what he supposes to be the exact truth on the subject, and particularly aims, in the following chapter, to show that the ways of God are inscrutable, and that we cannot be expected to comprehend them, and are not competent to pronounce upon them” [Barnes, Bible-soft].
2. Verses 13-15: “This *is* the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty. If his children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword: and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread. Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and his widows shall not weep.”
 - a. Zophar had made a similar statement to what Job said in verse thirteen: “This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God” (Job 20:29). The *portion* of the passages is a reference to a share in an estate. The portion to be inherited by a wicked man is not to be desired! The portion intended for a righteous man is truly *heavenly*!

- 1) Psalms 73:26: “My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.”
 - 2) 2 Timothy 4:8: “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:11: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
- b. Job describes in the following verses the portion designated for the wicked man. The patriarch seems to agree with some of the things his friends have said about the wicked, but in doing so, he does not deny his main contention—that the wicked often prosper and righteous often suffer in this life. His position is that the wicked will ultimately suffer their proper fate and the righteous will enjoy their proper reward; and even in this life, many of the wicked ones will receive punishment and many of the righteous will be well blessed. His friends maintained that it was God’s universal law that all the wicked will be punished here and all the righteous will be blessed here. This position Job denies.
- c. Verse fourteen says that any children the wicked may have will be subjected to the sword and will not be satisfied with bread. Those who live by the sword are apt to die by the sword (cf. Matt. 26:52). Those who live violent lives are apt often to be hungry.
- d. Another feature of hardship to be faced by the wicked is that he will die and be buried in death; his widows will not weep.
- 1) Keil & Delitzsch translates the passage this way: “This is the lot of the wicked man with God, And the heritage of the violent which they receive from the Almighty: If his children multiply, it is for the sword, And his offspring have not bread enough. His survivors shall be buried by the pestilence, And his widows shall not weep” [Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
 - 2) War is often followed by famine and pestilence.
 - a) Jeremiah 15:2: “And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.”
 - b) Ezekiel 5:17: “So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.”
 - c) Revelation 6:8: “And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”
 - 3) This may be what Job had in mind. “And because of the nature of this death, his widows (which suggests that he was a polygamist) do not provide the normal funeral proceeding of hired professional mourners, processionalists and such” (Hailey, p.237).
 - 4) God had such a fate in store for the wicked king Jehoiakim: “Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem” (Jer. 22:18-19).
3. Verses 16-18: “Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay; He may prepare *it*, but the just shall put *it* on, and the innocent shall divide the silver. He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth *that* the keeper maketh.”
-

- a. Job says that the wicked man may accumulate silver to rival the dust in the vastness of his treasure; his wardrobe may be as numerous as the dirt. He may gather a vast amount of such wealth, but he shall not enjoy it; someone else may wear his clothing and the innocent may divide up his silver. This does not demand the conclusion that the wicked man described would die quickly after amassing his fortune; rather, Job means he will lose it either before or after his death.
 - b. Solomon described the accumulation of riches to be folly. He cannot take it with him, but must leave it behind for others to use. “Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity” (Eccl. 2:18-19).
 - c. Most of us take a proper amount of pride in our house; we beautify it and make it as presentable as possible; it is the place we feel most secure and at ease in the world. Whether Job has reference to the wicked man’s house or family, the point is the same. The wicked man’s house would not long endure.
 - 1) The patriarch likens it to the house of a moth, which is made of light material, thus not very substantial. The reference is to the moth-worm as it goes through its life-cycle.
 - 2) Job likens the wicked man’s house to a booth. The watcher over the vineyard would construct a temporary shelter. The wicked man would erect his house, but it would be merely a temporary structure; it would not last forever, just as his prosperity was also short-lived.
4. Verse 19: “The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he *is* not.”
- a. Job evidently is describing the death of the wicked man. To “lie down” is a reference to death; a dead body is prostrate; it can no longer stand.
 - b. To “be gathered” is an allusion to an honorable burial. Especially in the past, it was usual for a family to have a common burial place. The slain in battle were gathered together for burial, but this man would not be honorably buried. The “gathering” could have reference to being “gathered unto the people” as in earlier Old Testaments passages:
 - 1) Genesis 25:8: “Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.”
 - a) This does not mean that he was buried with his ancestors. It is not speaking of his body at all. They were buried in the Chaldees, and he in Canaan. Keil says, "This phrase is constantly distinguished from departing this life and being buried. It denotes the reunion in Sheol with friends who have gone before, and therefore presupposes faith in the personal continuance of a man after death" (p.263).
 - b) "Unger pointed out this expression is used of only six persons: Abraham (25:8), Ishmael (25:18), Isaac (35:29), Jacob (49:29-33), Aaron (Num. 20:24), and Moses (Deut. 32:50)" (Burton Coffman, *Commentary on Genesis*, p.321).
 - 2) Genesis 49:29: “And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite.”
 - c. When he dies, the wicked man will open his eyes and discover he is not. That is, he will perceive that he no longer is alive on earth. The Bible does not support the materialist doctrine that when an evil man dies he goes out of existence; Job’s statement being true, how could a non-existent person know anything?
 - d. Apart from Job being inspired, we cannot account for his knowledge of this matter. The Lord described the wicked rich man of Luke 16 in almost the same language: “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom” (Luke 16:22-23).
-

5. Verses 20-21: “Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.”
 - a. This passage describes the wicked man’s fall into ruin. When this disaster comes, he will be overwhelmed by terrors, as a man might be carried away in a sudden flood; the terrors would overcome and surround him just as the waters of a flood encompass the body of a man, carrying him away to his doom.
 - b. Job uses another figure to describe his ruin—he is torn away from his familiar surroundings as by a great tempest. The wrath of God would suddenly snatch him away. “A tempest comes upon him as unexpectedly as a thief or robber comes at night. Death is often represented as coming upon man with the silence of a thief, or the sudden violence of a robber at midnight...” [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - c. A third figure to describe this horror is being carried away by the east wind. In Palestine, the hot desert lay to the east; when the wind came from that direction, the hot and dry air could ruin a crop quickly by taking away the moisture from the plants and the ground. The wicked man would be hurled from his place just as a great wind could carry an individual away. Tornadoes in our country have been known to carry people several miles from where they were. The east wind was not known to kill people directly, but it could cause a great famine, and certainly could be very oppressive.
 - d. What Job said in this passage could be applied to the financial ruin of the wicked man; it could be understood to depict a very harsh punishment brought on him by the Almighty. Job could be still describing the man’s status in the Hadean realm, following his death.
 6. Verses 22-23: “For *God* shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand. *Men* shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.”
 - a. Since the word “God” is italicized, thus added by the translators for clarity (in KJV and ASV), some commentators think the subject of the first clause is the east wind of the previous verse. But the subject of verse twenty-two is identified by the pronoun “his” at the end of verse, which more readily connects with a person than an inanimate “it.”
 - 1) It seems more fitting to have God as the subject, who would cast punishment upon the wicked man, and not spare.
 - 2) The wicked man would fain [be inclined or obligated] to flee from God’s punishing hand.
 - b. In verse twenty-three, the word “men” is italicized, but the term is necessary for the sentence to make sense. Thus, other men would clap their hands over the justice being heaped upon the wicked man. We read about men clapping their hands in joy (Ps. 47:1) and in contempt (Lam. 2:15).
 - c. “To hiss (or whistle) may be an expression of amazement (Jer. 19:8) or a call to action (Isa. 5:26; 7:18). In this case it served to drive him out of his place (cf. Job 18:18), exposing him for what he is. Right thinking and acting people rejoice at his departure” (Hailey, p.239).
-

Job 28

Job Continues to Speak

A. Job 28:1-12: The Wisdom and Sovereignty of the Almighty.

1. The connection between chapter 28 and chapter 27 seems to be: Though one may be confident that the wicked will be punished, that matter (the when and the how) is in God's capable hands. Man is a finite being, thus can see only a tiny part of what goes on in the world, and that for only a brief span of time. It may seem to him that God is inconsistent in meting out material blessings and punishments, but there is far more to running the universe than what we can see. Any action that is taken has many possible side-effects which Jehovah must take into account. At any rate, due punishment will be given in the Judgment. Man can do some marvelous things, but he cannot get wisdom from any place but from God. Jehovah is the source of all true wisdom.
 - a. James 1:5: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."
 - b. James 3:13-15: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish."
2. Verses 1-2: "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold *where they fine it*. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass *is molten out of the stone*" (KJV). "Surely there is a mine for silver, And a place for gold which they refine. Iron is taken out of the earth, And copper is molten out of the stone" (ASV).
 - a. Man has learned how to find gold and silver and to refine these precious metals for his own purposes. Men know where these ores may be located; but God put these items in the earth and has provided the laws by which they may be found and refined—men merely used the intelligence God gave him to investigate, locate, and use these metals. The same can be said about other metals such as iron and brass [copper—ASV].
 - b. Job speaks of the skill which man has shown in mining, and to the discoveries which he has made. He is pointing out the skill, diligence and intelligence man uses to search out precious ores; the point of which appears to be to show that wisdom is not sought after and found in this fashion. "But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living" (Job 28:12-13).
 - c. Mining metals and refining ore can be traced back to at least four thousand years before Christ.
 - 1) The first mention of iron in the Bible is in Genesis 4:22: "And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah."
 - 2) "Mining for gold was carried on in Egypt before 4000 B.C.; turquoise and copper were mined in the Sinai Peninsula before 3400 B.C.; and silver was known in Egypt during the fourth millennium B.C. Silver formed a part of Abraham's wealth (Gen. 13:2)" (Hailey, p.242).
3. Verses 3-4: "He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death. The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters* forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men" (KJV).
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) "Man setteth an end to darkness, And searcheth out, to the furthest bound, The stones of obscurity and of thick darkness. He breaketh open a shaft away from where men sojourn; They are forgotten of the foot; They hang afar from men, they swing to and fro" (ASV).
 - 2) "Man puts an end to darkness, and searches every recess for ore in the darkness and the shadow of death. He breaks open a shaft away from people; in places forgotten by feet they hang far away

- from men; they swing to and fro” (NKJV).
- b. In these mining operations, man has penetrated to great depths, and has brought light into the earth’s darkness. Man makes a complete search, and yet he cannot dig up wisdom; he looks under every rock and in every dark place, even in the shadow of death [the furthest darkness, ASV].
 - c. “He set an end to the darkness of unseen metals by opening a shaft and searching for them by artificial light, even to the completeness or totality, i.e., the extreme end of the vein. ‘The stones of obscurity’ were the stones or ore which harbor the metal, hidden in the darkness of earth....There the laborers, at that time slaves, worked out their short life, ‘forgotten of the foot,’ which may refer to the remoteness of the mines, or as walking was the most common mode of travel, this may have indicated that travelers passed them by, unaware of their existence. They ‘hang...swing’ referred either to their descending and ascending in and out of the mine by rope or basket or by their swinging to and fro on scaffolds or supported by ropes in the mine” (Hailey, p.234).
 - d. In his quest for these precious treasures, he is willing to dig to the farthest limits and depths, even into the thickest darkness; he explores the dark regions deep within the earth, without regard to the fearful gloom and remoteness of his operation.
 - e. “The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant. This passage is very obscure; but recent critics suggest, as its probable meaning, ‘He (i.e. the miner) breaketh open a shaft, away from where men inhabit’ (see the Revised Version). The miner does not wish to be interfered with, and therefore sinks his shaft in some wild spot, far from the habitations of men. Even the waters forgotten of the foot; rather, they are forgotten of the foot; i.e. no one visits them; they are left alone; they are ‘forgotten of the foot’ of the passer-by. They are dried up, they are gone away from men; rather, they hang swinging to and fro far from men. The descent of the shaft is made by a rope, to which they ‘hang swinging’ all the time that they descend. As they have sought secrecy, all this takes place far from the haunts of men. [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
4. Verses 5-6: “As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire. The stones of it *are* the place of sapphires: and it hath dust of gold.”
 - a. From these deep mines he produces bread; that is, he finds the precious metal and gems which provide him with his livelihood. He makes his living from these mining efforts. This seems the likely sense of the verse, since the context speaks of mining operations. But the first part of verse five might speak of farmers producing crops from the upper part of the earth, while miners discover precious treasure in gemstones and gold underneath the earth.
 - b. The fire he turns up from the earth would be the “fire” of sapphires and the “gleam” of gold. The earth rewards his efforts with great wealth.
 5. Verses 7-8: “*There is* a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.”
 - a. The remoteness of the mines and their inaccessible nature hide their valuable treasures from the eye of the birds and the lions. Birds of prey are known for their keen eyesight, yet they do not discover these mines; the ferocious beasts of prey do not venture into the depths of these treasure-bearing sites.
 - b. These fearless birds and beasts do not penetrate the depths of the earth to see what lies there, but man is able and willing to do so. He spares no effort and will face any terror or peril to obtain the treasures of the earth.
 6. Verses 9-11: “He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing. He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and *the thing that is hid* bringeth he forth to light” (KJV).
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock; He overturneth the mountains by the roots. He
-

cutteth out channels among the rocks; And his eye seeth every precious thing. He bindeth the streams that they trickle not; And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light” (ASV).

- 2) “The princes refrained from talking, And put *their* hand on their mouth; The voice of nobles was hushed, And their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard, then it blessed me, And when the eye saw, then it approved me” (NKJV).
 - 3) “The princes refrained from talking and laid their hand on their mouth; the voice of the nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard, it called me blessed, and when the eye saw, it approved” (ESV).
- b. Man is willing to dig through flinty rock to get at the treasure; he is able to dig through mountains, excavating as much of them as necessary to locate and mine the objects of his search.
 - c. Overturing the mountains by their roots may be taken as a figure of speech, but In Roman times, it appears that they could literally destroy mountains: “Pliny says of the process employed for detaching huge masses from the metalliferous hills in Spain, ‘They attack the rock with iron wedges and hammers. When this work is complete, they destroy the supports, and notify by signal that the fall is about to take place. A watchman, stationed on the mountain-top, alone understands the signal; and he proceeds at once to have all the workmen called in, and himself makes a hurried retreat. Then the mountain falls in upon itself with a crash that cannot be imagined, and an incredible concussion of the air. The successful engineers contemplate the ruin which they have achieved (‘Hist. Nat.,’ 33:4. § 73)” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - d. In his excavations into the earth, he digs tunnels (channels) in the rocks; he finds it necessary at times to stop up streams or divert the flow of water, so that he can conduct his work.
 - e. He goes to these extremes of effort and danger to bring the objects of his search into the light of day; he brings these precious metals and stones to the surface and puts them to practical use.
7. Verse 12: “But where shall wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of understanding?”
- a. The enlightening information Job has presented about man’s quest for precious stones and metals is given to make this point: Where is wisdom to be found?
 - b. Hailey comments: “By searching man is able to discover earth’s riches in places where neither bird nor beast find them, but questions of a more profound search are expressed in this verse. Where shall the wisdom be found that put the treasures there? This question pertained to the wisdom that made and rules the world and all that it embraces. Wisdom is insight into the underlying causes and consequences of things, and understanding enables one to comprehend their order and working” (pp.244f).
 - c. “That is, the full understanding of the plans of God—for this is the point of inquiry. The object of Job is to show that it is not to be found in the most profound science; by penetrating to the farthest extent of which man was capable in the earth, nor by any human investigations whatever. None of these things revealed the great plans of the Almighty in reference to his moral government, and particularly to the points which engrossed the attention of Job and his friends. Where true wisdom is to be found he proceeds to state in the subsequent verses” [Barnes, Biblesoft].

B. Job 28:13-28: Man Does Not Comprehend the True Value of Wisdom.

1. Verses 13-19: “Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, *It is* not in me: and the sea saith, *It is* not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *shall not be for* jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom *is* above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) Job 28:13-19: “Man knoweth not the price thereof; Neither is it found in the land of the living. The

- deep saith, It is not in me; And the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, With the precious onyx, or the sapphire. Gold and glass cannot equal it, Neither shall it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal: Yea, the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, Neither shall it be valued with pure gold” (ASV).
- 2) “Man does not know its value, Nor is it found in the land of the living. The deep says, 'It is not in me'; And the sea says, 'It is not with me.' It cannot be purchased for gold, Nor can silver be weighed for its price. It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, In precious onyx or sapphire. Neither gold nor crystal can equal it, Nor can it be exchanged for jewelry of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral or quartz, For the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, Nor can it be valued in pure gold” (NKJV).
- b. Man does not comprehend the true value of wisdom, nor can he obtain it from nature like he does the precious metals. Wisdom cannot be found in the depths of the earth; it is not in the deep recesses of the earth or in the great depths of the sea. This wisdom is not to be located in “the land of the living” (on earth, among human beings)—wisdom did not originate with man.
 - 1) Isaiah 38:11: “I said, I shall not see the LORD, even the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.”
 - 2) Isaiah 53:8: “He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.”
 - 3) Wisdom is in God: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:8-9).
 - c. Wisdom cannot be bought with gold; it cannot be equated with gold or jewels; its value far exceeds that of rubies.
 - d. Wisdom does not lie buried in the earth, nor can it be developed by natural means.
 - 1) “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Cor. 1:18-31).
 - 2) “We speak wisdom, however, among them that are fullgrown: yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nought: but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory: which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have
-

crucified the Lord of glory: but as it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And which entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:6-16, ASV).

2. Verses 20-24: "Whence then cometh wisdom? and where *is* the place of understanding? Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, *and* seeth under the whole heaven"
 - a. Where is the source of wisdom to be found? It is hidden from the eyes of all living—even from the keen eyesight of birds.
 - b. It is not known in the realm of the dead; it is only heard of there.
 - 1) "The two [Destruction and Death] are here personified, and both pertain to the nether world. Both have heard a rumor of wisdom and its fame, but they know not its whereabouts. So, neither the living, nor the realm of the dead, nor man's technology and his conquest of the secrets of nature, can answer the question. Neither can wisdom be compared in value with precious jewels and metals nor purchased by the wealth of the world; it pertains to a realm all its own" (Hailey, p.246). The statement regarding Destruction and Death does not address the subject of what the dead in the Hadean realm know or do not know; it speaks of the two personified entities in a highly figurative sense.
 - 2) "Perhaps there is an allusion to the natural expectation that, if one could go down and converse with the dead, he could find out much more than can be known on earth. It was to be presumed that they would understand much more about the unseen and future world, and about the plans and government of God, than man can know here. It was on this belief, and on the hope that some league or alliance could be made with the dead, inducing them to communicate what they knew, that the science of necromancy was founded..." [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - 3) Compare:
 - a) "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" (Isa. 8:19).
 - b) "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (1 Sam. 15:23).
 - c) "And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger" (2 Chron. 33:6).
 - c. Wisdom is with the Almighty. Job speaks of the wisdom whereby God rules his creation. With all of man's investigations and efforts, he has only scratched the surface of the secrets of the universe. He
-

has formulated theories by which to explain the universe apart from the Creator, but it cannot be done logically. Man has discovered some things about his world, but he only sees what wisdom has revealed.

- 1) God “alone knows its secrets and laws, both of the physical or material world (vv. 23-27) and the spiritual or moral world (v.28). He alone knows the place where wisdom is found. Only God comprehends the way, the path, that wisdom takes and on which men must travel in order to find it. His ability to see everything under the whole heaven—things in the remote regions removed from man, in the depths of earth and sea, and in the nether world—enables Him to know all the secrets of wisdom” (Hailey, pp.246f).
 - 2) Wisdom is personified and made to speak in Proverbs 1:20-33: “Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.”
 3. Verses 25-28: “To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder: Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.”
 - a. Job illustrates God’s wisdom by the orderly workings of nature. He has weighed the wind and measured the waters. He gives rain according to his decree (natural law), and has provided a pathway for lightning. Compare: “Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man” (Job 38:25-26).
 - b. Wind carries weight; there are high and low pressure areas which help to circulate the air, distributing moisture over the earth. The waters are weighed—in liquid and vapor forms. God’s wisdom was used in forming and controlling nature.
 - c. Proverbs 8:27-36: “When he prepared the heavens, I [wisdom] was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”
 - d. He has told man that the fear of the Lord is wisdom and to depart from doing evil is understanding.
-

When this was told to man is not stated here; but respect for God and obedience to him was revealed to Adam and Eve in Eden, and undoubtedly passed on to following generations. This is one of the great fundamentals of man's relationship with God—to reverence and obey him. It is taught all the way through the Bible.

- 1) Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."
 - 2) Proverbs 14:27: "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."
 - 3) Proverbs 15:33: "The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility."
 - 4) Proverbs 19:23: "The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil."
 - 5) Psalms 111:9-10: "He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."
 - 6) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
 - 7) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 8) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
-

Job 29

Job Speaks On

A. Job 29: 1-10: Job Remembers the Former Days.

1. Verses 1-3: "Moreover Job continued his parable, and said, Oh that I were as *in* months past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me; When his candle shined upon my head, *and when* by his light I walked *through* darkness."
 - a. The patriarch recounted the former days before his afflictions came, when all was well with him, and he was richly blessed by Jehovah. His friends had assailed him, believing that he had brought the Lord's disfavor on him by his sins. They had been unable to convince Job that he was sinful, but he was also unable to convince them of his innocence. We do not doubt the good intentions of the three friends; we have no reason to doubt Job's innocence.
 - b. Barnes supposes that Job may have paused before continuing this part of his speech, giving his friends an opportunity to speak; they said nothing, so he proceeded.
 - c. As noted earlier (27:1), the word *parable* is not used here in its New Testament sense. "The word is used in the Scriptures to denote a parable, properly so called; then a sententious saying; an apothegm; a proverb; or a poem or song....The meaning is, that Job continued his discourse; but there is in the word a reference to the kind of discourse which he employed, as being sententious [*wise sayings* or *proverbs*] and apothegmatical" [a terse, pointed saying...to utter a short, pithy saying]" [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - d. Job speaks of the months past in which he was preserved [watched over] by the Lord. Some undetermined amount of time had passed since his afflictions began.
 - e. He speaks of the time in which he was so well blessed by Jehovah as a time when he had been illuminated—an allusion to the time of plenty, of ease and prosperity—when God's favor shone upon him. We are told that it was a custom of that ancient time for a man of wealth to leave a light burning always in his tent. This is a beautiful way to describe the bounties of God—a time in which the light of Jehovah's good pleasure shone upon him.
2. Verses 4-5: "As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God *was* upon my tabernacle; When the Almighty *was* yet with me, *when* my children *were* about me" (KJV). "As I was in the ripeness of my days, When the friendship of God was upon my tent; When the Almighty was yet with me, And my children were about me" (ASV).
 - a. Those were happy times for Job! He was a younger man; the Almighty was still with him; his children are about him. When parents get older, they tend to spend much time remembering the good years when their children were still at home; memories of those happy times fill their hearts.
 - b. During those happier days, the secret of God was upon his house; or, as the American Standard gives it, "the friendship of God" was upon his tent. At that point in his life, God was his friend; Job was included in the secrecy of God's friendship and was privy somewhat with his plans. The word translated secret originally meant "couch" or "cushion" on which one reclined; later it came to mean "circle of friends sitting together in consultation" (Barnes).
 - c. The word "youth" is from a word that properly means "autumn," and is from "pluck, pull as being the time when fruits are gathered." The word means that which is mature, ripe; and probably here denotes manhood or maturity (cf. Barnes). He is not talking about when he was young in years, for the passage shows that at the time indicated his children were about him.
 - d. Job fondly remembers when his children were around him, before their untimely deaths. This was when God was with him. He understood the preciousness of having proper fellowship with God. Of course, God had not turned away from Job; the patriarch had simply been given a great burden to carry in order that his mettle might be clearly demonstrated, and to become a wonderful example of patient

endurance for all who would later learn of his experiences.

- 1) Romans 15:4: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”
 - 2) James 5:11: “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”
3. Verse 6: “When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil.”
- a. In verse six, Job gives a figurative description of prosperity. Canaan was depicted to Israel as a land that flowed with milk and honey. The picture presented in the text describes a situation of abundance and prosperity and peace and happiness. Compare:
 - 1) “He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape” (Deut. 32:13-14).
 - 2) “And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil” (Deut. 33:24).
 - b. But the blessings and beauty of Canaan to the travel-weary Israelites, is minute to the sin-worn child of the devil who learns of the spiritual bounties available in Christ! And beyond this life, what is awaiting the faithful in Heaven far surpasses anything we have ever perceived on earth!
 - 1) Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”
 - 2) Ephesians 2:12-16: “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”
 - 3) Romans 8:1-2: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:3-5: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
 - 5) 2 Peter 1:3-11: “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election

- sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
- 6) Revelation 21:4: “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”
 - 7) Revelation 21:27: “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”
 - 8) Revelation 22:14: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”
4. Verses 7-10: “When I went out to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street! The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, *and* stood up. The princes refrained talking, and laid *their* hand on their mouth. The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.”
- a. Job describes the honor and respect he received from his fellow country men back in those former days. He speaks of going out of his abode to the gate of the city, preparing to take his seat. That he had a seat among the prominent men of the city is suggested by this statement.
 - b. “In the ancient cities there were broad places or ‘squares’ at the gate of the city where people congregated to transact business and where justice was dispensed. It is uncertain whether Job lived within the walls of the city or in a walled dwelling on his large estate. When he went forth from his place to the gate of the city where he prepared his seat (judicial bench) to serve as an elder, a member of the council, or a magistrate, he was warmly welcomed by all. This respect and whole-hearted reception was not built on politics or wealth, but on fairness and respect for the rights of the people. He had earned the esteem of his fellows because of his concern for others (vs. 7)” (Hailey, p.250).
 - c. The gate was the place where the elders of the city passed judgment over civil and legal affairs; to sit in the gate was to act as a judge. Young men were awed at his presence; the aged men stood up to show their respect. Even the princes and noblemen showed him honor. Such was the greatness of Job. But look at his current situation! His children are gone; his great flocks and herds are gone; his body is covered with sore boils; he is miserable; he is forsaken by many; his friends no longer support him; he feels rejected by the Almighty.

B. Job 29:11-18: Job Helped Others.

1. Verses 11-13: “When the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and *him that had* none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.”
 - a. One cause for the respect and honor he formerly possessed was his kindness to others. Job received this honor and respect on account of aid he gave to those in need. He delivered the poor, the fatherless and the one who stood friendless; he aided him who was about ready to perish; he gave the widow reason to sing with joy.
 - b. We may be certain that his aid consisted not of words only; he had the means to supply their needs and the willingness to do so.
 - 1) Galatians 6:9-10: “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”
 - 2) James 1:27: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
 - 3) James 2:14-16: “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not
-

- works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"
- 4) 1 John 3:17-19: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."
- c. When Job spoke of delivering the poor, he had reference to the service he provided as a judge or magistrate. The poor are often taken advantage of in court if the adversary is rich and evil. But Job did not pervert justice for a bribe or as a favor to an influential friend. In ancient Israel, this was a prominent problem.
 - 1) Amos 2:6: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes."
 - 2) Amos 8:6: "That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?"
 - 3) Proverbs 21:13: "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."
 - 4) Proverbs 24:11-12: "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"
 - d. When a case involving the fatherless came before Job, he became a protector of those whose natural protectors—their parents—had been removed by death. The poor man had no better friend than Job. He saw that justice was served. One who was about to perish [a man who was falsely accused, and who was in danger of being condemned] found a friend in Job.
 - e. He also "caused the widow's heart to sing for joy" by vindicating her cause, delivering her from the oppressor who sought to take advantage of her natural vulnerability. Compare: "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa 1:17).
2. Verses 14-18: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame. I *was* a father to the poor: and the cause *which* I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth. Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply *my* days as the sand."
 - a. He wore the clothing of righteousness; he was ornamented with justice; he was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame; he was as a father to the poor; and he searched out the cause (problem) of the stranger. And he punished the wicked and restored the loot they had taken from their victims. Notice the graphic way in which Job described the punishment he meted out to the robbers—he broke their jaws (of course, this is to be taken as a figure of speech).
 - b. In his official role as judge, he was fair, he dispensed justice, he supported the blind and lame, was compassionate to the poor, and was impartial to the case of the stranger. In his position in the community, he showed compassion to the unfortunate and aided those who were in need.
 - c. Thus does Job describe his former days; yet he was now reduced to the present condition of wretchedness. Insofar as he could discern it, he was being afflicted without just cause; he could not grasp why he was now in such evil circumstances.
 - d. In verse eighteen, the patriarch described the future while he was under the former circumstances. He thought he would continue in that condition until his natural death; that he would die in his nest. As
-

we might put it: die in peace in bed at a ripe old age. The picture is of an old man, spending his last days in familiar surroundings, with his loved ones gathered around him, dying peacefully at home. He perceived that he would die after accumulating a multitude of days, which he depicts as being as numerous as sand. Things were going so well with him that he could scarcely think otherwise.

- e. This does not suggest that Job was overconfident; rather, he saw how well-blessed he was at the time, and would naturally suppose that he would live out his life under these happy circumstances. We are taught in the Bible not to over-estimate our future.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 10:12: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
 - 2) James 4:13-16: “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoyce in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.”
3. Verses 19-22: “My root *was* spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. My glory *was* fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand. Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them.”
 - a. Job anticipated a long and happy life ahead of him while he was in the happy conditions of the past. Picturing his life as a healthy tree, his roots were spread out, able to draw all the water he needed; at night, the dew was upon his branches.
 - b. Using other figures, he speaks of his glory as being fresh, and his bow being renewed in his hand. “His bow, the weapon of defense or offense, was always ready in his hand, its usefulness and readiness being ever renewed. This, together with his manner of life, sustained his hope in former years of longevity and serenity” (Hailey, p.253).
 - c. He again speaks of the respect others gave him; they listened to what he had to say; they waited on his word; they kept silent as his counsel was given. After he had spoken, they did not take issue, but accepted his words; they readily received his speech. With all the things he has said about his former situation, we may well perceive that he was a happy man, with a good future awaiting him. But God willed otherwise!
4. Verses 23-25: “And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain. *If* I laughed on them, they believed *it* not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down. I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one *that* comforteth the mourners” (KJV).
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “And they waited for me as for the rain; And they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain. I smiled on them, when they had no confidence; And the light of my countenance they cast not down. I chose out their way, and sat as chief, And dwelt as a king in the army, As one that comforteth the mourners” (ASV).
 - 2) “They waited for me as for the rain, And they opened their mouth wide as for the spring rain. If I mocked at them, they did not believe it, And the light of my countenance they did not cast down. I chose the way for them, and sat as chief; So I dwelt as a king in the army, As one who comforts mourners” (NKJV).
 - 3) “They waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouths as for the spring rain. I smiled on them when they had no confidence, and the light of my face they did not cast down. I chose their way and sat as chief, and I lived like a king among his troops, like one who comforts mourners” (ESV).
 - b. Job recalled how men sought his counsel and received it as a refreshing rain; he was able cheerfully

to encourage others; he had comforted the mournful. How he must have longed for those glorious days! But how far he had fallen!

- c. According to the ASV rendering of verse twenty-four, when Job smiled on the despondent, his smile gave them confidence. “Whatever the situation, Job maintained a hopeful and cheerful disposition and outlook; he refused to be cast down” (Hailey, p.254).
 - d. “Though not an absolute monarch, but only a patriarchal head, I practically determined the course which the tribe took, since my advice was always followed. I thus ‘sat chief’—nay, dwelt as a king in the army (or, in the host, i.e. among the people), as one that comforteth the mourners; i.e. as one to whom all looked for comfort in times of distress and calamity, as much as for counsel and guidance at other times (vers. 21-23)” [Barnes].
 - e. On verse twenty-five, Clarke offers these comments: “The whole verse seems to me to point out Job in his civil, military, and domestic life. As supreme magistrate he chose out their way, adjusted their differences, and sat chief, presiding in all their civil assemblies. As captain general he dwelt as a king in the midst of his troops, preserving order and discipline, and seeing that his fellow soldiers were provided with requisites for their warfare, and the necessaries of life. Since a man, he did not think himself superior to the meanest offices in domestic life, to relieve or support his fellow creatures, he went about comforting the mourners—visiting the sick and afflicted, and ministering to their wants, and seeing that the wounded were properly attended. Noble Job! Look at him, ye nobles of the earth, ye lieutenants of counties, ye generals of armies, and ye lords of provinces. Look at JOB! Imitate his active benevolence, and be healthy and happy. Be as guardian angels in your particular districts, blessing all by your example and your bounty. Send your hunting horses to the plough, your game cocks to the dunghill; and at last live like men and Christians” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Biblesoft].
-

Job 30

Job Is Still Speaking

A. Job 30:1-8: Job is Now Held in Derision by Some.

1. Verse 1: "But now *they that are* younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock."
 - a. The patriarch had held a position of authority and was respected and honored [Job 29] before his troubles came. Now the younger generation held him in derision. The fathers of these younger ones he has in mind he would not have trusted to watch over the dogs which tended his sheep. Apparently, he means he would not have hired them to work with his sheep dogs [he may even mean that he would not have wanted them to be associated with his dogs]. He thought more highly of his dogs than these men.
 - b. The people in that land had contempt for dogs, which they considered as mere scavengers. But from this passage it is clear that Job had used trained dogs to control and guide his flocks of sheep. This was evidently the exception to the rule. In ancient societies of that region, to call a man a dog was one of the greatest expressions of scorn that could be used.
 - 1) 1 Samuel 17:43: "And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods."
 - 2) 1 Samuel 24:14: "After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea."
 - 3) 2 Samuel 3:8: "Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ishbosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman?"
 - 4) 2 Samuel 9:8: "And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"
 - 5) 2 Samuel 16:9: "Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head."
 - 6) 2 Kings 8:13: "And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."
 - 7) 2 Peter 2:20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
 - c. Having described the honor and respect he enjoyed in former days [in the previous chapter], he now begins to draw a dark contrast with his present awful condition. He is held in scorn by younger men whose fathers were not worthy to work with his sheep dogs; being held in contempt by young men would be a great insult in that culture; old men were commonly esteemed very highly.
2. Verses 2-3: "Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished? For want and famine *they were* solitary; fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate and waste."
 - a. The subject continues to be the younger men of verse one. These younger men who scoffed at Job were without profit to the patriarch [logically, the same could be said about their fathers]. There are some people in every society who are not worth hiring—they would not do enough productive work to earn their pay.

- b. “Men, who had no such strength in their hands as to yield an employer any profit—poor, weak creatures, in whom old age (rather, manly vigour) was perished. An effete race seems to be pointed at, without strength or stamina, nerveless, spiritless, ‘destined to early decay and premature death’...” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
 - c. These individuals being described are said to be gaunt from lack of food; they are relegated to living in the wilderness, which has scant food to supply their needs. They would “gnaw the dry ground” (ASV)—they would be reduced to eating roots, etc., as they tried to survive in the desolate wasteland where they were forced to live.
 - d. Christians understand that we are not to judge a person based only on outward appearance [John 7:24]; things and people are not always what they seem to be. But in our current generation in America, there are some teenage boys who *seem* to be—based only on their dress, general appearance, and attitude—*crack-heads* [involved in drugs]; not many employers would be interested in hiring them. The same could be said about some teenage girls. Many of these may get straightened up, but they may join an earlier generation of their kind, unwilling to work or bereft of the skill or health to be productive.
3. Verses 4-6: “Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots *for* their meat. They were driven forth from among *men*, (they cried after them as *after* a thief;) To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, *in* caves of the earth, and *in* the rocks” (KJV). “They pluck salt-wort by the bushes; And the roots of the broom are their food. They are driven forth from the midst of men; They cry after them as after a thief; So that they dwell in frightful valleys, In holes of the earth and of the rocks” (ASV).
- a. “Salt-wort (or mallows) is a bush bearing light green leaves that grows in salty regions. It has a sour taste and was eaten by the poor only when their dire necessity demanded it. The roots of the broom plant are not edible, if they were eaten at all, it would be in a time of absolute necessity. However, the roots made good charcoal and were used for fuel” (Hailey, p.256).
 - b. The Pulpit Commentary offers this:
 - 1) Weak races retreat before strong ones, who occupy their lands, and whose will they do not dare to dispute. They are not intentionally "driven out," for the strong races would gladly make them their drudges; but they retire into the most inaccessible regions, as the primitive population has done in India and elsewhere. They cried after them as after a thief. Outcast tribes naturally, and almost necessarily, become robber-tribes. Deprived of their productive lands, and driven into rocky deserts, want makes them thieves and marauders. Then those who have made them what they are vilify and decry them.
 - 2) To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys...Western Asia is full of rocky regions, seamed with deep gorges and clefts, the walls of which rise abruptly or in terraces, and are themselves pierced with caves and cracks. The tract about Petra is, perhaps, the most remarkable of these regions; but there are many others which closely resemble it. These places afford refuges to weak and outcast tribes, who hide in them, either in caves of the earth, or in the rocks. The Greeks called these unfortunates "Troglodytes"(Herod., 4:183; Strabo, 16. p. 1102; Diod. Sic., 3:14.etc.).
 - c. The ones Job describes were eventually forced to live like hermits; they were more like animals than men; others would shout at them as they would at thieves, to drive them away. They did not start out like this; but because they had not done the best they could, they were finally forced into such a sorry situation. There are many homeless people in America today, living on the street, begging for food, suffering from the weather, and sometimes reduced to eating from trash cans.
4. Verses 7-8: “Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together. *They were* children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.”
- a. We remember that the ones the patriarch describes are those who scorned Job; they considered Job
-

to be beneath them in society.

- b. Job describes these people as gathering together among the nettles and braying from among the bushes. Such was their status that they spent their time in these locations; perhaps they gathered there or huddled there, crying out for food as they searched through these unpleasant locations. Job speaks of the wild ass braying when he has grass to eat (Job 6:5); he pictures these people in similar terms.
- c. He depicts them as children of fools, offspring of base men, and had been driven from polite society. “The physical degeneracy whereof Job has been speaking is accompanied in most instances by extreme mental incapacity. Some of the degraded races cannot count beyond four or five; others have not more than two or three hundred words in their vocabulary. They are all of low intellect, though occasionally extremely artful and cunning. Yea, children of base men; literally, children of no name. Their race had never made for itself any name, but was unknown and insignificant. They were viler than the earth; rather, they were scourged out of the land. This must not be understood literally. It is a rhetorical repetition of what had been already said in ver. 5. The expression may be compared with the tale in Herodotus, that when the Scythian slaves rebelled and took up arms, the Scythians scourged them into subjection (Herod., 4:3, 4)” [Pulpit Commentary, *ibid.*].

B. Job 30:9-15: I Am Now Their Byword.

1. Verses 9-11: “And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword. They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face. Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.”
 - a. “And now I am become their song, Yea, I am a byword unto them. They abhor me, they stand aloof from me, And spare not to spit in my face. For he hath loosed his cord, and afflicted me; And they have cast off the bridle before me” (ASV).
 - b. Job is dismayed to think that these lowly creatures now treated him with such disrespect that they sang about him, made him a common byword, despised him, stood aloof from him, and would spit in his face if possible. His close friends had turned against him, which caused Job great sorrow; but now the lowliest of men scorned him—adding shame and insult to his sufferings.
 - c. If we should get to feeling that the world is against us, think about Job’s situation as he describes it here. It is doubtful that we have been (or will ever be) treated like this! But if such a development should arise, we should gladly accept it if we are being opposed for righteousness’ sake.
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”
 - 2) Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:10: “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”
 - d. The patriarch does not identify the “he” of verse eleven, but from his earlier similar statements, we must conclude that he is speaking of the Almighty. It is Job’s conviction that God had brought about his downfall from his former position of wealth, happiness, and success; God had done so, but for reasons that are presently hidden from the patriarch.
 - e. Since God had loosed his cord, these low-class people were ridiculing Job. What exactly is the cord that has been loosed?
 - 1) Solomon similar language in Ecclesiastes 12:6: “Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.” Death is pictured as the loosing of the silver cord and the breaking of the golden bowl. It appears that

the imagery is that of drawing water from a well, using a silver cord and a golden bowl. During life, we continually draw the water that sustains us; but at death, the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl is broken, preventing us from drawing that life-giving water. However, the word translated “cord” [Strong’s number 2256] is a different Hebrew word from the one Job uses [# 3499].

- 2) If the term is understood to mean “bowstring,” then Job means that his bow [with which he could have protected himself] had been loosened, so these young men could insult him with impunity. If this should be the understanding of the statement, we could either perceive Job to mean that he might have closed their mouths with a threat of violence, or if it is taken as a figure, then Job would mean that he stood defenseless against their insults, since they were belittling him because God had brought him into this sorrowful state.
 - f. The patriarch speaks of God having afflicted him with one blow after another; we are told in chapter one of the loss of his animals, servants, and children; in chapter two we are told that his health was virtually destroyed by the sore boils and his wife advised him to renounce the Almighty. He was now impoverished, bereaved, and very ill.
 - g. The rabble had lost all respect for Job, had now cast off the “bridle” that had restrained them, and attacked him with the vicious insults which Job has listed in the passage.
2. Verses 12-15: “Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction. They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper. They came *upon me* as a wide breaking in *of waters*: in the desolation they rolled themselves *upon me*. Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Upon my right hand rise the rabble; They thrust aside my feet, And they cast up against me their ways of destruction. They mar my path, They set forward my calamity, Even men that have no helper. As through a wide breach they come: In the midst of the ruin they roll themselves upon me. Terrors are turned upon me; They chase mine honor as the wind; And my welfare is passed away as a cloud” (ASV).
 - 2) “At my right hand the rabble arises; They push away my feet, And they raise against me their ways of destruction. They break up my path, They promote my calamity; They have no helper. They come as broad breakers; Under the ruinous storm they roll along. Terrors are turned upon me; They pursue my honor as the wind, And my prosperity has passed like a cloud” (NKJV).
 - b. They placed themselves on his right hand, a place reserved for the most honorable companion in ancient culture; they jostled him (totally unconcerned about his honor or welfare). They pushed their way into his presence without invitation and for base purposes; their intention was to cause him to stumble (literally or otherwise); they shoulder against him as an army positions itself to attack a city.
 - c. They stand in his path, or as Job put it, “they mar my path.” They try to interfere with him—we are not told in what way. They are a source of aggravation and embarrassment. Compare: “And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction” (Zech. 1:15).
 - d. “[They have no helper] Various interpretations have been given of this phrase. It may mean, that they had done this alone, without the aid of others; or that they were persons who were held in abhorrence, and whom no one would assist; or that they were worthless and abandoned persons....The idea here then is, probably, that they were so worthless and abandoned that no one would help them—an expression denoting the utmost degradation” (Barnes).
 - e. Job speaks of their attacks upon himself under the figure of an army making a wide breach in the walls of a city. Notice that the phrase “of waters” is italicized; the American Standard omits the phrase; the
-

New King James renders the statement as, “They come as broad breakers; under the ruinous storm they roll along.”

- 1) Compare: “Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant” (Isa. 30:13).
 - 2) “The enemies of Job poured in upon him as if a breach was made in a wall. Formerly they were restrained by his rank and office, as a besieging army was by lofty walls; but now all these restraints were broken down, and they poured in upon him like a tumultuous army. In the desolation they rolled themselves upon me. Among the ruins they rolled...or they came pitching and tumbling in with the ruins of the wall. The image is taken from the act of sacking a city, where the besieging army, having made a breach in the wall, would seem to come tumbling into the heart of the city with the ruins of the wall. No time would be wasted, but they would follow suddenly and tumultuously upon the breach...” (Barnes).
- f. These youthful no-accounts bring further misery and heartache upon the suffering patriarch. They pursue his soul [honor, ASV] for the purpose of adding insult and pain to his discomfort. Some scholars think that “they” may have reference to the terrors of which Job speaks. If that is the case, then Job’s welfare [his well-being, prosperity, honor] is taken from him like the passing of a morning cloud, by these terrors [i.e., the loss of his prosperity, the loss of his children, the loss of his health]. In his understanding of this distressful situation, God had (for unknown reasons to Job) taken from him these blessings.

C. Job 30:16-23: Job Bemoans His Agony.

1. Verses 16-19: “And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me. My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest. By the great force of *my disease* is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat. He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes” (KJV). “And now my soul is poured out within me; Days of affliction have taken hold upon me. In the night season my bones are pierced in me, And the pains that gnaw me take no rest. By God's great force is my garment disfigured; It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat. He hath cast me into the mire, And I am become like dust and ashes” (ASV).
 - a. Job now turns his attention to God, and bemoans the agony he thinks was coming from the Lord. He speaks of his soul as being poured out. The Hebrew word translated “soul” serves also to mean breath, life, mind, etc. “Job is probably saying that his life is being poured out, drained, washed away within him by tears and weeping (cf. 16:16, 20), an expression of inward emotions. Job’s days of affliction (pain, suffering) have held him tenaciously in their grasp as an animal holds fiercely its prey in its jaws” (Hailey, p.259).
 - b. He experienced deep pain, within his bones and sinews (tendons); he was “aching all over!” The sore boils afflicted the outward part of his body, but the pain was throughout his system.
 - c. Verse eighteen is difficult to translate and to interpret. The garment he wears, once clothed his body properly, but now he is so emaciated that it hangs loosely about him; he has lost so much weight that his garment is so loose that the collar will wrap around him.
 - d. Verse nineteen refers to God, even though he is not directly identified. Job describes his condition as being cast into the mud; he has become nothing more important than dust and ashes. Agony and sorrow have taken their toll on the great man.
2. Verses 20-23: “I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me *not*. Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposeth thyself against me. Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride *upon it*, and dissolvest my substance. For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and *to* the house appointed for all living.”
 - a. “I cry unto thee, and thou dost not answer me: I stand up, and thou gazest at me. Thou art turned to

be cruel to me; With the might of thy hand thou persecutest me. Thou liftest me up to the wind, thou causest me to ride upon it; And thou dissolvest me in the storm. For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, And to the house appointed for all living” (ASV).

- b. “God neither heard his cry nor regarded his presence, but simply looked at him. Job’s conclusion was that God was indifferent to his condition and cry” (Hailey, p.260).
- c. In his agony, Job thinks that God has treated him with cruelty; he even supposes that God has lifted his strong hand to oppose him (i.e., persecute him). This is some of the patriarch’s strongest words of lamentation (cf. 19:13-22). “This [verse 21] expressed the sufferer’s explanation of why God did not answer when he cried unto Him and why God only gazed at him when he stood up (v.20). For some reason unknown to Job, God became insensitive to his needs and had turned from compassion to offense or resentment....This was a terrible charge to bring against the Lord, but let us remember the state of Job’s body and mind at the time. However, it was because of this accusation that God rebuked Job (38:1-2; 40:1-2)” (Hailey, p.261).
 - 1) Job 38:1-2: “Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?”
 - 2) Job 40:1-2: “Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.”
- d. The patriarch describes his woes as being lifted up and caused to ride upon the wind (in a storm). The subject is Job’s woes; they have moved with great speed. Compare: This would be akin to being picked up by a tornado and carried some distance away. The ride would be terrifying and the end might well be disastrous!
- e. Job is convinced that the end result of his afflictions will be death—the house appointed to all men. “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). There is an appointed time for death; but this is not intended to be understood to say that a date has been fixed for every human being to die, and that that date cannot be changed. The point of the text is to declare that we must all die **one time** and face the Judgment **one time**; this fact has been established, and no mortal can change it or avoid its application to himself.
 - 1) Genesis 3:19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return."
 - 2) Job 14:1-2: "Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."
 - 3) Psalms 90:10: "The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
 - 4) Ecclesiastes 9:5: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten."
 - 5) Ecclesiastes 12:5: "Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."
 - 6) The statement of Hebrews 9:27 is an illustration; it was not intended to be a discussion of the fact. It does not mean that God has set an exact time for our demise, but simply declares the accepted truth that, as we are sure to die but once, and then face the Judgment, so Christ was once offered for our sins (verse 28).

D. Job 30:24-31: Job Speaks of the Unbrotherly Treatment He Has Received.

1. Verses 24-25: “Howbeit he will not stretch out *his* hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction. Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was *not* my soul grieved for the poor?” (KJV). “Howbeit doth not one stretch out the hand in his fall? Or in his calamity therefore cry for help? Did not I weep for him

that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the needy?" (ASV).

- a. Job describes the unbrotherly treatment he has suffered at the hands of others. In his agony, he stretched out his hands for help; he had cried for help, but none came to his assistance. "As one falls he instinctively stretches out his hand; this is what Job did. Who would not stretch out his hand in a cry for help if he were facing death in the midst of ruin?" (Hailey, p.262).
 - b. In verse twenty-five, Job expressed his inability to understand why he could get no help, although he had been a source of help when others were in need.
2. Verses 26-27: "When I looked for good, then evil came *unto me*: and when I waited for light, there came darkness. My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me" (KJV). "When I looked for good, then evil came; And when I waited for light, there came darkness. My heart is troubled, and resteth not; Days of affliction are come upon me" (ASV).
- a. In his pain, Job sought for good and light, but received only evil and darkness. "This may refer to periods, after his calamities began, when he had hopes that his prayers would be answered, and a rest or pause, an interval of repose, be granted him (Job 9:34; 10:20), but when his hopes were disappointed, and the darkness closed in upon him thicker and murkier than ever" (Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].
 - b. "The bowels, in the Scriptures, are represented as the seat of the affections....The idea here is, that the seat of sorrow and of grief was affected by his calamities. Nor was the feeling slight. His emotions he compared with agitated, boiling water. It is possible that there is an allusion here to the inflammatory nature of his disease, producing internal heat and pain; but it is more probable that he refers to the mental anguish which he endured" (Barnes).
3. Verses 28-29: "I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation. I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls" (KJV). "I go mourning without the sun: I stand up in the assembly, and cry for help. I am a brother to jackals, And a companion to ostriches" (ASV).
- a. He mourned in darkness. In a time of mourning we scarcely notice the sun even if it is shining; its light is overshadowed by the blackness of our sorrow. Job had asked for good and light, but received evil and darkness; he had no hope of betterment; he could not see any "light at the end of the tunnel."
 - b. His cries were more like jackals and owls (ostriches, ASV) than like a man's cries. "Job's claim to a brotherly relationship with wild creatures of the desert further indicated his rejection by society. 'Jackals,' scavengers that are related to foxes, were a symbol of desolation. The ostrich was primarily a desert bird. The two symbolized Job's ostracism from society, his loneliness and longing for divine help and human sympathy" (Hailey, p.263).
4. Verses 30-31: "My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat. My harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep" (KJV). "My skin is black, and falleth from me, And my bones are burned with heat. Therefore is my harp turned to mourning, And my pipe into the voice of them that weep" (ASV).
- a. He is black in his despair and pain, and burning with fever. Colors are often used to indicate certain emotions. Red is sometimes associated with anger or embarrassment; white can depict shock; blue is used to indicate sadness; green is occasionally used to denote envy; and black is commonly used to describe sorrow and hopelessness. Black certainly is appropriate for Job's present condition.
 - b. Happy times have been turned into heartache. The harp and the pipe were used on joyous occasions, but in Job's case, the sounds they emit are tones of mourning and tears.
-

Job 31

Job's Final Statement of His Innocence

A. Job 31:1-8: He Affirms His Mental Purity.

1. Verses 1-2: "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? For what portion of God *is there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?"
 - a. In this final speech, Job defends his integrity, claiming innocence in those things in which he has been charged with wickedness. He goes even beyond these charges to affirm his innocence in things no man could know about—his thoughts and motives and secret activities.
 - b. He affirms that he has kept his mind pure. He had made a covenant with his eyes that he would not lust after a maiden.
 - 1) Proverbs 6:25: "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids."
 - 2) Matthew 5:27-28: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." A man can look at a woman entirely without any lustful desire; what is forbidden is the lustful look which has an actual desire to commit fornication.
 - 3) 2 Peter 2:14: "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children."
 - c. It may have been the case that he resolved in his heart *while he was a young man* that he would not allow lust to arise within him which might lead him into sin. Regardless of his age when he made this commitment, it is highly commendable! This resolution would set him apart from the average man of any generation. Within the lifetime of many today, we have known of several presidents who corrupted themselves with fornication; we have also learned of a good many preachers who have also done so.
 - d. If one allowed lust to lead him into fornication, what portion [inheritance, reward] could he expect from God? There would be none! Job understood that fornication condemns the soul; it alienates the offender from the Almighty; it incurs his wrath.
 - 1) James 1:12-15: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
 - 3) Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 4) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
 - 5) 1 Peter 2:11: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts,

- which war against the soul.”
- 6) Matthew 5:8: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”
2. Verses 3-4: “Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity? Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?” (KJV). “Is it not calamity to the unrighteous, And disaster to the workers of iniquity? Doth not he see my ways, And number all my steps?” (ASV).
 - a. Job raises a rhetorical question about God punishing the wicked. As you know, such a question really affirms the truth about the subject matter. God will bring destruction [calamity] upon the unrighteous and disaster upon those who work iniquity.
 - b. He brings up another rhetorical question which affirms the fact that God does indeed see the ways of man and numbers his steps. A sinful man cannot forever get away with his evil conduct.
 - 1) 1 Peter 3:12: “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”
 - 2) Hebrews 4:13: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”
 - 3) Psalms 139:7-10: “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”
 - 4) Proverbs 5:21: “For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.”
 - 5) Proverbs 15:3: “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”
 - c. In the context, the patriarch shows that the man who gets involved in fornication (or some other sin) must face the consequences of his wickedness whenever God decides to take action.
 3. Verses 5-6: “If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know mine integrity” (KJV). “If I have walked with falsehood, And my foot hath hasted to deceit (Let me be weighed in an even balance, That God may know mine integrity)” (ASV).
 - a. Vanity is equivalent to falsehood as is indicated by the parallelism of verse five. Job’s friends had charged him with living a lie [being a hypocrite; acting deceitfully].
 - 1) Job 4:7-9: “Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same. By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.”
 - 2) Job 8:6: “If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.”
 - 3) Job 8:12: “Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.”
 - 4) Job 11:4-6: “For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes. But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee; And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.”
 - 5) Job 11:20: “But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.”
 - 6) See also Job 18:4-21; 20:5-29.
 - b. The patriarch denies the charge. He is willing for God to weigh him in the balances, and if he is found wanting, he is willing to be deprived of the fruit of all his labors. Compare: “And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art

found wanting” (Dan. 5:25-27).

- c. Job knows his own heart and life, and therefore is aware that he has not lived in sin; he is willing to be fairly judged, with all the facts of the case being duly considered; if he should be found guilty, he is not unwilling to suffer the penalty; but knowing his true condition, he is convinced he will be found pure, and vindicated.
4. Verses 7-8: “If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands; *Then* let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out” (KJV). “If my step hath turned out of the way, And my heart walked after mine eyes, And if any spot hath cleaved to my hands: Then let me sow, and let another eat; Yea, let the produce of my field be rooted out” (ASV).
 - a. “Job denied that he ever allowed his heart, enticed though the eye, to turn his step out of the pattern of his life to covet that which belonged to another....If any act of falsehood, deceit, or covetousness be found in him, then let a curse fall upon him and the fruit of his labor” (Hailey, p.266).
 - b. If a fair and honest investigation of his life turns up anything amiss, he states his willingness to be punished with the proper penalty. If any blot [spot] has soiled his hands, then let another take what he has labored to produce, or let it be pulled up by the roots and destroyed.
 - c. No one should doubt Job’s honesty and sincerity in denying the charges of wrongdoing.

B. Job 31:9-12: Job Affirms His Moral Purity.

1. Verses 9-10: “If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; *Then* let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.”
 - a. Job denies that he has been guilty of adulterous conduct. He has not been seduced nor has he sought out his neighbor’s wife for unholy purposes. Compare:
 - 1) Jeremiah 5:7-8: “How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.”
 - 2) Amos 2:7: “That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek: and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name.”
 - b. Job speaks of his wife [singular], which plainly shows that he was not a polygamist. If he should be found guilty of adultery, then he is willing for the harsh penalties he names to be imposed: that his wife should work for another man and that others should abuse her.
 - c. “In Abraham’s day the sin of defiling another’s wife was recognized as wickedness by the pharaoh of Egypt (Gen. 12:18-20) and the king of Gerar (Gen. 20). Should he [Job] so sin against his neighbor, he would expect the same in return; let his wife become the servant or slave of another and be sexually used by others—a terrible penalty!” (Hailey, p.267).
2. Verses 11-12: “For this *is* an heinous crime; yea, it *is* an iniquity *to be punished* by the judges. For it *is* a fire *that* consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.”
 - a. Job understood the heinous nature of fornication, that it was worthy of being severely punished; it is even to be punished beyond this life. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).
 - b. Joseph turned down the advances of Potiphar’s wife, describing fornication as a great sin against God: “There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9).
 - c. Fornication was strongly discouraged by American society until the 1960s, when sexual misconduct

became an accepted practice, and those who spoke against it were berated as being judgmental. But when fornication [in its assorted forms] is practiced by an individual, his entire person is consumed by the guilt and taint of this immoral practice; if a society or nation becomes contaminated by this lifestyle, it will bring about its own destruction. Job describes this practice as a fire which spreads. It is often the case that once one gets involved therein, he stoops to other sins and evils. Consider how much evil and pain fornication has caused in the world—divorces, homes destroyed, souls lost, children’s lives torn asunder. No wonder the Bible strongly warns, “Flee fornication!” (1 Cor. 6:18).

- d. Proverbs 6:20-35: “My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.”

C. Job 31:13-15: Job Denies That He Has Mistreated His Servants.

1. Verse 13: “If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me.”
 - a. In the case of slaves, undoubtedly there have been many masters who mistreated and abused their slaves; even in modern cases, employers have been known to mistreat and take advantage of their employees. Child-labor laws were put into effect to protect young children; and other regulations have been enacted to protect the rights of many workers.
 - b. Job denies that he has abused his servants, whether male or female. One can imagine that some slave-owners might take advantage of their female slaves. The patriarch did not do such things. If his friends had made such a charge, it would be their obligation to prove it. They never made any such attempt!
 - c. Some slaves [and some modern workers] caused problems for their owners. Even when one of his slaves contended with him, Job did not mistreat him. They were given a fair hearing when complaints were raised.
2. Verses 14-15: “What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?”
 - a. He observes that if he were to mistreat a servant he must answer to God (cf. Rom. 14:12), since the Lord is the Maker of all men.
 - 1) Acts 17:26: “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”
 - 2) Proverbs 22:2: “The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.”
 - 3) Romans 14:12: “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - b. Verse fifteen speaks of God’s activity in the womb; it is in accordance with his natural laws that women conceive and bear children. Women as well as men bear the seed of life.
 - 1) Psalms 139:13: “For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.”

- 2) Jeremiah 1:4-5: “Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”
- 3) Luke 1:4: “And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.”
- c. Some argue that Psalm 58:3 says that we inherit sin: “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies” (Ps. 58:3).
 - 1) It is certain that an infant does not speak lies or otherwise go astray; as we have earlier noticed, sin for an accountable individual begins during his youth, not in his infancy.
 - 2) Job 31:18 says that Job had aided the widow “from my mother’s womb.” The meaning is that these were done from his youth. What he calls his mother’s womb in the first part of the verse, he calls from his youth in the second part; this is an example of parallelism, for which the Hebrews were especially noted.
- d. An infant or little child cannot become guilty of sin.
 - 1) Genesis 8:21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for **the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth**; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.” [Sin does not start in our infancy, but in our youthful years].
 - 2) Ezekiel 18:20: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” [The sins of the parent are not imputed to the child; the righteousness of the parent is not conferred to the child].
 - 3) Ezekiel 28:15: “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.” [One is perfect when he enters this life, and remains in that condition until sin is committed by the individual].
 - 4) Matthew 18:3: “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” [One who would be a follower of Christ must become as pure and innocent as little children; thus little children are free from sin].
 - 5) Matthew 19:14: “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” [Those in the kingdom of Christ are like little children—pure and free from the contamination of sin].

D. Job 31:16-23: Job Denies He Has Neglected the Poor.

1. Verses 16-18: “If I have withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as *with* a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb).”
 - a. Job said he had never neglected the poor, the widow or the orphan; he had fed the hungry and clothed the naked, and such benevolence had been his way of life from his early days.
 - b. If an orphan was present, Job declares that he would not eat alone—he would provide food for the fatherless also.
 - c. Again, notice the parallelism of verse eighteen: the phrase “from my mother’s womb” is placed in parallel to “my youth.”
2. Verses 19-21: “If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; If his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep; If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate.”
 - a. Job continues his statements about helping, not hurting, those in need. If there were some who were

in need of clothing, he would provide them with garments. He had used the fleece from his sheep to furnish covering for them. These individuals he had aided gave thanks to the patriarch for his great generosity.

- b. He declares that he has not lifted up his hand against the fatherless. He “denied having used his influence on judges at the gate (court) to force an advantage of the helpless. Instead, he had used it in their defense (29:7, 12-13)” (Hailey, p.269).
3. Verses 22-23: “*Then* let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.”
 - a. If his attestations are wrong, then he is willing for his shoulder to fall from his shoulder-blade, and his arm be broken. This is a strong way to affirm that what he has declared above.
 - b. He knows that God has the power to severely punish evildoers [such as those who affirm falsehoods], and to penalize those who have the means of helping the needy and refuse to do so.
 - c. He calls on God to punish him fully if his conduct has been sinful in these matters. He affirms that he has always operated consistently, with respect for God’s majesty.

E. Job 31:24-28: Job Has Been Faithful in Religion.

1. Verses 24-27: “If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence; If I rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and because mine hand had gotten much; If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking *in* brightness; And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand.”
 - a. The patriarch here affirms his faithfulness in discharging his religious responsibilities. Materialism [gold] was never his god; he did not place his confidence in earthly wealth. His experience has taught us all that wealth is certainly fleeting!
 - 1) Luke 12:15-21: “And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”
 - 2) Luke 16:13: “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”
 - 3) Colossians 3:5: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”
 - 4) 1 Timothy 6:17-19: “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”
 - 5) Mark 10:23-25: “And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” [A *rich man* in the Lord’s lesson here is one who places his trust in his riches, and not in God].

- b. Mistakenly, Job's friends had accused him of trusting in his wealth instead of in God. They had Job in mind when they condemned wicked rich men.
 - 1) Job 15:28: "And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps."
 - 2) Job 20:10: "His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods."
 - 3) Job 20:15: "He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly."
 - 4) Job 20:19: "Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not."
 - c. Job had never been an idolater; he had never worshiped the sun, moon, or stars. Astrology is not a modern invention; many of the ancients fell into this foolish practice.
 - 1) 2 Kings 23:5: "And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven."
 - 2) Isaiah 47:13-14: "Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it."
 - 3) Jeremiah 10:2: "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them."
 - d. What is the meaning of "kissing the hand"? "The Muslims at the present day, in their worship at Mecca, kiss the black stone which is fastened in the corner of the Beat Allah, as often as they pass it, in going round the Caaba. If they cannot come near enough to kiss it, they touch it with the hand, and kiss that. An Oriental pays his respects to one of a superior station by kissing his hand and putting it to his forehead....The foundation of the custom here alluded to, is the respect and affection which is shown for one by kissing; and as the heavenly bodies which were worshipped were so remote that the worshippers could not have access to them, they expressed their veneration by kissing the hand. Job means to say, that he had never performed an act of homage to the heavenly bodies" (Barnes).
2. Verse 28: "This also *were* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: for I should have denied the God *that is* above."
- a. Job admits that if he had worshiped the sun or moon, that would have been an iniquity which should be punished by the judges; it would have been a denial of the true God. God is greater than anything he created, including the sun and moon.
 - b. The Mosaic Law prescribed execution for an Israelite who worshiped idols: "If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you" (Deut. 17:2-7).
 - c. During Abraham's time, idolatry appears to have been growing, but there were some who retained
-

their knowledge and respect for God. When he came to Gerar, he had this thought about the place: “And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake” (Gen. 20:11). Abraham thought that the people at Gerar might have been God-fearing folks, but for some reason decided that they were not. The implication was that he expected them to know and reverence God. In the context (Gen. 20:1-18), it appears that Abraham’s first idea was correct—that Abimelech and his people were God-fearing. Job lived during the time-frame when Abraham lived; by saying that idolatry was punishable by the judges, Job’s generation still retained a general knowledge of God, and opposed idolatry.

F. Job 31:29-32: Job Has Treated His Enemies With Charity.

1. Verses 29-30: “If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him: Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.”
 - a. Job had even treated his enemies with charity. He never rejoiced at their bad fortune; he never sought to put a curse on them. Compare: “He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed” (Num. 22:5-6).
 - b. The patriarch anticipated the high ethical tone of the New Testament. “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:17-21).
2. Verses 31-32: “If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied. The stranger did not lodge in the street: *but* I opened my doors to the traveller” (KJV). “If the men of my tent have not said, Who can find one that hath not been filled with his meat? (The sojourner hath not lodged in the street; But I have opened my doors to the traveller)” (ASV).
 - a. Even his servants testified that he was generous to all. They perceived his generous nature, and stated that his table was available to all who were hungry; no hungry person could be found who could not have eaten his fill at Job’s house.
 - b. The people of that ancient day were known for their hospitality. Abraham was very forward in giving the three travelers a place to rest and eat (Gen. 19:1-3). Job’s servants would not be able to point out anyone who had been turned away hungry from the patriarch’s table. Meat from his flocks and herds was always available to those who were hungry.
 - c. This is further evidence that Job was a God-fearing man; he had always endeavored to obey the will of God. His friends had been unable to give a single specification to their charge that he was sinful, but Job was able to point out many things about his life to prove his faithfulness to Jehovah.

G. Job 31:33-40: Job Argues For His Spiritual Piety.

1. Verses 33-34: “If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom: Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, *and* went not out of the door?”
 - a. Job argues that he is not like Adam, who tried to conceal his sins from God:
 - 1) “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew

- that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself” (Gen. 3:6-10).
- 2) He had admitted that he had been guilty of sin during his youth [13:26], an admission all responsible adults will make, if they are willing to tell the truth. But Job denies the charges his friends have alleged against him that he was presently in sin; they were operating out of ignorance, and could find no other way to explain why he had suddenly lost his prosperity and health.
- b. Job denies that he has been guilty of some open or secret sin which he is afraid to confess out of fear of a great multitude; he is not fearful that powerful families would unite against him—fear would not have kept him from confessing his sins. He has no secret sins! He had not sinned openly. He had tried to live right all of his adult life, a truth which God has supported.
 - 1) Job 1:8: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”
 - 2) Job 2:3: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.”
 - 3) Job 42:7-8: “And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.”
 - c. If he had been guilty of the sins with which his friends had charged him, he would not have gone out in public for the shame he felt. But their charges were false.
2. Verses 35-37: “Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire *is*, *that* the Almighty would answer me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book. Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me. I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “Oh that I had one to hear me! (Lo, here is my signature, let the Almighty answer me); And that I had the indictment which mine adversary hath written! Surely I would carry it upon my shoulder; I would bind it unto me as a crown: I would declare unto him the number of my steps; As a prince would I go near unto him” (ASV).
 - 2) “Oh, that I had one to hear me! Here is my mark. Oh, that the Almighty would answer me, That my Prosecutor had written a book! Surely I would carry it on my shoulder, And bind it on me like a crown; would declare to Him the number of my steps; Like a prince I would approach Him” (NKJV).
 - b. He cries out for his adversary to write down the charge against him and he would answer; he wanted his guilt specified. It is easy to make general charges, but it is something altogether different to prove the charges. He was ready to sign a legal document to attest his innocence and to defend his name.
 - c. As he has said on other occasions, he wants the Almighty to give him a fair hearing; he knows that he will be found guiltless. The picture of the passage may be this: Let both the adversary and Job appear before God’s fair court; the enemy can state the charges and the specifications; Job will defend himself; before God’s honest and fair court, the patriarch knows he will be declared innocent. That
-

is what in effect happened (Job 42).

- d. “[Surely, I would take it upon my shoulder] That is, the book or bill which the Almighty would write in the case. Job says that he has such confidence that what God would record in his case would be in his favor, such confidence that he had no charge of hypocrisy against him, and that he who knew him altogether would not bring such an accusation against him, that he would bear it off triumphantly on his shoulders. It would be all that he could desire. This does not refer to what a judge would decide if the cause were submitted to him, but to a case where an opponent or adversary in court should bring all that he could say against him. He says that he would bear even such a bill on his shoulders in triumph, and that it would be a full vindication of his innocence. It would afford him the best vindication of his character, and would be that which he had long desired” (Barnes).
 - e. This passage is difficult. The above comments seem to be a safe and fair interpretation. Job was willing for God to pass judgment on his case; he is confident he would be found innocent; he would go before God’s court with the confidence of a prince.
3. Verses 38-40: “If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain; If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life: Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.”
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) “If my land cries out against me, And its furrows weep together; If I have eaten its fruit without money, Or caused its owners to lose their lives; Then let thistles grow instead of wheat, And weeds instead of barley” (NKJV).
 - 2) “If my land crieth out against me, And the furrows thereof weep together; If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, Or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life: Let thistles grow instead of wheat, And cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended” (ASV).
 - b. Job concludes his speech with this declaration. If he has been wrong about his claim to innocence, then let the land cry out against him; if he has stolen any man’s field, or been prospered at another man’s loss, then may thistles and cockle grow in the place of wheat or barley. This statement is a strong denial of wrongdoing and an equally strong affirmation that he has done right.
 - c. The thistles are useless weeds that interfere with crops; the cockle is also a weed that intrudes into fields; cockle burrs have been a major problem with farming.
-

Job 32

Elihu Begins His Long Speech

A. Introduction.

1. Elihu was young, cocky, verbose, impetuous, and argumentative. At times he waxes eloquent. No one answers him, which may imply that his speech amounted to nothing. He tries to sum up all that was said and comment on it.
2. Not much is known of him except the brief genealogical sketch of verse two. He may have been a distant relative of Abraham: “Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram” (Gen. 22:21). He was younger than Job and his three friends (vs. 3); he had listened to the debate between Job and these three, and now feels compelled to speak.
3. Job’s three friends said that “Job was suffering because of his sins. Job knew that was not true, and yet, Job is struggling with how to be able to reconcile his own righteous living with the righteousness and the justice of God. He cannot put them together. Now, a fourth man comes on the scene—Elihu. His approach is different. He will make some mistakes, but he sees the suffering of Job from a different standpoint. He does not believe that Job is suffering because of his sins. He thinks that there is a gracious design that is in the suffering though which he is going, and he tries to convince Job that God is not his enemy. He is not suffering because of the wrath of God, but rather there is a purpose for good in it, and he says some things that, of course, are correct, but perhaps because of his limited knowledge, he tries to say too much” (Franklin Camp, *Redemption Through the Bible, A Study of the Book of Job*).

B. Job 32:1-10: Job’s Three Friends Cease to Speak.

1. Verses 1-4: “So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he *was* righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and *yet* had condemned Job. Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they *were* elder than he.”
 - a. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar decided to say nothing else to Job. The text says they thought Job was righteous in his own eyes, and therefore would not listen to reason. That was their rationale. We are privy to the whole story, and know that Job was right in his arguments and these three friends were in error (Job 42:7-8). They could not prove their charges against Job and Job had been unable to convince them of his innocence.
 - b. There is a time when faithful saints need to quit wasting their time trying to convince certain sinners and false teachers of the error of their way, when it becomes evident that they are not willing to examine the evidence. “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you” (Matt. 7:6).
 - c. Elihu now enters the picture. He was the son of Barachel the Buzite. It is possible that he could be a descendant of Buz, who was kin to Aram, and was related to Abraham (Gen. 22:20-24). Elihu’s wrath was kindled because he perceived that Job tried to justify himself [claim innocence when he was actually guilty]. So Elihu entered the fray. But his assessment of Job was in error; the patriarch was not justifying himself—he was innocent of the iniquity alleged against him.
 - d. Elihu was not prejudiced! His wrath was also kindled against the other three men, because they could find no way to answer Job; they could not respond to Job’s arguments, but only maintained he must be wrong. The three friends had not proved Job’s guilt, but had built their entire argument on the false premise that hardships imply guilt.
 - e. One good trait that Elihu had was to wait until the older men had all had their say. The three friends had exhausted their argument; and Job had said all that he needed to say. It was at this point that this

younger man began to speak.

2. Verses 5-7: “When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of *these* three men, then his wrath was kindled. And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I *am* young, and ye *are* very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.”
 - a. He was incensed that Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar were unable to refute Job’s arguments; when he saw that these three older men were finished, he began to try to answer Job.
 - b. His first remarks are directed against the three; he figured that age should mean that they had greater wisdom than he. The length of their lives should have taught them wisdom, Elihu states, but he leaves the implication that he did not think they had acquired much wisdom.
3. Verses 8-10: “But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not *always* wise: neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will show mine opinion.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “But there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding. It is not the great that are wise, Nor the aged that understand justice. Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will show mine opinion” (ASV).
 - 2) “But there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding. Great men are not always wise, Nor do the aged always understand justice. Therefore I say, 'Listen to me, I also will declare my opinion'” (NKJV).
 - b. The three friends have based their argumentation on the wisdom of men. They thought that iniquity always brings the wrath of God upon the offender; their theory also maintained that righteousness is always blessed with prosperity, happiness, and good health. Job had shown the error of this view.
 - c. What man may be able to perceive from his experience and observation may serve him well in many areas, but there are other things that can be learned only through inspiration. Observing the universe shows the thoughtful student that a marvelous and powerful hand designed it; but natural observation cannot reveal the identity or the will of the Great Designer. We need revelation for that information.
 - 1) Psalms 19:1: “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork.”
 - 2) Romans 1:20: “For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse” (ASV).
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: “But as it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And which entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged” (ASV).
 - 4) Hebrews 11:3: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”
 - 5) Psalms 33:6-9: “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe

- of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”
- 6) Isaiah 55:8-9: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - 7) Jeremiah 10:23: “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”
 - 8) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”
- d. We are not to take Elihu’s statement here to mean that he was claiming inspiration; he refers to the information he presents as his “opinion.” He states that man does not necessarily obtain wisdom merely by growing old; there are some things that can be learned only by God’s revelation. God had no written revelation during the Patriarchal Age, but he had obviously revealed many truths to certain patriarchs, from Adam and Eve on down through the time of Abraham and Job; this revealed truth was passed on by word of mouth from one generation to the next. Undoubtedly, there was still a large amount of revealed knowledge extant during that ancient time. Beginning at Sinai, God began to reveal the entirety of his will to mankind, through Moses and the later prophets, and finally through Christ and his apostles (Heb. 1:1-2).

C. Job 32:11-22: Elihu Feels Compelled to Speak.

1. Verses 11-14: “Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say. Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that answered his words: Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man. Now he hath not directed *his* words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say. Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words: Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man. Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches” (ASV).
 - 2) “Indeed I waited for your words, I listened to your reasonings, while you searched out what to say. I paid close attention to you; And surely not one of you convinced Job, Or answered his words— Lest you say, 'We have found wisdom'; God will vanquish him, not man. Now he has not directed his words against me; So I will not answer him with your words” (NKJV).
 - b. Elihu had listened to the speeches of the three older men and has observed that Job was unconvinced by what they had said. He even states that their arguments did not answer Job’s arguments; they had lost the debate!
 - c. He cautions them not to assume that their wisdom could defeat Job; only God could vanquish him. It is obvious that Elihu believes that Job is in the wrong and needs to be vanquished (thrust down). But we learn from Job 1:8, 2:3, and 42:7-8 that Job was in good standing with Jehovah; thus, this young man is going to be fighting a losing battle against Job.
 - 1) Job 1:8: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”
 - 2) Job 2:3: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without

- cause.”
- 3) Job 42:7-8: “And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.”
 - d. Elihu proposes to answer Job, but not with their arguments. “Since Job had not directed his speeches toward him, Elihu will not follow the arguments made by the three, but will make a new approach to the subject and its solution. He will state his own views on the subject. Besides, it was not his desire to vanquish Job, but to befriend him by showing him his error, and thereby bring him to repentance (v.14)” (Hailey, p.278).
2. Verses 15-17: “They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking. When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more;) *I said*, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “They are dismayed and answer no more; Words escape them. And I have waited, because they did not speak, Because they stood still and answered no more. I also will answer my part, I too will declare my opinion” (NKJV).
 - 2) “They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking. When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more;) I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion” (ASV).
 - b. Notice the change to the third person pronoun [*ye* to *they*]. Elihu turns from speaking directly to the three friends to address Job about those three. He states that they were amazed [dismayed] at the arguments Job made; they could not offer a reply.
 - c. The young man said he had waited for them to say more, but nothing was forthcoming from them, so he felt compelled to take up the debate at this point. What he proposes to offer is his *opinion* on the matter. As with many young men, Elihu rushed into the fray, in what appears to be an exuberant overconfidence.
 3. Verses 18-20: “For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly *is* as wine *which* hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer” (ASV).
 - 2) “For I am full of words; The spirit within me compels me. Indeed my belly is like wine that has no vent; It is ready to burst like new wineskins. I will speak, that I may find relief; I must open my lips and answer” (NKJV)
 - b. He confidently asserts that he is full of words; he is almost ready to burst with arguments; he will give vent to his convictions. He believes he can succeed where the older ones have failed.
 - c. The three friends had been silenced by Job’s argument, but he is not. “Elihu says that the reverse was true of him. He was full of words, and felt constrained to speak. It was not because he forced himself to do it, nor because he did it as a mere matter of duty, but he was so impressed with the subject that it would be a relief for him to give utterance to his views” (Barnes).
-

-
- d. His inner spirit constrained him to speak, loosing a torrent of words which seem designed to overwhelm the patriarch. His inward parts are like a wine bottle which has no vent—it is swelling so much that it is apt to burst. He plans to speak to relieve the inner pressure. Sometimes a person thinks he has “just got to speak or bust!” We are already seeing some of Elihu’s cocky, impetuous, and verbose nature.
4. Verses 21-22: “Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my maker would soon take me away.”
- a. Other translations:
- 1) “Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my maker would soon take me away” (ASV).
 - 2) “Let me not, I pray, show partiality to anyone; Nor let me flatter any man. For I do not know how to flatter, Else my Maker would soon take me away” (NKJV)
- b. The young man makes an excellent statement in this passage. His stated desire is not to accept any man’s person; he has Job in mind. We remember the greatness of Job, both in his family, in his own community, in the civil affairs of his people, and his standing with God. He had been well-blessed in every way, but he has lost that standing in the eyes of some. He eschews the use of flattering titles. He will not use them of any man; he perceives that his Maker would take him away if he should violate this precept.
- c. What he intends to do is to state the truth as he sees it, without seeking to gain an advantage by using flattering titles or condescending speech; despite Job’s greatness, Elihu says he will not hold back from speaking the truth on that account. These are noble intentions.
-

Job 33

Elihu Continues

A. Job 33:1-12: Elihu Asks Job to Listen Carefully to His Words.

1. Verses 1-3: "Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words. Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth. My words *shall be of* the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly."
 - a. Elihu makes an appeal for Job to listen and attempt a reply if he is able to do so. His cockiness is showing. Though he is a young man and Job is older and wiser, yet he will endeavor to speak words of knowledge which should be able to *straighten-out* the older man.
 - b. In his speeches, Elihu addressed the patriarch directly by name three times, and six times indirectly. He speaks to the patriarch directly in this chapter; in the first part of the next chapter, he will address his remarks to the three friends.
 - c. He affirms his own sincerity in verse three. It is entirely possible for one to be very sincere but still be wrong. Saul of Tarsus lived in good conscience even while he was opposing Christ and assaulting Christians.
 - 1) Acts 23:1: "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 1:13-15: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
 - 3) For the conscience to do us good, it must be properly taught. The most expensive watch can keep accurate time only if it is properly *set*.
2. Verses 4-5: "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. If thou canst answer me, set *thy words* in order before me, stand up."
 - a. He speaks of his recognition of his divine origin. One's view of his origin will be reflected in his conduct; if one believes he is a product of chance evolution, he will live like the animals—with little interest in morality; if one believes he is the offspring of God, he will be more likely to conduct himself with some measure of morality.
 - b. What is well-received in the heart will be seen in the way we live.
 - 1) Proverbs 4:23: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."
 - 2) Proverbs 6:12: "A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth."
 - 3) Matthew 12:35-37: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."
 - 4) Matthew 15:18-19: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."
 - c. Elihu apparently thinks that Job will be unable or unwilling to answer him. He challenges the patriarch to stand up and answer—if he can.
 - d. In commenting on verse four, Hailey states: "This is practically a repetition of 32:8, but with this difference; in that verse he affirmed that the spirit of God gives him understanding, i.e., the spirit which God gave to man when He created him (Gen. 2:7); whereas in this verse he speaks of the Spirit

that made him and gave him life. In neither is he speaking of inspiration. So both his mental or intellectual entity and physical life came from God, which puts him and Job on a common level (cf. v.6)" (p.281).

3. Verses 6-7: "Behold, I *am* according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Behold, I am toward God even as thou art: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, Neither shall my pressure be heavy upon thee" (ASV).
 - 2) "Truly I am as your spokesman before God; I also have been formed out of clay. Surely no fear of me will terrify you, Nor will my hand be heavy on you" (NKJV).
 - 3) In the King James Version, Elihu seems to be saying that he is a spokesman for God, but in the ASV, he states that he and Job share in a common standing before God and to each other. This latter view fits the context well.
 - b. Elihu states the obvious truth that he and Job were both produced by God's power. Their bodies were both made from the same physical ingredients. They are in this sense on a par with each other. He has already shown that their intelligence and spiritual part came from God.
 - c. Therefore, nothing he says against Job should be feared, or be a source of fear to Job. He states that he will not say anything to the patriarch what will be too heavy for him to bear. He will not be harsh, as the other friends had been; he will not make demands of him that go too far.
 - d. According to the Pulpit Commentary [and other scholars], Elihu claims to fill the roll of the antagonist for which Job had asked: "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead; i.e. I am the antagonist for whom thou hast asked (Job 9:33; 13:19), ready to enter into controversy with thee, instead of God" (Biblesoft). "Who is he that will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost" (Job 13:19). But just because Elihu may have claimed to fill this roll, does not necessarily mean that God had chosen him for the job.
4. Verses 8-12: "Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of *thy* words, *saying*, I am clean without transgression, I *am* innocent; neither *is there* iniquity in me. Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy, He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths. Behold, *in* this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man."
 - a. Elihu says he has heard all the speeches Job had uttered, how that he had claimed to be innocent of any transgression, that there is no iniquity in him; that he was suffering because God sought an occasion against him to treat him as an enemy; that in effect God had put his feet in stocks and had intentionally made his pathway difficult.
 - b. Job had made some statements similar to what Elihu said.
 - 1) "Although some passages may be subject to a slightly different translation, in a general way the charges are claims Job made. Unlike the friends who in some instances made hypothetical charges against Job, based not on facts but on their traditional view of suffering, Elihu charged Job according to his own words" (Hailey, pp.282f).
 - 2) "Elihu does not quote exactly what Job had said. He probably intended to be perfectly fair and just, but in reality he greatly overstates the truth. Job had never said the words he ascribes to him in ver. 9; at best they are an inference, or deduction, from what he had said" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - c. From Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) Job had not said that he was "clean," or "without transgression," or "innocent." With respect to "cleanness," he had observed, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one," implying that all men were unclean (see Job 14:4). Concerning, "transgressions," he had declared, "I have

- sinned... Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?" (Job 7:20,21); and again, "Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth" (Job 13:26). Further, he had asked to be told the number of his iniquities and sins (Job 13:23), and declared that God kept his transgressions and iniquities sewn up and sealed in a bag (Job 14:17). With regard to "innocence," the only observation that he had made was, "I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent" (Job 9:28). What he had really asserted was his uprightness, his integrity, his "righteousness" (Job 12:4; 16:17; 23: 7; 27:5, 6; 31:5-40). And these are exactly what God bore witness to (Job 1:8; 2:3). It is plain, then, that Elihu overstated his case, and, whatever his intentions were, was practically almost as unfair to Job as the "comforters."
- 2) Neither is there iniquity in me. Nor had Job said this. He had frequently acknowledged the contrary (see Job 7:21; 13:26; 14:17).
 - 3) Behold, he findeth occasions against me. This charge may perhaps be justified by reference to Job's complaints in Job 7:17-19 and 10:3-6; but the exact words are not Job's.
 - 4) He counteth me for his enemy. Certainly, Job had said this more than once (see Job 16:9; 19: 1 1). But he cannot really have believed it, or his trust in God must have failed. The fact that to the last he clung to God, appealed to him, hoped to receive judgment from him (Job 31:2,6,28,35-37), is proof sufficient that he knew God was not really alienated from him, but would in the end acknowledge him and vindicate his character.
- d. In verse twelve, Elihu asserts that Job was unjust to make such statements against God. He states that God is greater than man, and therefore man ought not to make such allegations against God. Job may have opened himself up for an attack by Elihu when he spoke of God acting the part of an enemy toward Job.
- 1) But Elihu's response is not a logical answer; merely to say that God is greater than man is not an adequate response. His argument appears to be that might makes right; that because Jehovah is all-powerful, he is authorized to do whatever he wishes.
 - 2) This is what powerful worldly rulers have done. "So Cambyses was justified in his worst acts by the royal judges (Herod., 3:31); and so in an absolute monarchy it is always possible to justify the extremest acts of tyranny. Certainly God cannot act unjustly; but this is not because his doing a thing makes it right, but because his justice, is a law to his will, and he never wills to do anything that he has not previously seen to be just..." (Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft).
 - 3) This is an argument which Calvinists make when they try to justify their doctrine of predestination and foreordination [that God decided who would go to Heaven and who would go to Hell, without the individuals having any part in the destiny they are given].
 - 4) If in Elihu's point, in saying God is greater than man, he means that God knows far more than man, and knows what is best for man, then we must agree. However, the argument would still be the same—since God is greater than man, he can do anything to man he wishes. But that is not how God operates.
- e. Elihu's statements about Job must be kept in the context of God's glowing statements about the patriarch. God did not misjudge the faithfulness of Job.
- 1) Job 1:8: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"
 - 2) Job 2:3: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause."
 - 3) Job 42:7: "And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said
-

to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.”

B. Job 33:13-28: “You Have Complained That God Will Not Hear You.”

1. Verses 13-15: “Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters. For God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed” (KJV). “Why dost thou strive against him, For that he giveth not account of any of his matters? For God speaketh once, Yea twice, though man regardeth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, When deep sleep falleth upon men, In slumberings upon the bed” (ASV).
 - a. Elihu next says in effect, “Job, you have complained that God will not answer you. Well, he is not required to give account to humanity. He has, though, spoken to man in various ways.”
 - b. During the time when revelations were being made from God to mankind, he employed dreams and visions as two of the means of conveying his message. Man did not always understand all that was revealed and some did not want to do what they were told. Some complied fully.
 - 1) Genesis 20:3,6: “But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife....And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.”
 - 2) Genesis 31:10-11: “And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grisled. And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I.”
 - 3) Genesis 31:24: “And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.”
 - 4) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
 - c. God is not obligated to answer to any man for what he has said or done.
 - 1) Isaiah 55:8-9: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - 2) Hebrews 12:5-12: “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.... Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.”
 - 3) Job did not comprehend why he was being afflicted at the time, but doubtless he perceived it when his ordeal was over. We are not privy to God’s similar dealings with us, but we know that certain chastenings may be brought upon us for our good (Heb. 12:5-12); we receive them as such. With the full revelation of the Gospel before us, we can know more about these matters than Elihu could

- have known, but our knowledge is limited to what God has revealed in the Bible.
- 4) Job lamented his afflictions, as virtually every other human would have done. Did he go past the limit between a legitimate [and understandable] lamentation and proceed into sinful complaint? Elihu thought so.
2. Verses 16-18: “Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man *from his* purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.”
 - a. To open the ears of men is to reveal information to them. To seal the instruction is to let man know that this is truly the will of God.
 - b. What God has revealed is for the good of man, not for his injury. When God shows the consequence of disobeying his will, he is trying to get man to do right—to turn away from the evil intentions he has decided to do. Disobedience is caused in many cases by the pride of man; God’s revelation tries to get man to humble himself before God.
 - c. What Elihu states here is a general truth which all who discern the will of God readily perceive. If a man will heed the instructions and warnings God gives in his revealed will, they will be kept back from the abyss of torment and preserve their lives.
 3. Verses 19-22: “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*: So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones *that* were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.”
 - a. Elihu says that God also speaks through the chastisement of pain. Hebrews 12 presents this thought in clear language, as we have seen above.
 - b. The descriptions Elihu uses here vividly characterize Job’s afflictions—probably intentionally. He speaks of the one on the bed of affliction as having pain in his bones, who has no appetite, whose flesh is wasted away, and whose bones are prominent. Such a one draws near the grave and is about to be consumed by the destroyers.
 - c. The destroyers could be a reference to death and sheol, or to the destroying angels.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 24:16: “And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.”
 - 2) 2 Kings 19:35: “And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.”
 - 3) Psalms 78:49: “He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.”
 4. Verses 23-24: “If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.”
 - a. God could use one of the thousands of messengers (angels) to interpret his providential workings, and thus reveal to man what is right; he could thus deliver men from death.
 - b. The messenger might have reference to some human or angelic agency; some scholars think the passage is Messianic. It is hard (if not impossible) to know with certainty which may be meant. The point seems to be that God could (if he so desired) send some messenger to let a suffering man know why he is under affliction.
 - c. Does Elihu think of himself as such a messenger, one who could interpret the situation so that Job
-

could comprehend his afflictions? If so, then he “as an uninspired ambassador from God must interpret the message of suffering to the sufferer on the basis of his opinion or knowledge (32:6, 10:17)” (Hailey, p.287).

- d. Elihu makes no clear claim to being inspired; any counsel he gives would have to be on the basis of his personal understanding and knowledge; he calls it his opinion; he could therefore be wrong. Job and his friends, as well as Elihu, would have to wait until the whole story was complete to see why Job was being afflicted.
 - e. “Now, here it seems that Elihu understands that there needs to be someone between God and man to help man understand some things (33:23-24). Therefore, he says, “*I have found a ransom*” (33:24). No doubt, this now points to what took place with the coming of Christ, where he was mediator between God and men—the go-between and the one to help us understand some things about it” (Franklin Camp, p.55).
5. Verses 25-28: “His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth: He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men, and *if any* say, I have sinned, and perverted *that which was* right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; He returneth to the days of his youth. He prayeth unto God, and he is favorable unto him, So that he seeth his face with joy: And he restoreth unto man his righteousness. He singeth before men, and saith, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, And it profited me not: He hath redeemed my soul from going into the pit, And my life shall behold the light” (ASV).
 - 2) “His flesh shall be young like a child's, He shall return to the days of his youth. He shall pray to God, and He will delight in him, He shall see His face with joy, For He restores to man His righteousness. Then he looks at men and says, 'I have sinned, and perverted what was right, And it did not profit me. 'He will redeem his soul from going down to the Pit, And his life shall see the light” (NKJV).
 - b. The result of such a revelation (of the preceding verses) would be the restoration of health to the one afflicted, and the re-establishment of fellowship with God, together with the natural consequences that result from such fellowship. The sinner thus restored would be thankful, acknowledging his wrong, and would praise God for the deliverance. Elihu is clearly referring to what he thinks Job ought to do.
 - c. We remember that Elihu has spoken of dreams and visions by which God revealed information to the ancients; and he has spoken of the message taught by afflictions; he further spoke of the messengers who could be sent to convey information to the sufferer.
 - d. If the afflicted one would listen and learn from these sources of counsel, he could be restored into the original favor he enjoyed with the Almighty.
 - e. “Therefore, Elihu’s thesis simply is that God is not the author of evil (33:26)—he allows it, permits it and uses it for the good of man to help man” (Camp, p.55).

C. Job 33:29-33: God Acts to Save Man.

1. Verses 29-30: “Lo, all these *things* worketh God oftentimes with man, To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Lo, all these things doth God work, Twice, yea thrice, with a man, To bring back his soul from the pit, That he may be enlightened with the light of the living” (ASV).

- 2) "Behold, God works all these things, Twice, in fact, three times with a man, To bring back his soul from the Pit, That he may be enlightened with the light of life" (NKJV).
- b. God does what he has described above (according to Elihu) for the purpose of saving man from death and to provide man with a life that is guided by God's will. One who lives by his own wisdom, and shows little or no interest in what God says, is like a man stumbling around in darkness on the top of a mountain among steep precipices.
- c. Since we have God's completed revelation today, one would be foolish indeed who does not look into it with great interest to learn how we ought to live.
 - 1) John 10:10: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."
 - 2) John 3:16-21: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
 - 3) James 1:21-25: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
2. Verses 31-33: "Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak. If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee. If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: Hold thy peace, and I will speak. If thou hast anything to say, answer me: Speak, for I desire to justify thee. If not, hearken thou unto me: Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom" (ASV).
 - 2) "Give ear, Job, listen to me; Hold your peace, and I will speak. If you have anything to say, answer me; Speak, for I desire to justify you. If not, listen to me; Hold your peace, and I will teach you wisdom" (NKJV).
 - b. "Job's three friends contended that suffering was a *suffering for sins*, while Elihu argues that suffering may be *disciplinary, and so to serve to prevent sin*. The young man urges Job to listen for he wants to see the patriarch cleared; moreover, he has wisdom to impart (31-33)" (Jackson, p.71).
 - c. "[If not, hearken unto me...]. If nothing has been said from which you dissent, then listen to me, and I will explain further the perplexing subject which has excited so much discussion. These remarks of Elihu imply great confidence in the truth of what he had to say, but they are not arrogant and disrespectful. He treats Job with the utmost deference; is willing to hear all that could be said in opposition to his own views, and is desirous of not wounding his feelings or doing injustice to his cause. It may be supposed that he paused here, to give Job an opportunity to reply, but as he made no remarks, he resumed his discourse in the following chapter. The views which he had expressed were

evidently new to Job, and were entirely at variance with those of his three friends, and they appear to have been received by all with profound and respectful silence” [Barnes, Biblesoft].

Job 34

Elihu's Speech Continues

A. Job 34:1-9: Elihu Addresses the Three Friends.

1. Verses 1-4: "Furthermore Elihu answered and said, Hear my words, O ye wise *men*; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge. For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat. Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what *is* good."
 - a. Elihu turns his attention to the subject of whether God was unjust in sending the afflictions upon Job. He invites the friends to listen closely so that they might know what is good and right (what he considers to be Job's real situation).
 - b. This young man thinks he knows more than the older men present—you listen to me if you want to hear some real wisdom!
 - c. He uses an interesting analogy when he describes the ear testing words it hears as the mouth tastes food. This is an excellent illustration. He is calling for these wise men to examine the words he speaks to them, to thoroughly try them just as their taste buds examine the exquisite tastes of a fine meal.
 - d. He admonishes the three friends to choose judgment [justice] and that which is good. Of course, he is ready to tell them what is just and good! The point is excellent, that we choose that which is just and good, but the young man seems to have a degree of pride.
2. Verses 5-6: "For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment. Should I lie against my right? my wound *is* incurable without transgression" (KJV). "For Job hath said, I am righteous, And God hath taken away my right: Notwithstanding my right I am accounted a liar; My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression" (ASV).
 - a. Elihu asserts that Job, having claimed to be righteous, and had been called and treated like a liar by God (vv. 5-6).
 - b. "Elihu reminded the wise men that Job had claimed that he was 'righteous' (13:18), and that when God tried him, he would 'come forth as gold' (23:10). Furthermore, Job had said, 'God hath taken away my right' (27:2), referring to his judicial right; he had not received a fair and proper trial.... Obviously, Elihu implied from these statements that Job had also claimed that God had branded him 'a liar.' However, no where had God called him a liar, nor had Job so charged God; Elihu himself had incorrectly drawn this conclusion" (Hailey, p.292).
 - c. Job had described his afflictions as being caused by God's arrows: "For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me" (Job 6:4). The patriarch had denied any knowledge of personal sin which might have been the reason for his calamities. These wounds were incurable by human means; only God could heal them. If the afflictions (wounds) were not brought upon the patriarch in punishment for iniquity, then only Jehovah could know their cause and have the ability to heal them.
3. Verses 7-9: "What man *is* like Job, *who* drinketh up scorning like water? Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men. For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God."
 - a. He asserts that Job scorned God by his irreverent and reproachful speeches. He says Job had aligned himself with the wicked in so doing.
 - b. In a general way, Eliphaz (Job 15:16; 22:5-11) had made a similar charge against Job, but Elihu tried to use the patriarch's own words, and sought to turn them against him. Eliphaz made these charges:
 - 1) Job 15:16: "How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?"
 - 2) Job 22:5-11: "Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given

- water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. But as for the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honourable man dwelt in it. Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee; Or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.”
- c. “It was not for Elihu, who professed a desire to ‘justify’ (or completely exonerate) Job, to aggravate his guilt by means of rhetorical comment; and the comment itself was unfair, for Job had not indulged in scorn to any extent, much less ‘drunk it up like water’ (comp. Job 15:16). He had in no respect scorned God; and if he had occasionally poured some scorn upon his ‘comforters’ (Job 6:21; 12:2; 13:4-13; 16:2; 21:2-5; 26:2-4), must it not be admitted that they had deserved it?” (Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft).
 - d. Elihu accused Job of joining forces with the workers of iniquity. This is an over-harsh charge, one that the patriarch clearly would have denied. With what we know about Job, there was no real way he could be described by what David said of wicked men in Psalms 1:1: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” [David is actually describing a godly man; a godly man does not walk in the counsel of ungodly men, he does not occupy the place of sinners, and does not sit in the seat of the scorners].
 - e. Elihu accused Job of saying that serving God is not a profitable venture. But the patriarch had not made this statement. Perhaps Elihu was twisting Job’s statement in Job 9:22: “This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.” But Job’s point there was that afflictions come upon those who are righteous just as they do upon those who are unrighteous. Job’s righteous conduct had not kept hardships from coming upon him; this is the common lot of mankind.
 - 1) Job 9:17-18: “For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause. He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.”
 - 2) Job 10:15: “If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction.”
 - 3) Job 17:9-16: “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you. My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart. They change the night into day: the light is short because of darkness. If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.”

B. Job 34:10-20: Elihu Defends God’s Justice.

1. Verses 10-12: “Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: far be it from God, *that he should do* wickedness; and *from the Almighty, that he should commit* iniquity. For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to *his* ways. Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.”
 - a. Elihu’s stated the truth in this passage, as all will acknowledge who know and believe the truth. God will not do wickedness for it is entirely alien to his will and nature. The Almighty will not commit iniquity. These are self-evident truths for those who love the Bible.
 - 1) Habakkuk 1:13: “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?”
 - 2) Psalms 92:15: “To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.”
 - b. God will truly award or punish a man in keeping with that individual’s works. This is another of the

basic truths of God's dealings with man. As we have observed while working our way through this great book, these penalties and rewards are sometimes given in this life, and in every case, they will be paid out in the Judgment.

- 1) Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
 - 3) Romans 2:2-11: "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God."
- c. God will not pervert justice. Perverting justice would include rewarding a wicked man for his evil deeds, and punishing a good man despite his righteous deeds. Apparently, Elihu thinks that Job has leveled such charges against God which he has named in this passage—that God has done wickedly, committed iniquity, perverted justice [in Job's case].
- d. Elihu's statements are not intended to be complimentary to Job; it appears that he calls attention to these fundamental truths about God for the purpose of reproaching Job. If that is the case, how does one reconcile his assessment of the patriarch by his implied accusations with what the Lord said in Job's favor in chapters one and two and forty-two?
2. Verses 13-15: "Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world? If he set his heart upon man, *if* he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath; All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust."
 - a. Since there is no one greater than the Almighty, He did not receive authority over the earth from any man. God made the universe, he fashioned the earth, he created man—he has full authority over all creation and all mankind by virtue of his being the Creator. He has always possessed sovereignty over all the universe and over every one of his creatures. No one could give him this authority and no one could take it from him.
 - b. God has the power and authority to snuff out all life in an instant. It is not his will to do so. Instead, it is his will to provide life and sustenance to his creatures, especially to his offspring.
 - 1) Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."
 - 2) Matthew 5:44-45: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
-

- 3) Acts 14:17: “Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”
 - 4) Acts 17:24-28: “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”
 - 5) Psalms 33:6-9: “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”
 - 6) He upholds all things by the word of his power (Heb. 1:1-4). The whole creation holds together by the power of his word (Col. 1:15-17).
 - a) Hebrews 1:1-4: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”
 - b) Colossians 1:15-17: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”
 - c. If God decided to withdraw his power from supporting the universe, it would collapse instantly into nothingness; if he should determine to withdraw his support of all human life, we would all immediately perish. Being deity, God can do nothing wrong; he controls the universe by his natural laws and providence; how he governs the affairs of the universe and the earth cannot be brought into question by feeble man. “Man should not complain or blame God for consequences that come as a result of his actions, but should correct his actions that brought on the consequences” (Hailey, p.294).
 3. Verses 16-17: “If now *thou hast* understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words. Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?” (KJV). “If now thou hast understanding, hear this: Harken to the voice of my words. Shall even one that hateth justice govern? And wilt thou condemn him that is righteous and mighty?” (ASV).
 - a. We remember that Elihu is still addressing these remarks to the wise men (vs. 2); these would be the three friends of Job—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. He calls on these men to hear and listen to his words, if they have wisdom. It appears the attitude expressed by this statement is this: “If you are as wise as you think you are, you will listen and take heed to what I’m telling you.”
 - b. Elihu’s question in verse seventeen asks whether one who would pervert justice would or could rule the universe. The implied answer is no. Therefore, no one should condemn the Governor, for he is righteous and mighty. It is evident that Elihu is directing these remarks against Job. He thinks that Job believes God has perverted justice in his case, by bringing unjustified afflictions upon him. But Job has not made this charge against God.
-

4. Verses 18-20: “Is it fit to say to a king, *Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him* that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all *are* the work of his hands. In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hand.”
 - a. Does a right-thinking person declare to a king or a prince that he is wicked or ungodly? Not if he values his freedom, his property, or his life. If that king or prince is wicked or ungodly, the charge would doubtless bring quick retribution.
 - b. Since we would not be likely to say such a thing to an king or prince, we ought not to consider saying such a thing to the Almighty! He does not show partiality or deference to earthly rulers; he does not take into account whether the individual is rich or poor, but acts from a sense of perfect justice. Elihu implies that Job is guilty of charging God with showing partiality, by perverting justice against him.
 - c. Elihu correctly observes that the rich and the poor are the product of God’s power. They are all in the same condition—they are destined to die; death, trouble, and sorrow can come upon any person, at any time. What applies to the poor and the weak, also applies to the rich and the powerful.
 - d. No man has the power to compel God to prolong his days on the earth; they all shall die. God spares none from death because of bias in their favor. He does not have to use human instrumentality in bringing about the end of one’s life; death is the common destiny of us all because of sin.

C. Job 34:21-37: God’s Eyes Are Upon Man.

1. Verses 21-24: “For his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. *There is* no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. For he will not lay upon man more *than right*; that he should enter into judgment with God. He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead” (KJV).
 - a. “For his eyes are upon the ways of a man, And he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor thick gloom, Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. For he needeth not further to consider a man, That he should go before God in judgment. He breaketh in pieces mighty men in ways past finding out, And setteth others in their stead” (ASV).
 - b. God is intimately aware of all of man’s operations; nothing can be concealed from his sight. There is no corner so dark that a wicked man may hide where God cannot see.
 - 1) Psalms 139:7-10: “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”
 - 2) Proverbs 15:3: “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”
 - 3) Amos 9:1-3: “I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered. Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them.”
 - 4) 2 Chronicles 16:9: “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.”
 - 5) Hebrews 4:13: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”
 - c. Verse 23 applies the principle of the preceding two verses. Being omniscient, God instantly knows

the condition of a man, whether he is innocent or guilty. “In God’s complete knowledge of all men and their total inability to hide from him (vv. 21-22), Elihu saw no need for further consideration by holding a judicial investigation. For in His omniscience God knows the whole of man’s character, thoughts, and deeds, and acts on that perfect knowledge” (Hailey, p.296).

- d. In verse 24, Elihu observes that God is able to apply the proper penalty to any wicked man. God is not influenced by a man’s wealth, rank, or earthly authority—He is able to break him down, and bring the proper punishment upon him. When this wicked one has been removed, God is able to fill his empty place with someone else.
2. Verses 25-28: “Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* in the night, so that they are destroyed. He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others; Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways: So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted” (KJV).
 - a. “Therefore he taketh knowledge of their works; And he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed. He striketh them as wicked men In the open sight of others; Because they turned aside from following him, And would not have regard in any of his ways: So that they caused the cry of the poor to come unto him, And he heard the cry of the afflicted” (ASV).
 - b. God’s omniscience provides him with instant and complete knowledge of a man’s affairs; he knows his works. God’s omnipotence provides him with complete power by which he can bring to bear upon the wicked the proper penalty. He can reach into the depth of the darkness in which these evil men operate, and punish them even there; they cannot cover their iniquity.
 - c. But God can also bring the proper penalty upon them in the open, in the full sight of others. He is not afraid of what these others might do, say or think.
 - d. These acts of punishment were proper. The individuals punished were guilty. In the case cited, these evil men had mistreated the poor, who cried unto the Lord for help; God heard their cries—and took the appropriate action.
 - e. We remember that it is Elihu who is making these statements. We have no reason to denounce what he says, for he is presenting a good depiction of how God can operate. His implication seems to be that Job ought to be fearful, in view of what Elihu has said about the operations of God against the wicked. But we also remember what God has said about Job, and what he will be stating later: “And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath” (Job 42:7).
 3. Verses 29-30: “When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth *his* face, who then can behold him? whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man only: That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared” (KJV). “When he giveth quietness, who then can condemn? And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? Alike whether it be done unto a nation, or unto a man: That the godless man reign not, That there be none to ensnare the people” (ASV).
 - a. If God has decreed quietness (a period of tranquillity) upon a man or a nation, is anyone able to disrupt this decree? Can anyone condemn the Almighty for taking this action? His actions are for the best good of the most people.
 - b. “When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? literally, Who then can condemn? The sentiment is the same as that of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, ‘If God be for us, who can be against us?...Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?’ (Rom 8:31-34). And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? When God hideth away his face, then all flesh is troubled (Ps 104:29); man shrinks into himself, and despairs of happiness; nature itself seems to fail and fade. None can behold him when he hides himself; none
-

can do more than deprecate his anger, and pray, ‘Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us’ (Ps 4:6). Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only. The results are similar, whether God withdraws the light of his countenance from a nation or from an individual. In either case, there is no help from without; ruin and destruction follow” [Pulpit Commentary].

- c. From other passages, we learn that God is active in the civil operations of nations. He is able through ways known only to himself to keep a godless man from rule.
 - 1) Daniel 4:32: “And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”
 - 2) But God expects his people to be obedient to the legal authorities: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (Rom. 13:1-7).
 - 3) But God can withdraw his support for a wicked ruler, and bring about his downfall. This he will do for the good of the population. There is much that we cannot know about God’s operations with nations. Why, for example, did he allow Mr. Hitler to come to power in Germany? His twelve-year rule brought untold amounts of suffering and death; many millions of people were directly and adversely affected. Why was Stalin allowed to rule in Russia for so long? Reports allege that he caused many millions of his own countrymen to die. These two men ultimately died, and their legacy is one of hatred and shame, to say nothing of their eternal destiny. We may rest in the assurance that God will always do what is best; there are factors involved in his managements of the universe that we cannot know; his dealings are so intricate and complex that no man has the capacity to comprehend them.
 4. Verses 31-33: “Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne *chastisement*, I will not offend *any more*: *That which* I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more. *Should it be* according to thy mind? he will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest” (KJV).
 - a. “For hath any said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: That which I see not teach thou me: If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more? Shall his recompense be as thou wilt, that thou refusest it? For thou must choose, and not I: Therefore speak what thou knowest” (ASV).
 - b. Elihu turns his attention to Job’s case, but he does so indirectly. Suppose one should say, “I have borne chastisement; I will offend no more. Now tell me exactly why I was punished.” Elihu’s point seems to be this: Does God operate on that level? He then says, “You decide.”
 - c. “Probably what Elihu said was that one who has suffered such correction or discipline as Job has suffered should confess the wrong-doing for which he is being corrected and vow to do such no more. This would take the friends’ view, the assumption that Job sinned beyond the things Elihu accused him of saying and that the suffering was either to correct or to punish (v.31). Elihu further indicated that this is his position by his insistence that Job had asked God to teach him what his sin was and he would promise to do it no more. But from his first speech, this has been Job’s urgent desire, ‘Teach me, and I will hold my peace; And cause me to understand where I have erred’ (6:24; cf. 13:23). Elihu,
-

- who seemed to think of himself as a messenger from God to Job, failed to teach him what his sins were prior to his afflictions” (Hailey, p.298).
- d. It appears that Elihu has arrived at the conclusion with which the three friends started—that Job is suffering in punishment for some sin he has committed. But neither of these men were willing or able to identify the sin. They reached their conclusion by assumption.
5. Verses 34-35: “Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom” (KJV). “Men of understanding will say unto me, Yea, every wise man that heareth me: Job speaketh without knowledge, And his words are without wisdom” (ASV).
 - a. “Elihu caustically charges that wise men would agree with him that Job has spoken without knowledge and wisdom. He has reasoned as a wicked man (34,35)” (Jackson, p.72).
 - b. He calls on the three friends to agree with him in his assessment of Job. While majority opinion holds sway in many earthly decisions and discussions, it has nothing to do with establishing the truth of God’s will.
 - 1) Exodus 23:2: “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest justice” (ASV).
 - 2) Proverbs 16:25: “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”
 - 3) Isaiah 55:8-9: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - 4) Isaiah 8:20: “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”
 - 5) Acts 17:11: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”
 - 6) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
 6. Verses 36-37: “My desire *is that* Job may be tried unto the end because of *his* answers for wicked men. For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth *his hands* among us, and multiplieth his words against God” (KJV). “Would that Job were tried unto the end, Because of his answering like wicked men. For he addeth rebellion unto his sin; He clappeth his hands among us, And multiplieth his words against God” (ASV).
 - a. The young critic says Job ought to be tried (punished) unto the end (even more severely than what he has already received) because he has been rebellious and has multiplied his words against God.
 - b. “[For he addeth rebellion unto his sin] To the sin which he has formerly committed and which has brought these trials upon him, he now adds the sin of complaining and rebellion against God. Of Job, this was certainly not true to the extent which Elihu intended, but it is a very common case in afflictions” (Barnes).
 - c. “[He clappeth his hands amongst us] To clap the hands is either a signal of applause or triumph, or a mark of indignation, Num 24:10, or of derision, Job 27:23. It seems to be used in some such sense here, as expressing contempt or derision for the sentiments of his friends. The meaning is, that instead of treating the subject under discussion with a calm spirit and a disposition to learn the truth and profit by it, he had manifested in relation to the whole matter great disrespect, and had conducted like one who attempts to silence others, or who shows his contempt for them by clapping his hands at them. It is scarcely necessary to say, that, notwithstanding all the professed candor and impartiality of Elihu,
-

this is a most unfair representation of the general spirit of Job. That he had sometimes given vent to improper feelings there can be no doubt, but nothing had occurred to justify this statement” (Barnes)

- d. “Elihu had his wish. Job was tried as severely as possible, and the issue was pronounced by God himself. ‘Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath’ (ch. 42:8, Revised Version)” (Pulpit Commentary).
-

Job 35

Elihu Continues To Talk

A. Job 35:1-8: Elihu Claims Job Boasts of His Righteousness.

1. Verses 1-3: "Elihu spake moreover, and said, Thinkest thou this to be right, *that* thou saidst, My righteousness *is* more than God's? For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? *and*, What profit shall I have, *if I be cleansed* from my sin?" (KJV). "Moreover Elihu answered and said, Thinkest thou this to be thy right, Or sayest thou, My righteousness is more than God's, That thou sayest, What advantage will it be unto thee? And, What profit shall I have, more than if I had sinned?" (ASV).
 - a. Elihu claims that Job had boasted along this line: "My righteousness is more than God's." The young critic must have twisted or misinterpreted something Job had said in his laments. If Job had made this statement, that would have been wrong. Yet the record says that Job did not sin with his lips (Job 1:22; 2:10), and at the end of the story, God speaks with glowing terms of the patriarch: "And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath" (Job 42:7).
 - b. "[That thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's]. Job had nowhere said this in so many words, but Elihu regarded it as the substance of what he had said, or thought that what he had said amounted to the same thing. He had dwelt much on his own sincerity and uprightness of life; he had maintained that he had not been guilty of such crimes as to make these calamities deserved, and he had indulged in severe reflections on the dealings of God with him....All this Elihu interprets as equivalent to saying, that he was more righteous than his Maker. It cannot be denied that Job had given occasion for this interpretation to be put on his sentiments, though it cannot be supposed that he would have affirmed this in so many words" (Barnes).
 - 1) Job 9:30-35: "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me: Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me."
 - 2) Job 10:13-15: "And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee. If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction."
 - c. Elihu puts some strong words in Job's mouth, sentiments which the patriarch had not spoken. He has Job saying that insofar as having real help from God, he might as well have lived in sin. Job had been greatly blessed with wealth, health, and happiness up until the disasters fell upon him in swift succession. God had not replaced his losses and had not restored his health. Job could not grasp why these things were so. In his lamentations, the patriarch had bemoaned his sorrowful state, but in the process, had made some marvelous statements of great faith and trust, which Elihu did not know or had forgotten.
 - 1) Job 1:21-22: "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."
 - 2) Job 2:9-10: "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."
2. Verses 4-5: "I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee. Look unto the heavens, and see; and

behold the clouds *which* are higher than thou.”

- a. The young man calls on Job to survey the heavens and thus see the vast superiority of God to man, by seeing what the Almighty has made.
 - b. “The same cocky self-assurance of chs. 32, 34 came to the fore; Elihu had lost none of his ego: ‘I will set you and your companions straight.’ One cannot question that this was what he sought to do; his confidence in his own ability is not to be questioned; but his ability is” (Hailey, p.304).
 - c. The greatness of God is not in question in the mind of Job. He fully understood how majestic and mighty Jehovah is. But the young man seems to think that he can instruct the patriarch in this truth, which is one of the very basic matters of man’s view of God.
3. Verses 6-8: “If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or *if* thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness *may hurt* a man as thou *art*; and thy righteousness *may profit* the son of man” (KJV).
- a. “If thou hast sinned, what effectest thou against him? And if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thy hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; And thy righteousness may profit a son of man” (ASV).
 - b. He states that God is not affected by man’s wickedness or by his goodness. He says that human conduct affects only other humans. He is not suggesting that God is unconcerned with human behavior, but that God’s actions of justice and benevolence toward man are determined by God, not by man.
 - c. What Elihu states here is obvious. When a man transgresses against God, he has not harmed God; he may have brought sorrow to the loving heart of God, but he has done no damage to God’s person. When a man does that which is right and good, has he made God greater or more majestic? No mere man can add to the stature or grandeur of the One who is infinite in these attributes.
 - d. The goodness of a man may be of great meaning and help to other men; if a good man provides food or other necessities to a widow or an orphan, that needy individual is lifted up, encouraged, and placed in a much better circumstance. If a man treats the same widow or orphan with harshness, he brings sorrow and trouble to that unfortunate person.

B. Job 35:9-16: Many Who Undergo Oppressions Cry Out to God.

1. Verses 9-10: “By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make *the oppressed* to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty. But none saith, Where *is* God my maker, who giveth songs in the night?” (KJV). “By reason of the multitude of oppressions they cry out; They cry for help by reason of the arm of the mighty. But none saith, Where is God my Maker, Who giveth songs in the night” (ASV).
- a. Elihu says that it is true that many who undergo oppression cry out to God for relief and are not heard. Why? Elihu thinks that they do not properly make their requests for help. If they did, God would give them songs in the night [i.e., gladden their hearts, give them relief]. This information is given by Elihu to refute what Job had earlier said about many righteous people undergoing hardship when no sin was chargeable to them.
- b. “[But none saith]. That is, none of the oppressed and down-trodden say. This is the solution which Elihu gives of what appeared so mysterious to Job, and of what Elihu regarded as the source of the bitter complaints of Job. The solution is, that when people are oppressed they do not apply to God with a proper spirit, and look to him that they may find relief. It was a principle with Elihu, that if when a man was afflicted he would apply to God with a humble and penitent heart, he would hear him, and would withdraw his hand; see this principle fully stated in Job 33:19-26. This Elihu now says, was not done by the oppressed, and this, according to him, is the reason why the hand of God is still upon them” (Barnes).
- c. “Songs in the night” is a beautiful idea, expressing the relief we may obtain during the dark hours

(perhaps at night) when our hearts are bowed down with sorrow or anxiety. That is a time when prayer is the greatest need; as we look toward Heaven through eyes that have been dimmed with tears, our burdened hearts are primed for God's help.

- 1) Acts 16:25: "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."
 - 2) Psalms 126:1-2: "When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them."
 - 3) Matthew 26:39: "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."
2. Verses 11-13: "Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven? There they cry, but none giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men. Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it."
- a. The truly humble spirit will not merely instinctively cry out of pain (says Elihu) as the animals do; we are wiser than the beasts. We will seek to become wiser as a result of the experience. Those who cry in vain for relief are not humble, but proud—so alleges Elihu.
 - b. "Only God who created the sufferer and controls the world in which he lives is great enough to bring songs of blessing and joy out of such experiences. Beasts of the earth and birds of the heavens live, suffer, and die without knowing their Maker or why they live, suffer, and die. But man, made in God's image and likeness and possessing spirit, intelligence, and reason, can be, and is, taught by God to see His use of afflictions, and through them to bestow a blessing—a 'song in the night'" (Hailey, p.306).
 - c. Verse twelve speaks of some who are oppressed crying out for help, but no relief is given—because of the pride of evil men. The idea seems to be that those who are oppressed try to obtain mercy from evil men, who will not assist them due to the pride of these wicked ones. "The oppressed cry for help, but, as today, the pride of godless men in high places—educational, political, and social, who deny God and the power of faith and prayer—wield such an influence on religious thought that men are hindered from crying (praying) with faith that God will hear" (Hailey, p.306). Evil men may not be willing or able to help, and may even be opposed to our receiving any help.
3. Verses 14-16: "Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, *yet* judgment *is* before him; therefore trust thou in him. But now, because *it is* not *so*, he hath visited in his anger; yet he knoweth *it* not in great extremity: Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge" (KJV).
- a. "How much less when thou sayest thou beholdest him not, The cause is before him, and thou waitest for him! But now, because he hath not visited in his anger, Neither doth he greatly regard arrogance; Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vanity; He multiplieth words without knowledge" (ASV).
 - b. Elihu now addresses Job directly: "Do you think that God will respond to you when you claim to be unable to find and see him? Your cause is before him, so be patient and wait for his answer."
 - c. God had not taken into full account the errors of Job, but passed them over and did not bring them all into the account in his dealings with Job. Thus God has not dealt as severely with Job as he could and should have done (Elihu's thinking).
 - d. Therefore, (vs. 16), the views of Job are wrong (says Elihu). There has been no cause for any complaint on Job's part. But what would Elihu have said and done if he had undergone the same hard experiences Job had suffered? Elihu would doubtless have sung a different tune from what he now is singing!
-

Job 36

Elihu Is Still the Speaker

A. Job 36:1-10: Elihu Asks For Their Indulgence.

1. Verses 1-4: "Elihu also proceeded, and said, Suffer me a little, and I will show thee that *I have* yet to speak on God's behalf. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker. For truly my words *shall* not *be* false: he that is perfect in knowledge *is* with thee."
 - a. In this part of his speech, Elihu rises above the tone of his previous expositions; here he speaks on the greatness of God—his majesty, authority, goodness, and justice. In the first segment of this chapter, he softens his tone toward Job.
 - b. First, he requests that they be patient with him as he speaks on God's behalf, for he has important things to say about the righteousness of his Maker. Perhaps he includes an insinuation in this remark that Job had said some disparaging things about God's righteousness.
 - c. He asserts that what he will have to say will be true, not false, for he that is perfect in knowledge was with him. This appears to be a claim by Elihu that he is inspired. "The idea that Elihu is an inspired messenger from God (33:23) is unacceptable; such a thought is incompatible with some things he said" (Hailey, p.310). However, he may be referring to himself, and is merely saying that he has a mature knowledge about things he presents. If that is his point, then he opens himself up to a charge of arrogance—that he knows and understands some things his older associates do not comprehend.
 - d. "The Hebrew commentators remark that this word [*proceeded*—vs. 1] is used because this speech is 'added' to the number which it might be supposed he would make. There had been 'three' series of speeches, by Job and his friends, and in each one of them Job had spoken three times. Each one of the three friends had also spoken thrice, except Zophar, who failed to reply when it came to his turn. Elihu had also now made three speeches, and here he would naturally have closed, but it is remarked that he 'added' this to the usual number" [Barnes].
2. Verses 5-10: "Behold, God *is* mighty, and despiseth not *any*: *he is* mighty in strength *and* wisdom. He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor. He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings *are they* on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted. And if *they be* bound in fetters, *and* be holden in cords of affliction; Then he showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: He is mighty in strength of understanding. He preserveth not the life of the wicked, But giveth to the afflicted their right. He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: But with kings upon the throne He setteth them for ever, and they are exalted. And if they be bound in fetters, And be taken in the cords of afflictions; Then he showeth them their work, And their transgressions, that they have behaved themselves proudly. He openeth also their ear to instruction, And commandeth that they return from iniquity" (ASV).
 - 2) "Behold, God *is* mighty, but despises *no one*; *He is* mighty in strength of understanding. He does not preserve the life of the wicked, But gives justice to the oppressed. He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous; But *they are* on the throne with kings, For He has seated them forever, And they are exalted. And if *they are* bound in fetters, Held in the cords of affliction, Then He tells them their work and their transgressions-- That they have acted defiantly. He also opens their ear to instruction, And commands that they turn from iniquity" (NKJV).
 - 3) "Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise any; he is mighty in strength of understanding. He does not keep the wicked alive, but gives the afflicted their right. He does not withdraw his eyes

from the righteous, but with kings on the throne he sets them forever, and they are exalted. And if they are bound in chains and caught in the cords of affliction, then he declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly. He opens their ears to instruction and commands that they return from iniquity” (ESV).

- b. God does not despise any one—since he is mighty in mercy. He does not ignore the wickedness of the wicked, nor the affliction of the poor and mistreated. He is infinite in knowledge and wisdom, thus he knows the troubles of the weak, the destitute, the downtrodden, and the downhearted.
- c. Elihu declares that Jehovah does not preserve the life of the wicked man, despite what Job has maintained. But the patriarch had not asserted that God gave the wicked rich men special blessings and help; he did argue that many of them were able to amass wealth and power through evil means, and God had not prevented this success. Job did not suggest that the wicked of this world, although they were often wealthy, would be blessed in eternity. They frequently obtained wealth, influence, and happiness here; they usually lived out their normal span of years; and they died. From outward signs, they were not usually hindered by the Lord as they went about their affairs; but it was also the case that some righteous people were afflicted for purposes that were not apparent.
- d. If the righteous are subjected to hardship, God could use these troubles to teach them, and especially to correct their pride (vs. 9, ASV). By sending hardships, God could open the ears—thus get their attention in order to instruct them—and therefore bring them out of sin. Elihu’s position was basically the same as that maintained by the three friends—that Job was being punished for his sinful conduct. The reference to fetters and cords describes the various sufferings the righteous may endure; these restraints could be literal or figurative.
- e. Elihu says that God does not turn away from the righteous when they are in trouble. He states that as God exalts certain men to be kings, so he will exalt the righteous from their afflictions, provided they turn from their transgressions (vv. 8-9). In other words, “Job, if you will admit your sinful conduct and turn from these evil ways, God will bring you back to your former state of wealth, health, and happiness.” [The word “forever” is used in the sense that the exaltation will be for the full time God intended; in this setting it does not mean eternal].
- f. “God, by his chastisements, makes men see what has been faulty in their life's work, in what respects they have been negligent, where they have lapsed into actual sin. Signal afflictions are a call to men to ‘consider their ways,’ and search out the nature of their offences. Some afflictions, as sickness and imprisonment, by depriving men of active employment, almost force them to engage in such a retrospect. And their transgressions that they have exceeded; rather, and their transgressions wherein they have behaved themselves proudly (compare the Revised Version). In all sin, as it is a contempt of God's Law, there is an element of pride. The temptation to pride especially besets those whose conduct is, in outward appearance, correct and virtuous....It is the especial merit of Elihu's theory of suffering that he views it as far less penal than disciplinary and restorative. Job's sufferings especially he views in this light. Instead of looking upon Job, like his other friends, as a heinous sinner, upon whom God is taking vengeance, he regards him as a person who is being chastised, in love, for some fault or faults that he has committed, to his ultimate advantage and improvement. This, though not exactly the truth, is far nearer the truth than the view taken by the other three ‘friends.’ And commandeth that they return from iniquity. God's chastisements are to be viewed as commands to men to ‘go and sin no more” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].

B. Job 36:11-18: A Wise Man Listens and Profits.

1. Verses 11-12: “If they obey and serve *him*, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.”
 - a. According to Elihu, if the righteous man, who is being chastened because of his sinful conduct, will repent, and obey and serve the Lord, he will spend his days in prosperity and happiness. Elihu uses

- the plural but doubtless has Job in mind.
- b. On the other hand, if the individual being described will not obey the Lord, he will perish by the sword—and thus die in ignorance.
 - c. Elihu’s point is obviously correct; his mistake was in describing Job as an unrighteous man. Job would not claim sinless perfection, but he has denied living in sin. God agreed with Job.
2. Verses 13-14: “But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them. They die in youth, and their life *is* among the unclean” (KJV).
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “But they that are godless in heart lay up anger: They cry not for help when he bindeth them. They die in youth, And their life perisheth among the unclean” (ASV).
 - 2) “The godless in heart cherish anger; they do not cry for help when he binds them. They die in youth, and their life ends among the cult prostitutes” (ESV).
 - b. The hypocrite will refuse instruction—the instruction here being the chastisement God sends to correct the individual who has strayed into forbidden territory. This person will not cry out for help, therefore he shall die before his time, and he will die among those who are unclean. Elihu [and the three friends] thought this was a fitting description of Job.
 - c. The Hebrew word translated “unclean” is used of some of the most vile of men and women—male and female prostitutes, and sodomites. Compare:
 - 1) 1 Kings 14:24: “And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.”
 - 2) 1 Kings 15:12: “And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.”
 - 3) Romans 1:27: “And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.”
 - 4) Deuteronomy 23:17-18: “There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.”
 - 5) Genesis 38:21-22: “Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place. And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place.”
 - d. Elihu did not say such an individual would become a sodomite or prostitute, but that he would share the same kind of fate these corrupted people would have—he would die in a lost condition. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:13-14).
3. Verses 15-18: “He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression. Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait *into* a broad place, where *there is* no straitness; and that which should be set on thy table *should be* full of fatness. But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee. Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest he take thee away with *his* stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “He delivereth the afflicted by their affliction, And openeth their ear in oppression. Yea, he would have allured thee out of distress Into a broad place, where there is no straitness; And that which
-

is set on thy table would be full of fatness. But thou art full of the judgment of the wicked: Judgment and justice take hold on thee. For let not wrath stir thee up against chastisements; Neither let the greatness of the ransom turn thee aside” (ASV).

- 2) “He delivers the poor in their affliction, And opens their ears in oppression. Indeed He would have brought you out of dire distress, *Into* a broad place where *there is* no restraint; And what is set on your table *would be* full of richness. But you are filled with the judgment due the wicked; Judgment and justice take hold *of you*. Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest He take you away with *one* blow; For a large ransom would not help you avoid *it*” (NKJV).
 - 3) “He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity. He also allured you out of distress into a broad place where there was no cramping, and what was set on your table was full of fatness. But you are full of the judgment on the wicked; judgment and justice seize you. Beware lest wrath entice you into scoffing, and let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside” (ESV).
- b. But the righteous man who gets involved with sin and is chastened, if he will open his ears to his real situation, he can be delivered from his physical distresses and his spiritual maladies. Elihu’s counsel is wise and accurate, but if he has Job in mind, he has miscalculated. “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, *Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the Lord loves He chastens*, And scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:5-11, NKJV).
 - c. In Elihu’s view, Job should have understood that his afflictions were brought upon him as the means God had chosen to chasten him, so that he might repent and come back to the Lord. He assumed, as did the three friends, that Job was deeply engaged in sin. They assumed the point that they could not prove. Elihu counsels the patriarch to take heed to his situation, change his ways, and God would draw him out of his present distress and place him into a broad and smooth way; he would fill his table with “fatness” (plenty of food). The point is that God would restore him to prosperity and make his life one of abundance and happiness.
 - d. “Although uncertain, Elihu seems to have said that Job acted in such a manner as to bring upon himself the full measure of God’s judgment that was usually reserved for the wicked” (Hailey, p.314).
 - e. God’s wrath is to be feared and avoided. Elihu thought that if Job continued in his present direction, he would certainly have to face the wrath of the Almighty. If the patriarch wanted to avoid being cast off from his Maker, he must change his ways and seek the good pleasure of God.
 - f. “[Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee]...The meaning is, that a great ransom could not prevent him from being cut off...The idea here is, not that a great ransom could not deliver him ‘after’ he was cut off and consigned to hell—which would be true; but that when he had manifested a spirit of insubmission a little longer, nothing could save him from being cut off from the land of the living. God would not spare him on account of wealth, or rank, or age, or wisdom. None of these things would be a ‘ransom’ in virtue of which his forfeited life would be preserved” (Barnes).

C. Job 36:19-33: Will God Esteem Riches?

1. Verses 19-21: “Will he esteem thy riches? *no*, not gold, nor all the forces of strength. Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place. Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.”

- a. Elihu warns Job that God would not esteem his riches; he could not be deterred from pouring out his wrath upon the patriarch because of any strength that he might possess. This statement by Elihu may imply that Job still possessed riches; nothing was explicitly said about his losing his money; we are told that he lost his flocks and herds and his children (Job. 1). Assuming that Job had wealth and influence, he could not use them to keep God from punishing him for his sin [this point was Elihu's]. Job's wealth, influence and fame did not keep him from being afflicted.
 - b. The young critic warned Job against desiring the night. This may be an allusion to death, when everyone is cut off from this world. Our Lord stated that he must fulfill the work of God while it was daytime, for the night was coming in which no man could work (John 9:4). He was speaking of life and death—daytime and nighttime. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Ecc. 9:10).
 - c. “According to Elihu, Job had chosen wickedness rather than ‘affliction,’ the state of pain or punishment intended to correct or instruct him, for in this way God opens the ears to instruction that may turn one from iniquity...” (Hailey, p.315).
2. Verses 22-25: “Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him? Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity? Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold. Every man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Behold, God doeth loftily in his power: Who is a teacher like unto him? Who hath enjoined him his way? Or who can say, Thou hast wrought unrighteousness? Remember that thou magnify his work, Whereof men have sung. All men have looked thereon; Man beholdeth it afar off” (ASV).
 - 2) “Behold, God is exalted by His power; Who teaches like Him? Who has assigned Him His way, Or who has said, 'You have done wrong'? Remember to magnify His work, Of which men have sung. Everyone has seen it; Man looks on it from afar” (NKJV).
 - 3) “Behold, God is exalted in his power; who is a teacher like him? Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, 'You have done wrong'? Remember to extol his work, of which men have sung. All mankind has looked on it; man beholds it from afar” (ESV).
 - b. Elihu now turns to the very heart of his presentation—that God “doeth loftily” (ASV); he is to be exalted because of his power; and the purpose of his powerful operations is to instruct the heart of men.
 - c. No one can give counsel to the Almighty. His knowledge and wisdom are infinite. No one can charge God with injustice. Elihu reminds Job to magnify the work of God, even as others had done through the songs they have sung (ASV).
 - d. Elihu makes a good point beginning in verse twenty-five. The eternal God is so great that men are compelled to hold him in profound awe from afar. If men would spend more time reflecting on the majesty of our Creator they would be less preoccupied in wallowing in self-pity.
3. Verses 26-28: “Behold, God *is* great, and we know *him* not, neither can the number of his years be searched out. For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: Which the clouds do drop *and* distil upon man abundantly” (KJV). “Behold, God is great, and we know him not; The number of his years is unsearchable. For he draweth up the drops of water, Which distil in rain from his vapor, Which the skies pour down And drop upon man abundantly” (ASV).
- a. Elihu exalts the greatness of the Almighty, and says that no one can tell his age—that information cannot be discovered. We understand that God, being deity, had no beginning of life and will have no end. He is infinite in every respect. “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Ps. 90:2). Our knowledge of God may be derived from studying his creation, from our own experiences and
-

- observations, and from God's revealed word.
- b. The young critic refers to certain illustrations from nature to emphasize the majesty and power of God. He speaks first of the water cycle as an example, but his descriptions of this process is not as detailed as those given by writers who are clearly inspired:
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 1:7: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."
 - 2) Amos 9:6: "It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven, and hath founded his troop in the earth; he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name."
 - 3) Psalms 135:7: "He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures."
 - 4) Jeremiah 10:13: "When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures."
 - c. "The clouds having received the ascending vapor, retain it, and pour it down copiously for the use of man. The arrangement, to the eye even of one who did not understand the scientific principles by which it is done, is beautiful and wonderful; the beauty and wonder are increased when the laws by which it is accomplished are understood. Elihu does not attempt to explain the mode by which this is done. The fact was probably all that was then understood, and that was sufficient for his purpose" (Barnes).
4. Verses 29-33: "Also can *any* understand the spreadings of the clouds, *or* the noise of his tabernacle? Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea. For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance. With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt. The noise thereof showeth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour."
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Yea, can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, The thunderings of his pavilion? Behold, he spreadeth his light around him; And he covereth the bottom of the sea. For by these he judgeth the peoples; He giveth food in abundance. He covereth his hands with the lightning, And giveth it a charge that it strike the mark. The noise thereof telleth concerning him, The cattle also concerning the storm that cometh up" (ASV).
 - 2) "Indeed, can *anyone* understand the spreading of clouds, The thunder from His canopy? Look, He scatters his light upon it, And covers the depths of the sea. For by these He judges the peoples; He gives food in abundance. He covers *His* hands with lightning, And commands it to strike. His thunder declares it, The cattle also, concerning the rising storm" (NKJV).
 - 3) "Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of his pavilion? Behold, he scatters his lightning about him and covers the roots of the sea. For by these he judges peoples; he gives food in abundance. He covers his hands with the lightning and commands it to strike the mark. Its crashing declares his presence; the cattle also declare that he rises" (ESV).
 - b. "Who can understand the spreading from horizon to horizon of the great cloud mass so essential to the transition of moisture from the vast bodies of water to the earth's surface? Who can explain the process from water to vapor, to heights, into cloud masses, distillation, and rain? Modern meteorology can explain scientific fact back of the spreading clouds, how that underneath they maintain a flat level appearance, but extend in many shapes and to greatly differing heights; however, it cannot explain the wisdom and power manifested in such a phenomenon. His pavilion (tabernacle, KJV; literally, 'booth'), indicated that His presence and action in the storm is only temporary" (Hailey, p.317).
-

- c. “God flashes the weird brilliance of his lightning over the heaven—not over himself, as some translate (Rosenmuller, Cook). He lights up the whole sky at once with the electric splendour, and even covereth with it the bottom (literally, the roots) of the sea. This is, of course, hyperbole; but it seems to be Elihu's meaning....For by them judgeth he the people. By his clouds God works two opposite effects. On the one hand, he executes judgment upon the peoples, destroying their crops, causing widespread ruin by inundations, smiting and slaying numbers with his thunderbolts; on the other, he giveth meat in abundance, restoring to the parched earth its fertility by means of copious and refreshing showers, stimulating vegetation, and so furthering the harvest” (Pulpit Commentary).
 - d. The great things of nature can bring judgment against man or bless him abundantly. Rain is essential for man to live, but storms can bring destruction and death. “He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy” (Job 37:13).
 - e. In the second part of verse thirty, “Elihu probably was saying that God surrounded Himself with the lightning of the storm, thereby manifesting His presence, the light of which penetrated to the floor of the sea. However, Elihu’s emphasis was on the manifestation of God’s glory in His works, which we can only perceive and understand to a degree” (Hailey, p.318).
 - f. The following comments were made by Hailey on verses 32-33:
 - 1) “Poetically expressed, God covers His hands with the forces of lightning and directs the flashes by a flip of the finger or by pointing His finger toward the target. But more practically speaking, it may be that God works through the established laws of positive and negative points of origin and destiny of the flash. In all of His purposes and works God has established laws through which His power is exercised.
 - 2) “The idea [vs. 33] seems to be that the noise of the crashing thunder that follows the lightning announces God’s presence and that the lightning has done its work, possibly of destruction (cf. Ps. 29, sometimes spoken of as, ‘The Voice of the Seven Thunders’). The cattle are disturbed by the approaching storm, though Elihu does not describe the result of their being perturbed, or possibly he refers to their apparent nervousness and moving about.” (pp.318f).
-

Job 37

Elihu Concludes His Long Speech

A. Job 37:1-8: The Power of God's Voice.

1. Verses 1-3: "At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound *that* goeth out of his mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth."
 - a. Elihu's speech continues the thought with which the previous chapter ended. He had just discussed the awesome power of God as demonstrated in the great storms which assail the face of the earth. The young man described the effect this demonstration had on his heart—it trembled and is moved out of its place.
 - b. He calls on Job to listen to the power of God's voice (in the storm) as a demonstration of his power and authority over puny man. The lightning and the storms are examples of the Almighty's greatness. As one witnesses the bolts of lightning at night, which illuminates the area for miles, he is impressed with the power that produced it.
 - 1) Psalms 19:1-3: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."
 - 2) Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
2. Verses 4-8: "After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard. God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, Be thou *on* the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work. Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places."
 - a. Elihu had observed that following a flash of lightning was a clap of thunder, which is actually more startling than the lightning. In the young man's view, the thunder is representative of the voice of God's majesty. These great storms are only a small indication of how powerful God is; he does things which no man can comprehend.
 - b. When God sends snow or rain upon the earth, he seals up the hands of men—they have to quit their work in the fields and seek shelter. The wild animals seek shelter in their dens and stay there until the storm or blizzard is over.
 - c. God is the power behind the small rain (the showers) and the great storms; his laws produce the snow, the cold, and the heat. The seasons are dependable: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22).
 - d. "The passage before us (Job 36:29-33; 37:1-5), is probably the earliest description of a thunderstorm on record. A tempest is a phenomenon which must early have attracted attention, and which we may expect to find described or alluded to in all early poetry. It may be interesting, therefore, to compare this description of a storm, in probably the oldest poem in the world, with what has been furnished by the masters of song in ancient and modern times, and we shall find that in sublimity and beauty the Hebrew poet will suffer nothing in comparison. In one respect, which constitutes the chief sublimity of the description, he surpasses them all: I mean in the recognition of God. In the Hebrew description, God is every where in the storm. He excites it; he holds the lightnings in both hands; he directs it where he pleases; he makes it the instrument of his pleasure and of executing his purposes. Sublime, therefore, as is the description of the storm itself, furious as is the tempest; bright as is the lightning:

and heavy and awful as is the roar of the thunder, yet the description derives its chief sublimity from the fact that ‘God’ presides over all, riding on the tempest and directing the storm as he pleases” [Barnes].

B. Job 37:9-16: God’s Power.

1. Verses 9-12: “Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north. By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened. Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth his bright cloud: And it is turned round about by his counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.”
 - a. From God’s power comes the whirlwind and the cold; by his breath the frost is formed (a figure of speech). Elihu has noticed, as everyone in the northern hemisphere is also aware, that cold comes from the north and heat from the south.
 - b. “By covering the water with ice its breadth, i.e., width or expanse, is narrowed or congealed so that one may cross from one side to the other on the ice. Ice is one of God’s marvelous works; most liquids and solids contract by cold, but at a certain temperature water suddenly expands so that becoming lighter than the water it remains on top rather than sinking to the bottom—a marvel of nature, rather, of nature’s God” (Hailey, p.323).
 - c. He loads the clouds with moisture and the clouds and lightning move about at his bidding. Through his natural laws, which evidently may be influenced by his providence, God is able to control the forces of nature. Hence, we pray for rain; we pray for protection from the storms.
 - d. “[That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them.... The idea is, that even the clouds, which appear so capricious in their movements, are really under the direction of God, and are accomplishing his purposes. They do not move at haphazard, but they are under the control of one who intends to accomplish important purposes by them. Elihu had made this observation respecting the lightning (Job 36:30-33), and he now says that the same thing was true of the clouds. The investigations of science have only served to confirm this, and to show that even the movements of the clouds are regulated by laws which have been ordained by a Being of infinite intelligence” (Barnes).
 - 1) Psalms 147:17-18: “He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.”
 - 2) Job 36:30-33: “Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea. For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance. With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt. The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.”
2. Verses 13-16: “He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy. Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine? Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?”
 - a. Nature can be used to correct wayward man or to bless him. “In a sentence [vs. 3] Elihu summarized God’s exercise and use of His mighty power in the storms described. His direction may be for ‘correction,’ from a Hebrew word meaning rod, staff, or scepter. The reference may be a shepherd’s staff for protection (Ps. 23:4) or to a rod or instrument of correction or punishment as in this instance. Can we conclude that the hurricanes, tornadoes, and flooding rains are often God’s voice trying to tell us something?” (Hailey, p.324).
 - b. In verse thirteen, Elihu makes a point concerning the chastening and mercy of the Lord, which he uses as a basis to make an appeal to Job. He tells the patriarch to be quiet and consider the works of God.
 - c. The young man directs several questions to Job, beginning in verse fifteen.
 - 1) Do you know how God controls the clouds and makes his lightning to flash? God, who is able to

command the lightning and suspend the clouds in the heavens, is manifestly superior to any man, and is deserving of the utmost respect by man.

- 2) Do you understand how God positions the clouds in the sky? This is surely a wonder of God whose knowledge is perfect. In chapter thirty-eight, God will direct many questions to Job which demonstrate the ignorance of man and the vastness of God's wisdom, knowledge, and power.
- d. "Dost thou know how the clouds are poised and suspended in the air? The difficulty to be explained was, that the clouds, so full of water, did not fall to the earth, but remained suspended in the atmosphere. They were poised and moved about by some unseen hand. Elihu asks what kept them there; what prevented their falling to the earth; what preserved the equilibrium so that they did not all roll together. The phenomena of the clouds would be among the first that would attract the attention of man, and in the early times of Job it is not to be supposed that the subject could be explained. Elihu assumes that they were held in the sky by the power of God, but what was the nature of his agency, he says, man could not understand, and hence, he infers that God should be regarded with profound veneration. We know more of the facts and laws respecting the clouds than was understood then, but our knowledge in this, as in all other things, is fitted only to exalt our conceptions of the Deity, and to change blind wonder into intelligent adoration" (Barnes).

C. Job 37:17-24: We Cannot Instruct God.

1. Verses 17-18: "How thy garments *are* warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south *wind*? Hast thou with him spread out the sky, *which is* strong, *and* as a molten looking glass?"
 - a. Elihu continues his questions:
 - 1) Can Job explain how the southern winds warms up his clothes? They knew nothing of the complex pressure systems which cause the air at the equator to rise and flow toward the poles where it is cooled and returns to lower altitudes. "The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits" (Eccl. 1:6).
 - 2) Could Job join the Lord in spreading out the sky which is strong? God did not need any man's help. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" (Isa. 40:13-14).
 - b. "Spread out" is from the same root as the noun rendered "firmament" in Genesis 1:6. Firmament is not a good translation of the original term for it arose from the idea that the sky was a solid vault. The original word simply means "that which is spread out, and expanse." It is not a fair criticism of the inspired writers to say they believed in a solid sky. Translators of the original text are limited by the weaknesses of human language.
 - c. "What can Job or any man contribute to God's help in spreading out the sky as a great molten mirror? Elihu wanted Job to recognize how much greater is God's strength, power, and wisdom, than that of puny man. The ancient mirrors were made of polished brass or bronze (Ex. 38:8), to which the heavens were likened in time of drought (Deut. 28:23). God can change this by calling the clouds to cover the heavens and to relieve the drought. Can Job in any way aid God in doing this?" (Hailey, p.325).
 - 1) Exodus 38:8: "And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 28:23: "And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron."
 - d. "Mirrors were commonly made of plates of metal highly polished....Ancient mirrors were so highly polished that in some which have been discovered at Thebes the luster has been partially restored,

though they have been buried for many centuries. There can be no doubt that the early apprehension in regard to the sky was, that it was a solid expanse, and that it is often so spoken of in the Bible. There is, however, no direct declaration that it is so, and whenever it is so spoken of, it is to be understood as popular language, as we speak still of the rising or setting of the sun, though we know that the language is not philosophically correct. The design of the Bible is not to teach science, but religion, and the speakers in the Bible were allowed to use the language of common life—just as scientific men in fact do now” (Barnes).

2. Verses 19-21: “Teach us what we shall say unto him; *for* we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness. Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up. And now *men* see not the bright light which *is* in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them” (KJV). “Teach us what we shall say unto him; For we cannot set our speech in order by reason of darkness. Shall it be told him that I would speak? Or should a man wish that he were swallowed up? And now men see not the light which is bright in the skies; But the wind passeth, and cleareth them” (ASV).
 - a. Elihu urges Job to teach us what we should say about God. We cannot instruct the Almighty, for he knows far more than any man could ever learn. In view of his majesty as stressed by the above examples from nature, and our corresponding darkness (ignorance of his ways), no one is prepared to set in order (present his case) before God (as Job had wanted to do). To presume that one could speak to (argue with) God would be to invite disaster.
 - b. Man cannot look directly at the sun in a clear sky (ASV). Men cannot look upon the dazzling face of God; yet this [according to Elihu] is what Job had tried to do.
3. Verses 22-24: “Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God *is* terrible majesty. *Touching* the Almighty, we cannot find him out: *he is* excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict. Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any *that are* wise of heart.”
 - a. The Lord’s majesty is more brilliant than the “golden splendor” (ASV, perhaps a reference to the brilliance of the sun shining from a sky that has been cleared of clouds by a north wind). God is simply beyond our power to comprehend.
 - 1) Romans 11:33: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”
 - 2) 1 Timothy 6:16: “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”
 - b. “In a grand climax Elihu extols the Almighty! God’s power and justice are underscored. His moral qualities are equal to His power. Elihu argues that because of His justice and the plenitude of His righteousness, He will not ‘afflict’ [i.e., *unjustly*]. This is a final rebuttal of Job’s complaint that he has been unjustly oppressed by the Lord. Whatever, therefore, may be said of Job’s affliction, Elihu wants him to know that *it did not come the Creator’s injustice!*” (Jackson, p.76).
 - c. Elihu also indicates that wise men have reverence for God, but those who exalt themselves as wise, are not respected by the Almighty. Those who are “wise in their own eyes” do not have the kind of relationship with God that will benefit their souls.
 - d. A final note by Jackson: Elihu “has not, of course, been totally correct in his approach to Job’s problems. He couldn’t have been, for he did not have full knowledge of the situation. He has, however, come much closer to the truth than the patriarch’s three critics did. And it is significant that Job does not respond at all to Elihu, as he had to the others. Why not?....Moreover, Elihu, both by his message and his method, has prepared the way for the coming of the Lord. The angry young man’s descriptives of God’s presence in the raging elements of nature paves the way for Jehovah’s response to Job ‘out of the whirlwind’ (38:1), and the Lord’s continued emphasis on His majesty as evidenced in the creation. Too, the series of pointed questions posed by God is similar to that pursued by Elihu

(cf. 38:2ff)” (p.76).

Job 38

God Speaks to Job Out of a Whirlwind

A. Introduction.

1. Job had expressed his desire to speak with God, which is now about to take place. But he gets more than he anticipated.
 - a. Job 13:22: “Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.”
 - b. Job 31:35: “Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book.”
2. “God now picks up where Elihu has left off, as a reminder that while Elihu knew some things and was able to move up a step away from where Job’s three friends were, Elihu did not have all the answers either, and the reason was that God had not made known revelations concerning some things. Therefore, God comes on the scene, as it were, to pick up and remind Elihu, as well as Job and his three friends, that God told some things, but he has not told them everything. They still do not know some things, and he is going to aid them a little bit now. What develops now is that God reminds them that they had been darkening counsel (38:2). Then, he is going to use some illustrations to try to get them to see his greatness, glory, majesty and holiness. God never does explain throughout this whole thing, even in his conversation with Job, how all things work. He leaves some things that are without explanation, which we should keep in mind. The reason is, of course, God has not designed to give us perfect knowledge. He keeps some things to himself” (Franklin Camp).
3. “After the sources and resources of the friends, Job, and Elihu had been exhausted, Jehovah spoke the final word....Almost the last words Job had uttered expressed a desire, yea, practically a challenge, that God answer him (31:35). He had requested that God call and he would answer, or that he speak and God answer (13:22). Instead of responding to either request, Jehovah met him in his world...a world of beauty and order, of mystery and wonder, upon which is the stamp of wisdom, purpose, and power....Jehovah made no reference to the background (ch. 1 - 2), to Job’s suffering or to his questions, charges, and harsh words, except to reveal that Job had spoken without knowledge. Neither did He make reference to Elihu and his speech. Did God dismiss him as an unworthy intruder in the discussion? Or did he acceptably fulfill a divine purpose...and was therefore, pleasing to God?” (Hailey, p.331).
4. Jehovah offers a series of more than seventy questions to Job, by which the patriarch is driven to his knees before the Almighty. Job sees that he has complained and accused without adequate knowledge of the situation or of the Lord. God’s questions emphasize two great propositions: his authority in the material affairs of the universe (38:1, cf. 40:5) and his authority in the spiritual and moral affairs of the universe (40:6—41:34). The great truths introduced are still humbling to the sincere believer today.

B. Job 38:1-7: For the First Time in the Book, God Speaks Directly to Job.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who *is* this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me."
 - a. God answers Job out of a whirlwind by asking, “Who is this that by his ignorant words, darkens (obscures) my counsel (i.e., my plan or design in these afflictions)?” (Jackson, p.79). The patriarch is to face a barrage of questions which he could not answer, indeed some of these questions are beyond the scope of modern science, which claims to hold the answer to all the troubles of man. The questions demonstrate such a deep perception of the universe that they were vastly superior to the knowledge of men during that time; they furnish proof that their source was none other than the great Creator himself.
 - b. Job is told to gird up his loins like a man and prepare for the discussion he had earlier sought. To “gird
-

up the loins” is a reference to the method by which people in ancient times gathered up their long flowing robes with a girdle (a belt), which would make it easier for them to engage in work, or play, or war. Peter used the expression in an intellectual sense—”Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13).

- c. God spoke to Job from the depth of the whirlwind. “The tempest; the storm—probably that which Elihu had seen approaching, Job 37:21-24. God is often represented as speaking to people in this manner. He spake amidst lightnings and tempests on Mount Sinai (Ex 19:16-19), and he is frequently represented as appearing amidst the thunders and lightnings of a tempest, as a symbol of his majesty; compare Ps. 18:9-13; Hab. 3:3-6. The word here rendered ‘whirlwind’ means rather ‘a storm, a tempest’” (Barnes).
 - 1) Job 37:21-24: “And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them. Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict. Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.”
 - 2) Exodus 19:16-19: “And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.”
 - 3) Psalms 18:9-13: “He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.”
 - 4) Habakkuk 3:3-6: “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.”
- d. To “darken counsel” is to make the truth more difficult to perceive. Job’s complaints and laments did not make it easier for others to see the goodness of God. The three friends did not cast light on God’s activities, but rather relied on the simplistic explanation that one who is good will always be blessed and one who is evil will always be punished. Elihu made some grand statements about God’s majesty, but he did not shed much light on the subject being discussed.
- e. The darkening of counsel was done through ignorant words. “Words that did not contain a true explanation of the difficulty. They conveyed no light about his dealings; they did not tend to satisfy the mind, or to make the subject more clear than it was before. There is much of this kind of speaking in the world; much that is written, and much that falls from the lips in debate, in preaching, and in conversation, that explains nothing, and that even leaves the subject more perplexed than it was before. We see from this verse that God does not and cannot approve of such ‘words.’ If his friends speak, they should vindicate his government; they should at least express their conviction that he is

right; they should aim to explain his doings, and to show to the world that they are reasonable. If they cannot do this, they should adore in silence. The Savior never spoke of God in such a way as to leave any doubt that his ways could be vindicated, never so as to leave the impression that he was harsh or severe in his administration, or so as to lend the least countenance to a spirit of murmuring and complaining” (Barnes).

- f. The procedure of the confrontation between God and Job is this: God would make a demand (ask a question) and Job is to answer. This approach is not what the patriarch had in mind when he stated his desire for a meeting with the Lord! He finally offered a response toward the end of the session: “Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further” (Job 40:3-5).
2. Verses 4-7: “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”
 - a. God asks Job where was he when the events indicated took place. Obviously, since neither Job nor any other human was in existence then, God is not trying to identify Job’s location at that occasion. The point of the questions was to reveal to Job that the earth had a beginning, and was constructed according to a wise blueprint drawn up by the infinite wisdom and knowledge of the Almighty. No man was present when the foundations of the earth were laid.
 - b. The “foundations of the earth” is a figure of speech which commonly is used in the Scriptures; it is used to help man gain at least a small comprehension of the formation of the earth. The earth was not haphazard in its formation [we are told today that the universe was the product of an accidental event of immense proportions], but that it resulted from a wise master plan, designed and implemented by the infinite mind and all-powerful hand of the Creator. The metaphor [*foundations of the earth*] is one with which man was familiar, for before one constructed a house or other building, there was a need for a foundation to be laid. The idea is used in other passages regarding the formation of the earth:
 - 1) Psalms 102:25: “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.”
 - 2) Psalms 104:5: “Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.”
 - 3) Proverbs 8:29: “When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.”
 - 4) Isaiah 48:13: “Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.”
 - 5) Isaiah 51:13: “And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?”
 - 6) Isaiah 51:16: “And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.”
 - 7) Zechariah 12:1: “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”
 - 8) Hebrews 1:10: “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.”
 - c. “Infinite wisdom was with Him as a master workman, guiding Him in the whole of creation (Prov.
-

8:22-31). This is an important point to be kept in mind as Jehovah proceeded; the whole of creation is an expression of His will, a product of His infinite wisdom, a demonstration of His creative and sustaining power v.4). He alone determined the measurement of the heavens, of water and land, and the weight of the mountains and hills; there were none to teach, advise, or give Him counsel (Isa. 40:12-14) (v. 5). When He spoke of the foundation (Hebrew ‘sockets’) being fastened (v. 6), He spoke metaphorically, for He ‘hangeth the earth upon nothing’ (Job 26:7)” (Hailey, p.333).

- 1) Proverbs 8:22-31: “The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.”
 - 2) Isaiah 40:12-14: “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?”
- d. The formation of the earth was carefully measured and weighed.
- 1) Scientists report that the earth is covered by an outer crust of rock (7 to 30 miles thick) which rests upon a mantle (foundation) of heavy rock called *peridotite*, which extends down to the heart of the earth (1800 miles). They tell us that the great land masses are anchored in “sockets” which extend deep into the earth’s mantle (about 300 miles deep).
 - 2) The diameter of the earth at the equator is 7,926 miles, but at the poles it is only 7,899 miles; thus the earth is not a perfect sphere. If it were perfectly round its rotation would cause the ocean waters to pile up at the equator, drawing water away from the north and south regions. If the diameter of the earth were greater, the crust of the earth much thicker, oxygen could not exist— life would not be possible.
 - 3) If the earth rotated at 200 miles per hour instead of 1,000 mph, the long days would cause the vegetation to burn up, and the long nights would cause everything to freeze; the daylight periods would be so long that the heat from the sun would burn up all vegetable and animal life. And the night would be so cold that all would freeze. There would be 5 times as much heating and cooling as now.
 - 4) If the sun gave off only half its radiation (heat), all would freeze; if 50% more, all would burn. If the earth were only a few feet thicker there would be no oxygen, and all animal life would die; if the ocean were few feet deeper, carbon dioxide would be absorbed and vegetable life could not exist.
 - 5) If the atmosphere were much thinner, some meteors now burned by friction with the air, would fall to earth and set fires everywhere. If the moon were only 50,000 miles away, tides would be so great that twice a day all continents would be submerged.
 - 6) The earth is just the right distance from the sun. If it were one million miles closer, too much heat; a million miles farther, too little heat. The slant of the earth is perfect; if it were perpendicular
-

instead of at an angle of $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, life could not exist.

- 7) If the land masses of the northern hemisphere were to exchange places with the great areas of water in the southern hemisphere, even with the present distance from the sun, the same effects (too much heat or too little heat) would exist and life would perish. Even the land and water masses are perfectly located—by design!
 - 8) If the temperature of the sun were cut in half, the earth would freeze; if it increased by fifty percent, the earth would be roasted.
- e. God asks Job about the time when the morning stars sang together. Light and sound are both part of the same electromagnetic wave medium. Light and sound are basically the same. When musical notes are sounded, corresponding color shows at the same time. There are waves passing through space, some reach the eye as color and others reach the ear as sound. There are rays of color so slow in frequency and so long, the human eye cannot see them; some are so fast that they cannot be seen (infrared and ultraviolet). Every ray of light has a tonal quality and likewise has every color.
- 1) The light from the sun emits sounds, but our ears are not attuned to hear them. The stars likewise send forth tones which can be “heard” by electronic equipment. The significance of this statement in Job is clear.
 - 2) “Scientists now know that light rays have musical qualities that would even be perceptible by the human ear if it were properly attuned. Frequently pilots come back from flights into the stratosphere to report hearing something akin to four-part harmony in sacred music” (Maurice A. Meredith, “Science Looks at Job,” bulletin article).
- f. God speaks also of the time when the “sons of God” shouted for joy. This would be a reference to the angels, since there were no men at the time. “They joined in praise for so glorious a work as the creation of a new world. They saw that it was an event which was fitted to honor God. It was a new manifestation of his goodness and power; it was an enlargement of his empire; it was an exhibition of benevolence that claimed their gratitude. The expression in this verse is one of uncommon, perhaps of unequalled beauty” (Barnes).

C. Job 38:8-15: Questions About the Sea and Other Matters.

1. Verses 8-11: “Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?”
 - a. God speaks to Job next about the mandate he has given the seas. We often do not realize how threatened by water we land-dwellers are. About 71% of the earth’s surface is water; the average height of land is 2230 feet, while the average depth of the ocean is 13,000 feet. The ocean is thus nearly six times as deep as the land is high (average). If the earth’s surface were smoothed out, water would cover the earth more than two miles deep. This great amount of water is needed as an equalizer of temperature, and to supply water vapor for rain.
 - 1) But it is providential that the waters are allowed to encroach on land only so far. Even with the great hurricane winds, the waves are limited. How? “He upholdeth all things by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3).
 - 2) Colossians 1:15-17: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”
 - b. As a baby in the process of being born cannot be kept in the womb, so the sea surges upon the land, and will not be kept back of its own volition; however, God placed limits upon it; it can come only

so far and no further. Carrying the figure a step farther, the Lord described his having clothed the sea with the clouds as a garment, and with darkness as its swaddlingband.

- c. “[And said, Hitherto shalt thou come]. This is a most sublime expression, and its full force can be felt only by one who has stood on the shores of the ocean, and seen its mighty waves roll toward the beach as if in their pride they would sweep everything away, and how they are checked by the barrier which God has made. A voice seems to say to them that they may roll in their pride and grandeur so far, but no further. No increase of their force or numbers can sweep the barrier away, or make any impression on the limits which God has fixed. [And here shall they proud waves be stayed]....A beautiful image. The waves seem to advance in pride and self-confidence, as if nothing could stay them. They come as if exulting in the assurance that they will sweep everything away. In a moment they are arrested and broken, and they spread out humbly and harmlessly on the beach. God fixes the limit or boundary which they are not to pass, and they lie prostrate at his feet” (Barnes).
2. Verses 12-15: “Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand as a garment. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days began, And caused the dayspring to know its place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed as clay under the seal; And all things stand forth as a garment: And from the wicked their light is withholden, And the high arm is broken” (ASV).
 - 2) “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed like clay under the seal, and its features stand out like a garment. From the wicked their light is withheld, and their uplifted arm is broken” (ESV).
 - 3) “Have you commanded the morning since your days *began*, *And* caused the dawn to know its place, That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? It takes on form like clay *under* a seal, And stands out like a garment. From the wicked their light is withheld, And the upraised arm is broken” (NKJV).
 - b. God now asks Job if he had ever been responsible for the dawning of a new day. He declared that as the day breaks all around the world, the wicked are shaken out of their hiding places; therefore, who could suggest that God takes no account of the wicked? As the clay is formed by the turning of the seal, so the dawning of a new day gives new hope and beauty; it is as if the earth puts on a new garment each day.
 - c. “‘It’ seems to be the earth that, when flooded with light, is changed, like a shapeless mass of clay is transformed under a seal into intelligible letters or the signature of a person, giving to everything a clearly defined robe or attire (v. 14)” (Hailey, pp.334f).
 - d. Barnes gives this explanation of verse 14: “The reference is, undoubtedly, to some effect or impression produced upon the earth by the light of the morning, which bears a resemblance, in some respects, to the impression produced on clay by a seal. Probably the idea is, that the spreading light serves to render visible and prominent the forms of things, as the seal when impressed on clay produces certain figures.
 - 1) “One form of a Babylonian seal was an engraved cylinder, fixed on an axle, with a handle in the manner of a garden roller, which produced the impression by being rolled on the softened wax. Mr. Rich (Second Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, p. 59) remarks, ‘The Babylonian cylinders are among the most interesting and remarkable of the antiques. They are from one to three inches in

length; some are of stone, and others apparently of paste or composition of various kinds. Sculptures from several of these cylinders have been published in different works....

- 2) “It may be observed, also, in the explanation of the passage, that clay was often used for the purpose of a seal in Oriental countries. The manner in which it was used was to daub a mass of it over the door or lock of a house, a caravansera, a room, or any place where anything valuable was deposited, and to impress upon it a rude seal. This indeed would not make the goods safe from a robber, but it would be an indication that the place is not to be entered, and show that if it had been entered it was by violence; compare Matt 27:66. This impression on clay would be produced by the ‘revolving’ or Babylonian seal, by turning it about, or rolling it on clay, and thus bringing the figures out prominently, and this will explain the passage here. The passing of the light over the earth in the morning, seems to be like rolling a cylinder-seal on soft clay. It leaves distinct impressions; raises up prominent figures; gives form and beauty to what seemed before a dark undistinguished mass.
- 3) “The word rendered ‘it is turned’ *tithapeek* (OT:2015), means properly ‘it turns itself’—and the idea is that, like the revolving seal, it seems to roll over the face of the earth, and to leave a distinct and beautiful impression. Before, the face of the earth was obscure. Nothing, in the darkness of the night, could be distinguished. Now, when the dawn arises and the light spreads abroad, the figures of hills, and trees, and tents, and cities, rise before it as if a seal had been rolled on yielding clay. The image is one, therefore, of high poetic character, and of great beauty” (Barnes).
- e. When the day-spring has occurred (when dawn has come), the earth is so illuminated and changed from darkness to light, thus exposing all its beautiful features and colors, it is as though it has put on a new garment, fresh and dazzling.
- f. Verse fourteen may reveal knowledge of the rotation of the earth before the sun; it is turned as clay and the seal are turned to each other, forming an impression in the clay. The tomb of Jesus was sealed with clay (or some such substance) and the official seal [evidently Pilate’s] was rolled in it; the clay was allowed to harden and thus became an official sign of the closure of the tomb. As the seal and the clay are rolled (turned) to each other, so the earth is turned (rotates). Some have thought that the figure is of a lump of clay being turned in forming pottery, but if that is the case, what is the purpose of the seal?
- g. Verse fifteen evidently speaks of the lack of benefit the dawning of a new day does for the wicked. Usually, they do their evil work during the hours of darkness, when their criminal or sinful activities may be concealed from human view. When the dawn comes, their movements may be detected, thus their “high arm shall be broken”—they can be apprehended and punished.

D. Job 38:16-21: Questions That Expose Job’s Lack of Information.

1. Verses 16-18: “Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all” (KJV). “Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee? Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death? Hast thou comprehended the earth in its breadth? Declare, if thou knowest it all” (ASV).
 - a. Questions are now offered to show Job his lack of experience and information. Has Job ever gone to the depths of the sea to behold the springs that gush forth from the ocean’s floor? Has he walked in the great canyons of the deep? Has he paid a visit to the realm of the dead? Certainly not!
 - b. Fresh water springs have been discovered in the seas. The earliest account of such is recorded by Strabo (a Roman geographer, 63 B.C.—21 A.D.). They have been observed off the coast of Greece, Italy, Israel, and Syria. Fresh water can be dipped in abundance from the sea off the coast of Australia. Fresh water was found in 1976 along the coast from New England to Georgia by the U.S. Geological

Survey. This is a truth not apt to be known by the ancient writer of Job, unless he were inspired. When God spoke of the springs in the sea, he knew that there were springs in the sea. These would be fresh-water fountains of water. This scribe read many years ago about some people who were lost at sea, floating in a small boat; when they got desperate for water, one member of the party drank from the ocean—and was greatly surprised to find it was fresh water. [This was in a report of an actual event, but its source I do not recall].

- c. God spoke of “the recesses of the deep.” The Hebrew term describes trenches. Modern exploration has found trenches on the ocean floor extending many miles long and, in some cases, more than six miles deep. If the book of Job was produced only by some uninspired man, how could he know of these great trenches miles down in far-away oceans? It was God who spoke of these extraordinary features; no man could have known of them by investigation at that ancient date.
 - 1) “Mariana Trench, depression in the floor of the Pacific Ocean, the deepest seafloor depression in the world. It is located just east of the Mariana Islands in the western part of the ocean basin. The Mariana Trench is an arc-shaped valley extending generally northeast to southwest for 2,550 km (1,580 mi); its average width is 70 km (40 mi). The Mariana is one of many deepwater ocean trenches formed by the geologic process of subduction (see Plate Tectonics). Near its southwestern extremity, 340 km (210 mi) southwest of the island of Guam, is the deepest point on earth. This point, the Challenger Deep, is estimated to be 11,033 m (36,198 ft) deep. The Challenger Deep was named after HMS Challenger II, the vessel of those who discovered the point in 1948. In January 1960 Swiss ocean engineer Jacques Piccard and United States Navy Lieutenant Donald Walsh descended into the Challenger Deep in the French-built, U.S. Navy-operated bathyscaphe Trieste. Piccard—whose father, Auguste Piccard, invented the bathyscaphe—and Walsh took the Trieste to a depth of 10,915 m (35,810 ft), the deepest descent in history” [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].
 - 2) “The structure and topography of the ocean floor are studied through the use of satellite mapping (*see* Remote Sensing), which measures the level of the ocean surface to estimate the shape of the ocean floor; sonar, which measures the depth of the oceans; and seismic techniques, which measure the thickness of sediments of the ocean floor. Depth measurements are made by sonar from ships that travel slowly, so only a small fraction of the ocean’s floor has been mapped from depth measurements. Even using the latest sonar techniques, it would take about 125 years to map the ocean floor with depth measurements. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Seasat satellite launched in 1978 and the United States Navy Geosat satellite launched in 1985 used frequent, short pulses of microwave radiation to measure the level of the surface of the sea with great accuracy (within 3 cm/1 in). Underwater mountains and valleys cause subtle variations in the earth’s gravitational field. The stronger gravity near high, massive formations attracts more water molecules, raising the level of the ocean slightly but measurably (the water above a 2-km/1.3-mi tall undersea volcano will be about 2 m/7 ft higher than average sea level). Valleys on the ocean floor produce areas of weaker gravity, so the level of the ocean will be lower over valleys. Using this method, a complete survey of the ocean floor was accomplished in less than two years. Maps made from data on the level of the ocean surface have been compared with maps made with direct depth measurements and the two types have corresponded well.” [Encarta].
- d. God inquired of Job whether he had ever entered into the realm of the dead, and seen the doors of the shadow of death. Only a handful of humans have entered into the Hadean realm and returned to earth to take up their former life [in other words, only a few ever experienced resurrection]. And even then, they would not be permitted to describe their experiences, for such a report would not be permitted, and human language could not aptly describe the place. “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such

an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter” (2 Cor. 12:2-4). A careful study of this passage reveals that Paul was describing a personal experience; his argument here would be faulty if he is referring to some other person.

- 1) In this *Paradise* to which he had been taken, Paul was privileged to hear words which were unlawful to repeat. Human language might not even be able to communicate the ideas expressed by the words he heard.
 - 2) Paul was not authorized to report what he had seen and heard, and may not even have had the ability to do so if such were permitted. The Greek term translated *unspeakable* is used to indicate words and ideas too sacred to be uttered by human tongue (Vine).
- e. Jehovah asks Job if he has been able to perceive the breadth of the earth. “Although Job apparently perceived that the earth is a spherical globe suspended in space (26:7), he had no way of knowing its diameter (ca. 8000 miles) or its circumference (ca. 25000 miles). The extent of his travel was likely limited to a small area in Arabia, though possibly beyond that. He was asked to declare the answer to these if he knows; but he does not, so he remained silent (v. 18)” (Hailey, p.335).
2. Verses 19-21: “Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where *is* the place thereof, That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof? Knowest thou *it*, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days *is* great?”
 - a. Job was asked if he knew the place where light and darkness dwelt, but the patriarch was not that old. No man was present when God spoke light into existence, and divided light from darkness.
 - b. “Light is conceived of as coming from a great distance, and as having a place which might be regarded as its home. It comes in the morning, and is withdrawn at evening, and it seems as if it came from some far distant dwelling-place in the morning to illuminate the world, and then retired to its home in the evening, and thus gave place for darkness to visit the earth....The thought is highly poetic, and is not to be taken literally. The meaning is, that God only could know what was the great fountain of light, and where that was; and the question substantially may be asked of man with as much force and propriety now as in the time of Job. Who knows what is the great fountain of light to the universe? Who knows what light is? Who can explain the causes of its rapid flight from world to world? Who can tell what supplies it, and prevents it from being exhausted? Who but God, after all the discoveries of science, can fully understand this?” (Barnes).
 - c. Scientists now know that light is a form of energy called radiant energy, and that it travels in electromagnetic waves at the speed of 186,000 miles per second [660 million miles per hour] in a straight line. It takes about eight minutes for light to travel its “path” from the sun to the earth (Jackson). Distances in space are measured by “light years”—the distance that light travels in a year.
 - d. “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). Let there be light. Light is one thing that is not relative (invariant). Light is a separate entity—not dependent on anything else. "The language here indicates that the stupendous acts of Creation were performed by fiat. God spoke the word, and it was done. Could any process of creating light gradually even be imagined? Any chain of events leading to the development of light is inconceivable, the very thought of such a thing being rejected by the intelligence. Primeval darkness demands just the fiat revealed in this verse as the only possible solution for it." (Burton Coffman, *Commentary on Genesis*, p.28).
 - e. "Pseudo-scientists at one time scoffed at Moses' supposed unscientific statement that light was made before the sun, moon, and stars since the light was made on the first day but the sun, moon, and stars were not made until the fourth day....Scientists now declare that light existed before the sun. Light is the result of rapid variations that move at a rate of 186,000 miles per second. Such vibrations do exist independent of the sun, such as in the electric bulb, in static electricity, or in other forms" (Otis
-

Gatewood, *There is a God in Heaven*, p.173).

- f. The following is taken from Encarta: “Light from the Sun provides the energy needed for plant growth. Plants convert the energy in sunlight into storable chemical form through a process called photosynthesis. Petroleum, coal, and natural gas are the remains of plants...and the energy these fuels release when they burn is the chemical energy converted from sunlight. When animals digest the plants and animals they eat, they also release energy stored by photosynthesis. Scientists have learned through experimentation that light behaves like a particle at times and like a wave at other times. The particle-like features are called photons. Photons are different from particles of matter in that they have no mass and always move at the constant speed of about 300,000 km/sec (186,000 mi/sec) when they are in a vacuum. When light diffracts, or bends slightly as it passes around a corner, it shows wavelike behavior. The waves associated with light are called electromagnetic waves because they consist of changing electric and magnetic fields” (Encarta, Electronic Encyclopedia by Microsoft].
- g. Some who believe in evolution, knowing how enormous the universe is and how much time is required for light to reach earth from distant stars, argue that this is proof that the universe is billions of years old. But how old did Adam appear to be one moment after he was created? Though he was only a moment old, he was a full grown man; he appeared to have the age of someone perhaps thirty years old. When God created the universe, he would naturally make it complete, with the light of distant stars already shining to the earth; while it would appear that they had been shining for a very long time, they would naturally be must younger.
- h. As with light, darkness is personified. It is depicted as coming forth from its abode to take the place of the light when it is withdrawn. These are highly figurative pictures, but they are clearly depicted.
- i. The point in verse twenty-one may have been given in an ironic fashion. Since Job was a man of great age, surely he was old enough to have been present back at the beginning when the universe with all of its features was created. “This may either be a question, or it may be spoken ironically. According to the former mode of rendering it, it is the same as asking Job whether he had lived long enough to understand where the abode of light was, or whether he had an existence when it was created, and knew where its home was appointed. According to the latter mode, it is keen sarcasm....The former, however, seems much better to accord with the connection, and with the dignity and character of the speaker. It is not desirable to represent God as speaking in the language of irony and sarcasm unless the rules of interpretation imperatively demand it” (Barnes).

E. Job 38:22-30: Valuable Elements in the Snow and Hail.

1. Verses 22-23: “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?”
 - a. God indicates that there are valuable elements in the snow and hail. Dr. Franklin T. Shutt (of Canada) set forth the result of seventeen years of research in the value of snowfall. He found that snow collected from the atmosphere four kinds of chemical fertilizer: free ammonia, nitrates, nitrites, and albuminoid ammonia. These are in a form that can be used by plant life. It was estimated that the value was \$14.08 per acre (this was in pre-inflation days!).
 - b. But Hailey offers a differing view: “Although modern science has discovered the value of snow to the soil and its productivity, Jehovah seemed to refer to the store-house of snow and hail to be used on the day of battle (cf. Josh. 10:11). The waters also are gathered in his store-houses (Ps. 33:7) and likewise His winds (Ps. 135:7), and in time of His indignation He opens His armory (store-houses) and brings forth His weapons for destruction (Jer. 50:25-26). His question to Job was, has he entered into the store-house of snow and hail that He uses in time of trouble to determine its outcome? These God uses along with waters and winds and armies that He stores for His special purposes, which may be for judgment or for determining the outcome of wars (vv. 22:23)” (p.336).
 - 1) Joshua 10:11: “And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down

- to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.”
- 2) Psalms 33:7: “He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.”
 - 3) Psalms 135:7: “He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.”
 - 4) Jeremiah 50:25: “The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.”
- c. The former view is more appealing to this scribe, but if that is the point of the passage, what is the meaning of these treasures being laid up against the time of trouble, battle, and war? Could it be the case that the lands upon which these treasures have fallen make that territory more desirable for an alien army? Would the increased productivity of those lands make the nation, in which they were found, stronger because of the increased wealth to resist an invader? The scholars, however, usually hold the other view.
 - d. “Snow is here represented as something which is laid up like treasure, and kept in reserve for use when God shall require it. Silver and gold were thus laid up for occasions when they would be wanted, and the figurative sentiment here is, that snow and hail were thus preserved for the use to which the Almighty might devote them, or for those great occasions when it would be proper to bring them forth to execute his purposes. Of course, it was to be expected that God would speak in the language which people commonly used when speaking of his works, and would not go into a philosophical or scientific explanation of the phenomena of nature. His object was not to teach science, but to produce a solemn impression of his greatness, and that is secured by such an appeal whether the laws of nature are understood or not. The simple appeal to Job here is, whether he could explain the phenomena of snow and hail?” (Barnes).
2. Verses 24-27: “By what way is the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth? Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, *where* no man is; *on* the wilderness, wherein *there is* no man; To satisfy the desolate and waste *ground*; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?”
 - a. “By what way is the light parted, Or the east wind scattered upon the earth? Who hath cleft a channel for the waterflood, Or the way for the lightning of the thunder; To cause it to rain on a land where no man is; On the wilderness, wherein there is no man; To satisfy the waste and desolate ground, And to cause the tender grass to spring forth?” (ASV).
 - b. Did Job know how light was distributed around the globe, or how God scattered the east wind? God used the east wind, and hail, to bring punishment on his enemies.
 - 1) Joshua 10:11: “And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.”
 - 2) Job 27:21: “The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.”
 - 3) Isaiah 27:8: “In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.”
 - c. Job did not know the principles by which God’s natural laws produce lightning and thunder. Lightning and thunder are more complex than they appear.
 - d. More questions about the weather are asked. Who cuts a channel for the torrents of rain that fall to the
-

earth? Who charts a path for the lightning that causes rain to fall even where no man lives? God shows his interest in providing for the animals of his creation, so he sends rain to produce vegetation, which feeds the birds and beasts. He sends his sunshine and rain upon the righteous and unrighteous, and supplies the lower creation what they need to survive. Pulpit Commentary offers this:

- 1) “Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters? rather, as in the Revised Version, Who hath cleft a channel for the water-flood? i.e. Who has furrowed and seamed the ground (in Western Asia) with deep gullies, or ‘water-courses,’ for the rapid carrying off of the violent rains to which those regions are subject? The wadies of Syria and Arabia seem to be alluded to. They too are God's work, not Job's. Or a way for the lightning of thunder? The ‘way’ for the passage of the electric current is not marked out beforehand, like the way for the escape of the superfluous waters; but it is equally determined on and arranged previously by God, who has laid down the laws which it is bound to follow.
 - 2) “To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man. God not only causes his rain to fall equally on the just and on the unjust (Matt 5:45), but equally, or almost equally, on inhabited lands and uninhabited. His providence does not limit itself to supplying the wants of man, but has tender regard to the beasts, and birds, and reptiles, and insects which possess the lands whereon man has not yet set his foot.
 - 3) “Parched ground seems to cry aloud for water, and so to make a piteous appeal to Heaven. Perhaps rain is not wholly wasted, even on the bare sands of the Sahara, or the rugged rocks of Tierra del Fuego. It may have uses which are beyond our cognizance. And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth. Where the rain produces herbage, it is certainly of use, for wherever there is herbage there are always insects, whose enjoyment of life has every appearance of being intense” (Biblesoft).
3. Verses 28-30: “Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen” (KJV). “Hath the rain a father? Or who hath begotten the drops of dew? Out of whose womb came the ice? And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? The waters hide themselves and become like stone, And the face of the deep is frozen” (ASV).
- a. Who is the father of the dew and the rain? Not some man! Man has made some feeble attempts to cause rain to fall, but he must have rain clouds present before his seeding can have any effect. High school science books in the 1950s speculated that man would have the ability and technology in the future to produce rain or dry weather at his convenience. Even if he could, more harm than good would result.
 - b. Who is the mother of the ice and frost? Not some woman. Who produces the ice and frost and causes the waters to be hidden under the frozen surface? Not humanity. What is the cause for the unusual conduct of ice? When objects are heated they normally expand, and when cooled they contract. This is the law governing all objects except water.
 - 1) When heated, water expands; but when chilled it contracts to a certain point. When it nears the freezing point contraction suddenly ceases; when it nears the freezing point again, it begins to expand and soon will gain back all its previous bulk, plus about a third more.
 - 2) Suppose that ice did not have these characteristics. The streams and lakes would freeze, the ice would descend to the bottom, the whole body of water would become solid ice; no fish would survive. But ice floats on the top and leaves space beneath for the fish and other water creatures to have oxygen to live.
 - 3) Why does water have these strange attributes? Simple. God made it that way! It is certain that inanimate water did not figure all this out by itself.
-

- c. These questions bring to Job's mind the fundamental fact that mankind cannot provide these items for himself; God is the only one who can supply them.

F. Job 38:31-41: Questions About the Heavens and Certain Animals.

1. Verses 31-35: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we *are*?"
 - a. "Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades, Or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season? Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train? Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens? Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, That abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go, And say unto thee, Here we are?" (ASV).
 - b. The special terms of the passage:
 - 1) MAZZAROTH: "The scattered ones—a feature either of the starry heavens or the changing seasons (Job 38:32). The meaning of this term is uncertain" [Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers].
 - 2) "ARCTURUS: "The bear keeper—KJV translation of a Hebrew word meaning 'crowd,' and referring to a constellation of stars. The NKJV translates the word as 'the Bear' (Job 9:9) and 'the Great Bear with its cubs' (Job 38:32)—the 'cubs' being a reference to the seven main stars of this constellation" [Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary].
 - 3) PLEIADES: "A brilliant cluster of stars seen in the shoulder of Taurus (the Bull). The name Pleiades comes from the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione in Greek mythology. This constellation consists of several hundred stars, although the naked eye can usually see only six or seven...God made the Pleiades (Job 9:9) and bound them in a cluster (Job 38:31)" [Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary].
 - 4) ORION: "The strong one—the name of a constellation, consisting of thousands of stars which is mentioned in the Old Testament (Job 9:9; 38:31; Amos 5:8). The constellation is near Gemini and Taurus, and contains the giant red star Betelgeuse and Rigel, a blue-white star of first magnitude. Most of the stars of Orion cannot be seen without the aid of a telescope" [Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary].
 - c. "Jehovah is asking Job if he thinks he can limit the influence of a constellation, since the Hebrew word for chain means influence. Astronomers tell us that Alcyone is the brightest star in the Pleiades constellation and this is the pivot around which our entire solar system revolves. The 'chain' of influence of this one star is so great that it regulates our solar system" (Maurice A. Meredith, Science Looks at Job, bulletin article).
 - d. Job's ignorance of nature extended to the heavens also. Could Job bind the sweet influences of the constellation Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion? The Pleiades appear in the spring and herald the start of that happy season; Orion is visible in late October and announces the coming of winter. The question is therefore, does Job or any man have the power to change the seasons? Can a man manipulate the heavenly bodies?
 - e. Another possible meaning: The Pleiades is a cluster of more than 200 stars, 7 of which are visible to the naked eye. They are bound together in a group and together they move through space. Did Job bind them together? Orion is a very outstanding constellation of stars that appears as a group to the naked eye, but there are actually vast distances between them and are in fact unassociated; hence, loosed. If this latter possibility is the true meaning, then here is information that far surpasses ancient

astronomical knowledge.

- f. "Pleiades (astronomy), in astronomy, loose cluster of 400 to 500 stars, about 415 light-years from the solar system in the direction of the constellation Taurus. The stars are about 1 light-year apart, on the average, and photographs show them to be surrounded by a nebulosity that shines by their reflected light. The cluster was named by the ancient Greeks after the 'Seven Sisters' of mythology. Observers have claimed to be able to see with the naked eye as many as 12 of the stars in the cluster" (Encarta).
 - g. "It is interesting that God chose an analogy from the physical universe to demonstrate the cosmic difference between His thoughts and our thoughts. The fitting illustration is as follows: 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts' (Isa. 55:9). The vast size of the universe is exemplified by an attempt to map it. If, on this map, one inch equaled 93 million miles, the map would have to stretch 4 miles to include the next nearest star. The map would need to extend 25,000 miles to show the distance from earth to the center of the Milky Way Galaxy (Jackson, p. 27)" [Christian Courier Website].
 - h. God asked Job whether he could bind the Pleiades or loose Orion. The patriarch could not control the constellations; he could not change the seasons, with which the appearance of certain stars coincides. He could not guide the Great Bear with its cubs as it moves about the universe. These statements suggest that the heavenly bodies are regulated by Jehovah. There is much about the universe and the earth that man does not grasp.
 - i. Job was asked about the ordinances of the heavens and their dominion over the earth.
 - 1) The sun exercises tremendous influence over the earth. Green plants are able to use the energy of sunlight to photosynthesize their food. Sunspots (500-50,000 miles in dimension) affect radio, television, and telephone communication, and also produce the northern lights (Aurora Borealis) and the southern lights (Aurora Australis).
 - 2) The moon which rules the night is our closest neighbor (240,000 miles away). It causes the ocean tides. The earth's gravitational pull on the moon keeps it in orbit, and the moon's gravitational pull on the earth causes the tides. The tides cleanse the shorelines, dilute stream discharges, mix the waters of the sea, scour out shipping channels, permit navigation of waters which are too shallow at other times, and provide a means of generating energy. "If the moon were significantly larger or smaller, life on earth would be altered drastically" (Jackson).
 - 3) The stars have no effect on the destiny of our lives as the astrologers claim, but they give light at night, and offer a prime means of navigation.
 - 4) Job had no control over the clouds or lightning; neither does any man. Only God does.
 - j. Space is unfathomable to man's finite mind, and cannot be entirely seen by his most powerful telescopes. The earth is 8,000 miles in diameter; the sun is 864,000; a star near Orion has a diameter of 215 million miles. Arcturus, a star mentioned by Job, is said to be 25,600 times greater in volume than our sun. And Antares is estimated to have a diameter of 400 million miles. And there are even larger stars. Our galaxy is 100,000 light years in width. There are a billion or more galaxies. Two-hundred-inch telescopes can see about 1.5 billion light years into space; beyond that, the stars appear as great clouds of light. [More modern telescopes enable astronomers to see even farther into space].
 - 1) Job 9:8-9: "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."
 - 2) Psalms 8:3: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"
 - 3) Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."
 - 4) Isaiah 40:22: "*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as
-

- grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."
- 5) Jeremiah 33:22: "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me."
 - 6) Romans 1:19-22: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."
 - 7) No wonder great men of the Bible trembled at his spoken word and manifestations!
2. Verses 36-38: "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart? Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven, When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?"
 - a. "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who hath given understanding to the mind? Who can number the clouds by wisdom? Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven, When the dust runneth into a mass, And the clods cleave fast together?" (ASV).
 - b. Verse thirty-six is in the context of questions relating to the weather. Thus, this verse may have reference only (or at least primarily) to the contextual subject. The point emphasized in this text is that God is the only one in control of nature; no man has such power or authority. Though we have learned much about the weather around us, no one can or should control it.
 - c. "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Some refer this to human wisdom, and understand the Almighty as asking—Who has put man's wisdom into his inward parts? literally, into his kidneys, or as our idiom would express it, 'into his heart.' But there is great difficulty in supposing a sudden transition from clouds and lightning in vers. 34, 35 to the human understanding in ver. 36, with a return to clouds and rain in ver. 37. Hence many of the best critics understand ver. 36 of the purpose and intelligence that may be regarded as existing in the clouds and rain and lightning themselves, which are God's ministers, and run to and fro at his command, and execute his pleasure" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - d. "Who can number the clouds in wisdom? i.e. Who is wise enough to number the clouds, and say how many they are? Or who can stay the bottles of heaven! rather, Who can pour out? (see the Revised Version). The 'bottles,' or 'water-skins,' of heaven are the dense clouds heavy with rain, which alternately hold the moisture like a reservoir, and pour it out upon the earth. God alone can determine when the rain shall fall" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - e. "When the dust groweth into hardness....When by the heat of the sun's rays the ground grows into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together, baked into a compact mass, then is the time when rain is most needed, and when the Almighty in his mercy commonly sends it. The consideration of inanimate nature here ends, with the result that its mysteries altogether transcend the human intellect, and render speculation on the still deeper mysteries of the moral world wholly vain and futile" [ibid.].
 3. Verses 39-41: "Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions, When they couch in *their* dens, *and* abide in the covert to lie in wait? Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of met."
 - a. "Canst thou hunt the prey for the lioness, Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, When they couch in their dens, And abide in the covert to lie in wait? Who provideth for the raven his prey, When his young ones cry unto God, And wander for lack of food?" (ASV).
 - b. Jehovah now asks Job about the animal kingdom. Was Job the one who gave the lioness the instinct
-

to hunt prey for her young? Who provides food for the raven (a despised bird) when his little ones cry out in hunger? They are said to cry out to God for food. It is God who has provided for their sustenance.

- 1) Psalms 147:9: “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.”
 - 2) Luke 12:24: “Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?”
- c. God asks Job about feeding the lions and ravens. Since the Creator has endowed these beings with the necessary instincts to search out their prey, there is no need for any man to provide for their sustenance. God gave them the inherent “wisdom” [instinct] to obtain food, and by his natural laws and providence he made food available for them; they can tend to themselves quite well.
- d. “There are in the arrangement by which it is accomplished marks of wisdom which far surpass the skill of man to originate, and the instinct and power by which it is done are proof of the supremacy of the Most High. No one can study the subject of the instincts of animals, or become in the least acquainted with Natural History, without finding every where traces of the wisdom and goodness of God.... Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meal.... Scheutzer... suggests that the reason why the raven is specified here rather than other fowls is, that it is an offensive bird, and that God means to state that no object, however regarded by man, is beneath his notice. He carefully provides for the needs of all his creatures” (Barnes).
-

Job 39

God's Questions Continue

A. Job 39:1-8: Questions About Some Wild Animals.

1. Verses 1-4: "Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? *or* canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? Canst thou number the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth? They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows. Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them."
 - a. Job is asked if he knows when the wild goats bring forth their young. These were extremely wild animals, living in high mountains.
 - 1) "The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies" (Ps. 104:18).
 - 2) "Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats" (1 Sam. 24:2).
 - b. "The wild goats of Western Asia are of two kinds, the *Capra segagrus*, and the Asiatic ibex, or *Capra Sinaitica*. The latter is probably the animal here intended, which is called *yael sela*, 'the wild goat of the rocks,' and was known to the Assyrians as *ya-e-li*. It is an animal with large rough horns curving backwards, closely allied to the steinbock, or bouquetin, of the Swiss and Tyrolian Alps. It is very shy and wild, difficult of approach, and inhabiting only the most rocky and desolate tracts of Syria and Arabia. Representations of the animal, which was hunted by the Assyrian kings, are common upon the Ninevite monuments (see 'Ancient Monarchies,' vol. 2. p. 140)" [Pulpit Commentary].
 - c. Did Job know the gestation period of these untamed beasts? Of course, God would know when these brought forth their young, even though it was in secret places, inaccessible to man. God saw them when the females bowed themselves as they gave birth, ignoring any pain that might accompany that experience.
 - d. Their young ones would grow up to be strong, able to fend for themselves, to find the provender God made available, and did not need to return to their mother any more. They operate by the instinct which God placed in them, not needing the help of man to survive.
 - e. "The animal here referred to is, doubtless, the same which Burckhardt saw on the summit of Mount Catharine, adjacent to Mount Sinai, and which he thus describes in his Travels in Syria, p. 571:
 - 1) "As we approached the summit of the mountain (Catharine, adjacent to Mount Sinai), we saw at a distance a small flock of mountain goats feeding among the rocks. One of our Arabs left us, and by a widely circuitous route endeavored to get to the leeward of them, and near enough to fire at them. He enjoined us to remain in sight of them, and to sit down in order not to alarm them. He had nearly reached a favorable spot behind a rock, when the goats suddenly took to flight. They could not have seen the Arab, but the wind changed, and thus they smelt him. The chase of the *beden*, as the wild goat is called, resembles that of the chamois of the Alps, and requires as much enterprise and patience. The Arabs make long circuits to surprise them, and endeavor to come upon them early in the morning, when they feed.
 - 2) "The goats have a leader who keeps watch, and on any suspicious smell, sound, or object, makes a noise, which is a signal to the flock to make their escape. They have much decreased of late, if we may believe the Arabs; who say that fifty years ago, if a stranger came to a tent, and the owner of it had no sheep to kill, he took his gun and went in search of a *beden*. They are, however, even now more common here than in the Alps, or in the mountains to the east of the Red Sea. I had three or four of them brought to me at the convent, which I bought at three-fourths of a dollar each. The flesh is excellent, and has nearly the same flavor as that of the deer. The Bedouins make water bags of their skins, and rings of their horns, which they wear on their thumbs. When the *beden* is

met with in the plains, the dogs of the hunters easily catch him; but they cannot come up with him among the rocks, where he can make leaps of 20 feet” (Barnes).

- f. Did Job know when the hinds bring forth their young? The hinds were wild deer, timid and seemed to be quite defenseless. But they made out very well in the wilderness, without any help from man. God has provided for the success of the species.
2. Verses 5-8: “Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains *is* his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.”
 - a. Job is asked who set the wild ass free. God placed these animals in the deserted places, far from cities; he provided them with ample pasturage in the mountainous highlands, where they can roam free, and tend to their own affairs and needs.
 - b. They were considered to be untamable, thus they scorned the cries of the donkey driver—they would not be brought under his control or his whip—even if they should be caught.
 - c. It was the Almighty who gave them this freedom and untamed disposition. He also provided for their food and drink. What man could have created such a beast? What man could have done for the wild donkey what God had done?
 - d. “Onager, species of Asiatic wild ass, also known as the Persian wild ass, member of the horse family. Like the horse, the onager is an odd-toed ungulate (hoofed mammal). It has only one toe on each foot, the tip of which is encased in a broad hoof. The onager stands up to 1.2 m (4 ft) at the shoulder and is 2 m (6.5 ft) in length. The animal's ears are about 23 cm (9 in) long. Its color varies from cinnamon-brown in summer to yellow-brown in winter, and its muzzle and underparts are white. It has several black stripes across the upper parts of its hind legs and an indistinct black streak across its shoulders. Female onagers are smaller than males and do not have the shoulder stripe. Onagers feed on coarse grasses.
 - 1) “Female onagers breed once every other year. The mating season is in September, and a single foal is born in May or June. At foaling time the herd of onagers breaks up into small groups. The females seek secluded pastures where there is access to water. A male will often accompany a small group of mares to protect them from predators.
 - 2) “Primarily because of overhunting, the onager population is listed as an endangered species. Captive breeding and reintroduction programs have helped to increase its numbers.
 - 3) “Scientific classification: The onager is a member of the family Equidae. It is classified as *Equus onager*” [Microsoft ® Encarta ® Reference Library 2004. © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].
 - e. “The Mesopotamian regions inhabited by the *Asinus hemippus* are those vast stretches of rolling plain, treeless, producing a few aromatic shrubs and much wormwood, which intervene between the Sinjar mountain-range and the Babylonian alluvium. Here the wild ass was seen by Xenophon and the Ten Thousand, in company with ostriches, gazelles, and bustards (Xen., 'Anab.,' 1:5); and here Sir Austin Layard also made its acquaintance ('Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 270). The Asians onager frequents the deserts of Khorassan and Beloochistan, which are even more barren than the Mesopotamian. And the barren land his dwellings; rather, the salt land (see the Revised Version). The great desert of Khorassan is largely impregnated with salt, and in places encrusted with it. The wild ass licks salt with avidity” [Pulpit Commentary].

B. Job 39:9-18: What About the Unicorn and the Ostrich?

1. Verses 9-12: “Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him, because his

strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?"

a. Other versions:

- 1) "Will the wild-ox be content to serve thee? Or will he abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the wild-ox with his band in the furrow? Or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? Or wilt thou leave to him thy labor? Wilt thou confide in him, that he will bring home thy seed, And gather the grain of thy threshing-floor?" (ASV).
- 2) "Will the wild ox be willing to serve you? Will he bed by your manger? Can you bind the wild ox in the furrow with ropes? Or will he plow the valleys behind you? Will you trust him because his strength is great? Or will you leave your labor to him? Will you trust him to bring home your grain, And gather it to your threshing floor?" (NKJV).
- 3) "Is the wild ox willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your manger? Can you bind him in the furrow with ropes, or will he harrow the valleys after you? Will you depend on him because his strength is great, and will you leave to him your labor? Do you have faith in him that he will return your grain and gather it to your threshing floor?" (ESV).

b. These points are from Bert Thompson:

- 1) "However, the Bible never panders to pagan mythology by incorrectly referring to non-existent, mythological animals as if they were real, living creatures. It is true that the word unicorn appears in the King James Version (nine times: Numbers 23:22; 24:8; Deuteronomy 33:17; Job 39: 9,10; Psalms 22:21; 29:6; 92:10; and Isaiah 34:7). What, exactly, was this unicorn? And why is it found in certain versions of the Bible?
- 2) The editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* answered the first question when they wrote that the unicorn was a mythological animal resembling a horse or a kid with a single horn on its forehead. The unicorn appeared in early Mesopotamian artworks, and it also was referred to in the ancient myths of India and China. The earliest description in Greek literature of a single-horned (Greek: *monokeros*; Latin: *unicornis*) animal was by the historian Ctesias (400 B.C.), who related that the Indian wild ass was the size of a horse, with a white body, purple head, and blue eyes; on its forehead was a cubit-longhorn coloured red at the pointed tip, black in the middle, and white at the base. Those who drank from its horn were thought to be protected from stomach trouble, epilepsy, and poison. It was very fleet of foot and difficult to capture. The actual animal behind Ctesias' description was probably the Indian rhinoceros....
- 3) "The word *re.em* does refer to the wild ox, and is translated as such in almost all later versions of the Bible. The translators of the Septuagint rendered *re.em* by the Greek *monokeros* (one horn) on the basis of the relief representations of the 'wild ox' in strict profile that they found in Babylonian and Egyptian art (cf. Pfeiffer, et al., 1975, p. 83). The charge that the Bible 'panders to pagan mythology' cannot be sustained, once all the relevant facts are known. Even certain atheists (like Asimov) acknowledge as much" [*Unicorns, Satyrs, and the Bible*, Apologetics Press Website].

c. "The Hebrew word represented in the King James Version by 'unicorn' is *re.em*, which undoubtedly refers to the wild ox (*urus* or aurochs) ancestral to the domesticated cattle of today. The *re.em* still flourished in early historical times and a few existed into modern times, although it is now extinct. It was a dangerous creature of great strength and was similar in form and temperament to the Asian buffaloes....

- 1) "The wild ox was a favorite prey of the hunt-loving Assyrian monarchs (the animal was called *rumu* in Assyrian, essentially the same word as *re.em*) and was displayed in their large bas-reliefs. Here the wild ox was invariably shown in profile and only one horn was visible. One can well imagine that the animal represented in this fashion would come to be called 'one-horn' as a

- familiar nickname, much as we might refer to ‘longhorns’ in speaking of a certain breed of cattle.
- 2) “As the animal itself grew less common under the pressure of increasing human population and the depredations of the hunt, it might come to be forgotten that there was a second horn hidden behind the first in the sculptures and ‘one-horn’ might come to be considered a literal description of the animal.
 - 3) “When the first Greek translation of the Bible was prepared about 250 B.C., the animal was already rare in the long-settled areas of the Near East and the Greeks, who had no direct experience with it, had no word for it. They used a translation of ‘one-horn’ instead and it became *monokeros*. In Latin and in English it became the Latin word for ‘one-horn’; that is, ‘unicorn.’
 - 4) “The Biblical writers could scarcely have had the intention of implying that the wild ox literally had one horn. There is one Biblical quotation, in fact, that clearly contradicts that notion. In the Book of Deuteronomy [33:17.BT], when Moses is giving his final blessing to each tribe, he speaks of the tribe of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) as follows: His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns...Here the word is placed in the plural since the thought of a one-horn’s single horn seems to make the phrase ‘horns of a unicorn’ self-contradictory. Still, the original Hebrew has the word in the singular so that we must speak of the ‘horns’ of a unicorn, which makes it clear that a unicorn has more than one horn (1968, pp. 186-187)” [Isaac Asimov, quoted by Thompson, *ibid.*]. [Note: Asimov was certainly no friend of the Bible, but he expressed the truth in the above citation].
- d. God’s point in the question is to remind Job that the wild ox was not subject to being tamed and used to pull a plow. He could not be trusted to work for the farmer as his tame counterpart could. The wild ox could not be tamed; therefore, if Job cannot even manage a wild ox, how does he think he could manage God’s universe?
 - e. The wild ox would not be willing to serve man. He would not quietly spend the night in your barn, eating from your manger. You cannot harness him to your farming implements and guide him as he plows your field. He will not pull the harrow across the fields for you. You cannot trust that he will use his great strength to do your bidding. You cannot trust him to aid you as you harvest your grain and bring it to the threshing-floor.
2. Verses 13-18: “*Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust, And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear; Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.*”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “The wings of the ostrich wave proudly; But are they the pinions and plumage of love? For she leaveth her eggs on the earth, And warmeth them in the dust, And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, Or that the wild beast may trample them. She dealeth hardly with her young ones, as if they were not hers: Though her labor be in vain, she is without fear; Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, Neither hath he imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up herself on high, She scorneth the horse and his rider” (ASV).
 - 2) "The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, But are her wings and pinions *like the* kindly stork's? For she leaves her eggs on the ground, And warms them in the dust; She forgets that a foot may crush them, Or that a wild beast may break them. She treats her young harshly, as though *they were* not hers; Her labor is in vain, without concern, Because God deprived her of wisdom, And did not endow her with understanding. When she lifts herself on high, She scorns the horse and its rider” (NKJV).
-

- 3) "The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, but are they the pinions and plumage of love? For she leaves her eggs to the earth and lets them be warmed on the ground, forgetting that a foot may crush them and that the wild beast may trample them. She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers; though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear, because God has made her forget wisdom and given her no share in understanding. When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider" (ESV).
 - b. Next, Jehovah mentions the ostrich (not the peacock as given in the KJV).
 - 1) If the peacock is meant, it appears that more would have been said of it than the single thought in verse thirteen. The peacock is a remarkable bird with a beautiful set of tail-feathers, but the wings of the bird spoken of here is glorified; it is the tail, not the wings, of the peacock that is magnificent.
 - 2) The Hebrew word translated "peacock" in the KJV ["ostrich" in the ASV] carries the idea of beautiful sound. The peacock "is of all fowls, perhaps, least distinguished for beauty of voice" (Barnes).
 - 3) Barnes cites some authorities to show that the peacock was a foreign bird to Judea and Arabia, as well as in Greece and Rome.
 - 4) For these reasons, the bird described must be the ostrich, and not the peacock.
 - c. The ostrich lays thirty or more eggs in a nest of sand. As the forty-two-day incubation period progresses, she leaves her eggs on the ground from time to time; they are kept warm in the sand. Some of the eggs are sometimes trampled because they are left unattended. It appears that she "forgot" to cover them (15) but the design of God is for these to serve as food for the chicks that subsequently hatch. She seems to show unconcern for her young, compared to other birds; she will flee away from the nest, but this might only be a ploy to draw the danger away from the eggs. From our viewpoint, she seems to be without wisdom. When she spreads her wings to run (she cannot fly), she can outrun a horse. The ostrich is therefore a marvelous example of creativity [see Jackson, p.83].
 - d. "After the hen lays her eggs they are left exposed to the dangers of being crushed by wild beasts trampling on them (vv. 14-15). The ostrich is also criticized because of her harsh treatment of the young, which is further attested in Lamentations 4:3. However, how she was cruel to her offspring is not stated, unless the young are used in metonymy for the eggs she abandoned....If her disregard for her young caused them to perish, she would appear indifferent to the loss of her labor, which seems to be the concluding thought of the verse (v. 16). The point made was that to some creatures God gave wisdom of one kind, and to others, such as the ostrich, He was exceeding restricted in his gift of good sense (v. 17). However, God gave her a redeeming quality—her speed. She can show scorn to the horse and his rider by her faster speed (v. 18)" [Hailey, p.344].
 - e. The following is from Encarta:
 - 1) "Ostrich, common name for a large, flightless bird. Now found only in Africa, fossils indicate that the ostrich once also lived throughout Europe and Asia. Ostriches are the largest and strongest of living birds, attaining a height from crown to foot of about 2.4 m (about 8 ft) and a weight of up to 136 kg (300 lb). They have long necks and small heads, with large eyes and short, broad beaks. They spread their small wings when running and have long, powerful legs that are used for defense. The feet have only two toes. Male ostriches are black, with white wings and tail. The white feathers of the male, which are large and soft, are the ostrich plumes of commercial value. The female is a dull grayish brown.
 - 2) "Ostriches are rapid runners and can attain about 65 km/h (about 40 mph). The males are polygamous and travel about in hot, sandy areas with three or four females, or in groups of four or five males accompanied by mates and young. The females lay their yellowish-white eggs
-

together in a single large depression in the sand. The eggs weigh about 1.4 kg (about 3 lb) each and have a volume of about 1.4 liters (about 3 pt). The male sits on them at night, and the female incubates them by day.

- 3) "In the last half of the 19th century ostrich farming, or the breeding of domesticated ostriches for their plumes, was carried on extensively in South Africa, Algeria, Australia, France, and the United States. Ostrich plumes were used in hatmaking and dressmaking. Farming declined as the demand for ostrich plumes became almost negligible; however, the introduction of ostrich hide as a luxury leather has renewed interest in ostrich farming. The so-called American ostrich is actually a rhea" [Microsoft ® Encarta ® Reference Library 2004. © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].

C. Job 39:19-30: The War-Horse and the Hawk.

1. Verses 19-25: "Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils *is* terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Hast thou given the horse his might? Hast thou clothed his neck with the quivering mane? Hast thou made him to leap as a locust? The glory of his snorting is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: He goeth out to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not dismayed; Neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, The flashing spear and the javelin. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; Neither believeth he that it is the voice of the trumpet. As oft as the trumpet soundeth he saith, Aha! And he smelleth the battle afar off, The thunder of the captains, and the shouting" (ASV).
 - 2) "Do you give the horse his might? Do you clothe his neck with a mane? Do you make him leap like the locust? His majestic snorting is terrifying. He paws in the valley and exults in his strength; he goes out to meet the weapons. He laughs at fear and is not dismayed; he does not turn back from the sword. Upon him rattle the quiver, the flashing spear and the javelin. With fierceness and rage he swallows the ground; he cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet. When the trumpet sounds, he says 'Aha!' He smells the battle from afar, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting." (ESV).
 - b. From what source did the horse obtain his strength? Not from Job or some other man. The horse has great strength in his shoulders and neck. He has both power and courage, and makes an excellent weapon of war. For the purpose of war, the horse was primarily used in ancient times. Where did he get the strength and courage to rush forth into battle? God gave him these powers. The horse is not as easily frightened as a grasshopper [or locust]; at your approach, this insignificant little insect will quickly fly away. But horses are known for their strength and courage, which can be controlled for man's use—whether for common purposes or for war.
 - c. "The verb is in the plural [vs. 19], because a line of cavalry, all pawing and eager to be off, is intended to be represented. And rejoiceth in his strength. Nothing is more remarkable than the eagerness and joy which war-horses show when the battle approaches. They are generally more excited than their riders. He goeth on to meet the armed men; literally, he rusheth upon the weapons. Equally true in ancient and in modern warfare. The main use of cavalry is in the charge" [Pulpit Commentary].
 - d. He swallows the ground as he swiftly races over it—devouring the miles. He can run for hours. Not only can the horse be used as a powerful force in battle, he is more than adequate as a means of

transportation.

- e. "The 'aha' in response to the sound of the trumpet occurs some seven additional times in the Old Testament, and each time it expresses a malicious joy (e.g, Ps. 35:21; Ezek. 25:3), so here it is probably a neigh or whinny, not a snort. By instinct he senses the battle afar off, as he hears the voice and shouting of the captains (v. 25). This majesty and these senses and instincts came not from man, nor a process of evolution, but are the manifestations of the power and wisdom of their Creator" (Hailey, p.346).
2. Verses 26-30: "Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, *and* stretch her wings toward the south? Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain *are*, there *is* she."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Is it by thy wisdom that the hawk soareth, (And) stretcheth her wings toward the south? Is it at thy command that the eagle mounteth up, And maketh her nest on high? On the cliff she dwelleth, and maketh her home, Upon the point of the cliff, and the stronghold. From thence she spieth out the prey; Her eyes behold it afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: And where the slain are, there is she" (ASV).
 - 2) "Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high? On the rock he dwells and makes his home, on the rocky crag and stronghold. From there he spies out the prey; his eyes behold it afar off. His young ones suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is he" (ESV).
 - b. God uses the example of the hawk and eagle to underscore the wisdom by which they were designed and sent forth. Hawks exhibit just about every technique to be seen in the world of flight. In recent years, scientists have learned much about bird migration: that they plot their routes by the sun and stars; but they admit that the birds follow a far more ancient guidance system, an instinct acquired in the egg. Acquired from whom? The idea about migration is suggested by the reference to the south—the direction of migration for the winter months
 - c. Was it by Job's command that the eagle mounts up on high? Some have been spotted at 10,000 feet. Did he design their sharp vision? An eagle can spot prey from three miles away.
 - d. "The falcon, or hawk, is often distinguished for fleetness. One, belonging to a Duke of Cleves, flew out of Westphalia into Prussia in one day; and in the county of Norfolk (England) one was known to make a flight of nearly thirty miles in an hour. A falcon which belonged to Henry IV of France, having escaped from Fontainebleau, was found twenty-four hours after in Malta, the space traversed being not less than one thousand three hundred and fifty miles; being a velocity of about fifty-seven miles an hour, on the supposition that the bird was on the wing the whole time. It is this remarkable velocity which is here appealed to as a proof of the divine wisdom. God asks Job whether he could have formed these birds for their rapid flight. The wisdom and skill which has done this is evidently far above any that is possessed by man" (Barnes).
 - e. What about the statement regarding the young eaglets sucking up blood? "It is supposed to mean, to sup up greedily; referring to the fact that the young ones of the eagle devour blood voraciously. They are too feeble to devour the flesh, and hence, they are fed on the blood of the victim. The strength of the eagle consists in the beak, talons, and wings; and such is their power, that they are able to convey animals of considerable size, alive, to their places of abode. They often bear away in this manner, lambs, kids, and the young of the gazelle. Three instances, at least, are known, where they have carried off children. In the year 1737, in Norway, a boy upward of two years of age was carried off by an eagle in the sight of his parents. Anderson, in his history of Iceland, asserts that in that island children of four and five years of age have experienced the same fate; and Ray mentions that in one of the

Orkneys an infant of a year old was seized in the talons of an eagle, and conveyed about four miles to its eyry. 'Edin. Ency.' The principal food of the young eagle is blood" (Barnes).

Job 40

God Continues His Questions to Job

A. Job 40:1-9: Does Job Want to Continue His Complaint?

1. Verses 1-2: "Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *him*? he that reproveth God, let him answer it."
 - a. If the complainer wants to continue his protest, then let him answer the previous questions. If Job thinks that he has any legitimate grievance, he should be willing to attempt an answer to the queries. Of course, no man could answer those questions. The purpose of the queries was to impress on the patriarch the vast distance between Job and the Almighty.
 - b. "The questions involved mysteries in the created world, in the divine government of the creation, and in the providence that controlled and directed the whole universe. Back of the creation, control, and providence there was an infinite wisdom directing the entire operation" (Hailey, p.349).
 - c. God brings up the deep subjects he has introduced to put Job's thinking in the right perspective; and since we are also members of the human family, we learn our position in respect to the Almighty. He is the Creator; we are the creatures he has brought into being.
2. "Verses 3-5: "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."
 - a. "Then Job answered Jehovah, and said, Behold, I am of small account; What shall I answer thee? I lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, and I will not answer; Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further" (ASV).
 - b. Job has quickly discerned that he is unfit to make any further complaints; he has resolved to put his hand over his mouth—he will say no more. He realizes he has spoken too much in his complaints; he understands that human wisdom cannot stand before God's infinite wisdom.
 - c. God has the right to take whatever action he chooses in running his universe; he will do nothing that is inconsistent with his own inherent goodness, or against his will, or against what is best for his offspring.
 - d. "He had argued boldly with his friends. He had, before them, maintained his innocence of the charges which they brought against him, and had supposed that he would be able to maintain the same argument before God. But when the opportunity was given, he felt that he was a poor, weak man; a guilty and miserable offender. It is a very different thing to maintain our cause before God, from what it is to maintain it before people; and though we may attempt to vindicate our own righteousness when we argue with our fellow-creatures, yet when we come to maintain it before God we shall be dumb. On earth, people vindicate themselves; what will they do when they come to stand before God in the judgment?" (Barnes).
3. Verses 6-7: "Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me."
 - a. The Lord is not through with the patriarch. He will raise additional questions, and Job is to answer these if he is capable. The questions will deal with (1) God's operations in his creation and (2) how could Job handle two of God's creatures—behemoth [Job 40:15-24] and leviathan [Job 41].
 - b. "Job's confession not having been sufficiently ample, the Divine discourse is continued through the remainder of this chapter, and through the whole of the next, the object being to break down the last remnants of pride and self-trust in the soul of the patriarch, and to bring him to complete submission and dependence on the Divine will" [Pulpit Commentary].
 - c. Job is to "gird up thy loins"—prepare for action. This statement suggests that the endeavor will be

strenuous for Job. As noticed earlier, the people then wore long robes as their outer garments. They found it necessary to bind these flowing robes up with belts to make it easier to move—as he worked, ran, or fought.

4. Verses 8-9: “Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous? Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?”
 - a. Will Job discredit God’s judgment (his justice); will he try to sustain a charge that God has acted unfairly in his dealings with the patriarch?
 - b. Job was not more righteous than the Almighty; he was far beneath the Lord in this quality, as well as in all other such attributes. God is infinite in everything; no man or angel can be on God’s level of perfection and power.
 - c. “The implication of all of this was that Job is *more just than God!* The Lord will, therefore, challenge Job to prove that! Jehovah’s argument, as follows, is this. If Job is more righteous than God, surely he is *more powerful as well*. But, is this the case? The Almighty asks: ‘Do you have an arm [symbol of power—Psalms 89:13] like God? Is your voice thunderous like His?’” (Jackson, p.84).
 - d. God’s power is indicated in many passages, including the following:
 - 1) Psalm 89:13: “Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.”
 - 2) Psalms 33:6-9: “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”
 - 3) Exodus 19:16-21: “And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.”
 - 4) Hebrews 12:21-29: “And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”
 - 5) John 11:43-44: “And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound

about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”

B. Job 40:10-14: Clothing of Deity.

1. Verses 10-11: “Deck thyself now *with* majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one *that is* proud, and abase him.”
 - a. God does an amazing thing here! He tells Job to array himself with all the attributes of deity and show the Almighty how he would operate the universe if he were in charge. “If I am not doing the job right, then show me how I ought to manage things!”
 - b. Job complained about being afflicted while he was trying to live the best life he could live; he thought he was being treated unfairly by what he had lost and by the physical malady of the sore boils. His friends had attributed his troubles to a sin-filled life, which Job denied. In fact, God had publicly stated that Job was an outstanding example of what God wanted a man to be (Job 1, 2). The Lord was not wrong in this assessment of the patriarch. But in the agony of his affliction, Job’s lamentations apparently went too far.
 - c. God is trying to show Job that in operating the affairs of the universe and in dealing with men, there is much that is to be done; infinite wisdom and power are necessary; the demands of justice must be fulfilled; good men are to be blessed and aided; wicked men are to be punished. This is only a short list of things that must be done. How can all these matters be attended to? In God’s wisdom, he knows that he cannot punish every evil immediately; and he cannot bless every good deed fully right away. His affairs are so complex and far-reaching, that only a divine being can comprehend them.
 - 1) When a man commits a crime against society and God, punishment is necessary; if that individual is imprisoned or executed, there may be disastrous effects that innocent people must suffer. In the interest of these innocent ones, perhaps God will delay punishing that man.
 - 2) In order for people to learn necessary lessons about trusting and obeying the Almighty, God may see fit to bring some hardships upon a good man; his case becomes an object lesson for others of his own time, and perhaps for many generations yet to be born. This was the situation with Job’s experiences—uncounted millions have profited from his ordeal. “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (Jas. 5:11).
2. Verses 12-14: “Look on every one *that is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in secret. Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.”
 - a. Having Job think from the viewpoint of God, the Lord tells him to consider every proud individual, and design a plan by which to bring him down; he is to look at the case of some wicked man, and deal with him in the proper way. In your anger, execute the wicked; shroud their faces in the burial cloth; cover their bodies in the earth.
 - b. As suggested earlier, before taking action against these men, Job must consider the effect this action will have on others—the innocent ones then present, and on people who are yet to live.
 - c. When Job has perfectly executed justice, then God will admit that he is great, and that he has the wisdom and power to save himself. But neither Job nor any other man was capable of doing these things! God is, in a very sharp way, informing Job that he is not qualified to rule the world; man is simply not intelligent enough to do so; and neither is he qualified to call the Master into question.

C. Job 40:15-24: Behemoth.

1. Verses 15-17: “Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox. Lo now, his strength *is* in his loins, and his force *is* in the navel of his belly. He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.”
 - a. Other versions:
-

- 1) “Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox. Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly. He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together” (ASV).
 - 2) “Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; He eats grass like an ox. See now, his strength is in his hips, And his power is in his stomach muscles. He moves his tail like a cedar; The sinews of his thighs are tightly knit” (NKJV).
 - 3) "Behold, Behemoth, which I made as I made you; he eats grass like an ox. Behold, his strength in his loins, and his power in the muscles of his belly. He makes his tail stiff like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are knit together” (ESV).
- b. The Bible speaks of this great beast as a herbivorous animal, not as a predator. The descriptions given of this large animal gives us insight into his size and probable kind.
- 1) He eats grass (15).
 - 2) Other animals graze nearby without harm (20).
 - 3) He lies peaceably in the shade of the trees (20).
 - 4) He laps up water from the river (23).
 - 5) He is a very strongly-built and powerful beast (18).
 - 6) He moves his tail like a cedar (17).
 - 7) He is the *chief* [largest] of the ways of God (19).
 - 8) Snares cannot entrap him (24).
- c. The English word “behemoth” is the anglicized form of the Hebrew word *behema* (used nine times in the Old Testament). Usually, the term means “beast,” but in our text, a specific animal is meant. It is used in this passage in its plural form, to give intensity to its size—“a great beast.”
- 1) The descriptions given eliminate the elephant, the crocodile, the hippopotamus, and every other animal on earth today. “And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:24-25). The three classifications (1) cattle, (2) creeping things, and (3) beasts of the earth include all such animals that are present today, and the dinosaurs. God states in Job 40:14 that he had “made” behemoth. If he had not made him during the operation described in Genesis 1, when did he make him? The text shows that God made behemoth at the time when he made Adam.
 - 2) Behemoth could only be one of the various dinosaur species which once roamed the earth. Why did not the writer of Job use the word *dinosaur*? That word was not invented until the 1840s: “The word dinosaur was coined in 1842 by British anatomist Sir Richard Owen, derived from the Greek words *deinos*, meaning ‘marvelous’ or ‘terrible,’ and *sauros*, meaning ‘lizard’” [Encarta, © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation].
 - 3) The reason the subject of behemoth came up was this: Job had been complaining about various things. God asked Job a series of questions (Job 38-39)—which the patriarch could not answer. Jehovah then brought up two powerful creatures—one on land [behemoth] and one in the sea [leviathan]. Neither of these creatures, which God had created, could be controlled by man. The Lord’s point is this: *No man is competent to complain about God’s operations.*
- d. If behemoth and leviathan are not animals that are alive on the earth, then what were they? It is obvious that the evidence presented in our text does not fit any animal we have seen. Since the Bible can be established as the inspired word of God, then these are not mythical beasts; God would not have supported the foolish speculations and inane inventions of pagans.
-

- 1) It follows logically that behemoth in this passage [and leviathan of the next chapter] is not the elephant or hippopotamus; the details do not harmonize with God's descriptions.
 - 2) Since they are not any creature which is alive on earth today, then they must be some creatures which are now extinct. The only alternative we have is to see them as members of what we call dinosaurs; these beasts roamed the earth [or lived in the sea] only a few thousand years ago [not the millions of years theorized by the evolutionists].
 - 3) The Bible says:
 - a) Exodus 20:11: "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Every creature that has ever lived on earth had its beginning in the statement of this passage; this includes all beasts and man.
 - b) Matthew 19:4: "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female" (cf. Mark 10:6). According to Christ, who was present at the beginning, man and woman [in the persons of Adam and Eve] were created at the beginning]. That means that man and dinosaurs both were on the earth at the same time. In fact, when God guided Adam to give names to all of the beasts, the first dinosaurs were among the throng [Gen. 2:19-20).
 - c) Psalms 33:6: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."
 - d) Job 26:13: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."
 - e. That man and dinosaurs lived at the same time is proved by a variety of evidence.
 - 1) Footprints of man and dinosaur have been found in the same rock formations.
 - 2) Paintings made by primitive man which clearly represent dinosaurs have been found. How could a man of ancient times have known what a dinosaur looked like if he had not seen one?
 - 3) "Skeletons of ten perfectly modern humans have been excavated from fifty eight feet down in the Dakota Sandstone, over an area spanning about 50 by 100 feet. This formation is a member of the Lower Cretaceous, supposedly 140 million years old. It is known for its dinosaurs and is the same formation found at Dinosaur National Monument. At least four of the ten individuals are female. One is an infant. Some of the bones are articulated [i.e., joined together]. Some are not, appearing to have been washed into place. No obvious tools or artifacts were found associated with the bones. The bulldozer driver who uncovered the first bones in 1971 expresses certainty that there were no tunnels or cracks in the extremely hard overlying layers of rock. The bones are partially replaced with malachite (a green mineral) and turquoise, thus appropriately named 'Malachite Man.' The evidence appears obvious that these 10 men, woman and children, were buried rapidly by some catastrophe, like a flood. Articulated skeletons indicate rapid burial. Some propose to explain these bones by arguing that they were mining, when the mine collapsed. However there is no indication of tunnels, and woman and small children would not likely be included in a mining operation. Additionally, no tools have been found and there are no crushed bones which would be expected if the mine caved in. Another invalid explanation is that this is a mass grave and they were buried. This cannot be true because the living would have to dig a grave 50-100 feet deep through extremely hard sandstone layers. The modern mining operation was halted in the 1970's because the sandstone was so hard it was destroying the bulldozers. These humans appear to have been buried by the same catastrophe that buried dinosaurs in this continent spanning formation. Humans and dinosaurs must have lived at the same time!" [Don Patton website].
 - 4) The following is also from brother Patton's website:
-

- a) In the early 1930's, his father found many of these ceremonial burial stones in the area's numerous Peru-tomb tombs. Dr. Cabrera has continued his father's research and has collected over 1100 of them. Approximately one third depict the pornographic culture of the Peru-tombs, graphically portrayed in the artifacts of that period (c.a. 500-1500 AD). Some picture their idolatry. The Indian chronicler, Juan de Santa Cruz Pachachuti Llamgui wrote that at the time of the Peru-tomb Pachachuti many carved stones were found in the Kingdom of Chperu-tomb, in Chinchayunga, which were called "Manco." (Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Llamqui: "Relacion de antique dades d'este reyno del Peru.") The reference to "Chinchayunga" was the low country of the central coast of Peru, where Ica is located today. "Manco" is believed to be a corruption of the Aymara word "malku" which means "Chieftain" or "Lord of vassals." It is noted that some of these stones were taken back to Spain. The chronicler of the Peru-tombs wrote in about 1570.
- b) The OJO, Lima Domingo, a major newspaper in Lima, Peru on October 3, 1993 described a Spanish Priest traveling in the area of Ica in 1525 inquiring about the unusual engraved stones with strange animals on them.
- c) All of this is very interesting since "modern" man's conception of dinosaurs did not begin until the 1800's when the word dinosaur was coined (1841). These stones do not depict skeletons but live, active dinosaurs, most of whom are seen interacting with man. The obvious implication is that ancient Peruvians saw and lived with dinosaurs.
- f. Behemoth, God said, moved his tail like a cedar. The cedars of Lebanon, similar to the great redwoods of our west coast, are commonly mentioned in the Old Testament. Some scholars have understood behemoth to be either an elephant or a hippopotamus, but neither of these two fit the description about his tail. Others have speculated behemoth might be a crocodile, but the crocodile is a meat-eater, while behemoth ate grass.
- g. Behemoth was very strong, with his power being especially in his loins. He was tough—the sinews were wrapped together. As the strands comprising a rope are made much stronger as a whole than they could be separate, so the muscles and tendons of behemoth are extremely strong.
2. Verses 18-20: “His bones *are as* strong pieces of brass; his bones *are* like bars of iron. He *is* the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach *unto him*. Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.”
- a. Other versions;
- 1) “His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him. Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play” (ASV).
 - 2) “His bones are like beams of bronze, His ribs like bars of iron. He is the first of the ways of God; Only He who made him can bring near His sword. Surely the mountains yield food for him, And all the beasts of the field play there” (NKJV).
 - 3) “His bones are tubes of bronze, his limbs like bars of iron. He is the first of the works of God; let him who made him bring near his sword! For the mountains yield food for him where all the wild beasts play” (ESV).
- b. Behemoth was strongly made; his bones are described by its Designer as being strong as brass and iron. He is further said to be the “chief”—the largest of God’s creatures. He is chief in point of size. The word [*chief*] is also found in these places:
- 1) Numbers 24:20: “And he looked on Amalek, and took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; But his latter end shall come to destruction” (ASV). “It is called ‘the first of nations,’ not certainly as being foremost in their attack upon Israel; but [as *goyyim* (OT:1471)

- means pagan nations] the Amalekites were the first of contemporary pagan people, probably in point of antiquity, certainly of power (cf. Num 24:7; Amos 6:1)” [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Copyright © 1997 by BibleSoft].
- 2) Numbers 24:7: “He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.”
 - 3) Amos 6:1: “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!”
- c. Behemoth, therefore, seems to be described as the largest [at least, one of the largest] of God’s creatures. The descriptions given fit the brontosaurus (now called *apatosaurus*), which appears to weigh about 30 tons, much bigger than the elephant and other land animals today.
 - d. “There is a growing body of evidence that dinosaurs and humans were contemporary. In 1970 newspapers reported the discovery of cave paintings in Zimbabwe. The paintings were made by bushmen who ruled that area from about 1500 B.C., until a couple of hundred years ago. Along with accurate representations of the elephant and the giraffe, is a painting of an Apatosaurus (brontosaurus). These art works have greatly puzzled scientists since bushmen are known to have painted from real life! (*Bible-Science Newsletter*, April 15, 1970, p. 2)” [Wayne Jackson, Christian Courier Website].
 - e. The gigantic size and strength of behemoth make puny man afraid to approach him, even if he is armed (as with a sword or spear). Behemoth’s Creator is not afraid to come near him, for the Creator is vastly superior to anything he has created. Through the centuries, men have been able to kill or capture elephants, and even tame them for useful purposes—this was not possible with behemoth. Men are able to kill or capture hippos and crocodiles.
 - f. Behemoth, being a herbivorous animal and not a predator, finds ample food in the mountains. This information rules out his being a hippo. There is no animal on earth today which fits the descriptions given of behemoth. The obvious conclusion must be that he was one of the dinosaurs, most likely the brontosaurus [now known as *apatosaurus*].
3. Verses 21-24: “He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens. The shady trees cover him *with* their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about. Behold, he drinketh up a river, *and* hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. He taketh it with his eyes: *his* nose pierceth through snares.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens. The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about. Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares” (ASV).
 - 2) “He lies under the lotus trees, In a covert of reeds and marsh. The lotus trees cover him with their shade; The willows by the brook surround him. Indeed the river may rage, Yet he is not disturbed; He is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth, Though he takes it in his eyes, Or one pierces his nose with a snare” (NKJV).
 - 3) “Under the lotus plants he lies, in the shelter of the reeds and in the marsh. For his shade the lotus trees cover him; the willows of the brook surround him. Behold, if the river is turbulent he is not frightened; he is confident though Jordan rushes against his mouth. Can one take him by his eyes, or pierce his nose with a snare?” (ESV).
 - b. Behemoth is pictured as lying in the shade of the trees, near a river. He is able to drink copious amounts of water. If the river rises to flood stage, he is unconcerned.
 - c. “[He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth] Or, rather, ‘He is confident [i.e. unmoved] though Jordan should rush forth to his mouth.’ The idea is, that though the whole river Jordan should
-

seem to pour down upon him as 'if' it were about to rush into his mouth, it would not disturb him. Even such an impetuous torrent would not alarm him....The mention of the Jordan shows indeed that this river was known to the writer of this book, and that it was probably written by someone who resided in the vicinity." [Barnes].

- d. "He taketh it with his eyes; rather, Shall one take him when he is looking on? Can he be captured i.e., 'when his eyes are open,' and when he sees what is intended? No. If captured at all, it must be by subtlety, when he is not on the watch. His nose pierceth through snares; rather, Or can one bore his nostril with cords? i.e., can we lead him away captive, with a ring or hook passed through his nose, and a cord attached (compare the next chapter, ver. 2)?" [Pulpit Commentary].
-

Job 41

God Speaks of Leviathan

A. Introductory Remarks About Leviathan by Wayne Jackson:

1. Next, Job is encouraged to reflect upon the monster called “leviathan,” which some believe was a crocodile (ASVfn). While “leviathan” may be used symbolically in some contexts (cf. Psalm 74:14; Isaiah 27:1), the expression does not appear to be so employed in this narrative. The etymology of the word seems to suggest that which is “bent,” “twisted,” or gathers itself “in folds.” It was some sort of aquatic creature.
2. There is an extended affirmation that leviathan is incapable of being captured and tamed by man (vv. 1-10). [Note: Herodotus recorded that the Egyptians tamed the crocodile and adorned it with jewelry (II.69)!]. If the crocodile *is* meant, this variety must have been significantly larger than what is now known to man. There is fossil evidence that some crocs of the ancient world were as much as 50 feet long (more than four times the size of his modern descendant). The description of this creature, enhanced perhaps by poetic imagery, continues through the balance the chapter (vv. 12-34). [*Job’s Final Exam*, Christian Courier Website].

B. Job 41: The Greatness of Leviathan.

1. Verses 1-2: “Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord *which* thou lettest down? Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fishhook? Or press down his tongue with a cord? Canst thou put a rope into his nose? Or pierce his jaw through with a hook?” (ASV).
 - 2) “Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, Or snare his tongue with a line which you lower? Can you put a reed through his nose, Or pierce his jaw with a hook?” (NKJV).
 - b. The overall point in this section of Job [ch. 38-41] is to demonstrate the overwhelming power of the Almighty; by doing this, the Lord will have shown the patriarch [and all who read this book] that God is not to be taken lightly. His wisdom and power are put in stark contrast with the ignorance and weakness of any man.
 - c. Scholars have discussed the identity of leviathan for centuries. The common view is that the crocodile is meant. The descriptions given indicate some kind of water monster, perhaps a whale, but there is a growing number who think leviathan was some now-extinct dinosaur.
 - d. Job is asked whether he would be able to catch leviathan with fishing equipment. If the patriarch were not familiar with leviathan, the question would have been meaningless. Obviously, Job knew what this monster was, and had enough knowledge of him to recognize the truth of God’s questions.
 - e. Leviathan could not be caught like a fish; he was too big and strong. As Wayne Jackson said, he cannot be either hooked or roped! He can neither be caught nor tamed. Leviathan is one of three possible beasts:
 - 1) Some allege he was a mythological beast. But God would not lend credence to a belief in some non-existent being.
 - 2) Others suggest that leviathan is one of the animals with which we are familiar today (particularly, the crocodile). The descriptions given do not fit the crocodile.
 - 3) Another view is that leviathan was one of the sea-dwelling dinosaurs, which no longer exists on earth. This seems to be a more likely choice.
 - f. The leviathan also is described as being too terrible to approach and too strong to capture. “Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fishhook? Or press down his tongue with a cord? Canst thou put a rope into

his nose? Or pierce his jaw through with a hook?...If one lay at him with the sword, it cannot avail; Nor the spear, the dart, nor the pointed shaft” (ASV). Herodotus reports that the Egyptians were able to capture, and even tame, crocodiles. “The Crocodile Hunter” (Steve Irwin) has been seen on his television program capturing and safely handling crocodiles. It is unlikely that leviathan was a crocodile.

- g. “Or his tongue with a cord which thou letteth down? rather, or press down his tongue with a cord? (see the Revised Version); i.e. ‘tie a rope round his lower jaw, and so press down his tongue.’ Many savage animals are represented in the Assyrian sculptures as led along by a rope attached to their mouths” [Pulpit Commentary].
2. Verses 3-6: “Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft *words* unto thee? Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? Wilt thou play with him as *with* a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “Will he make many supplications unto thee? Or will he speak soft words unto thee? Will he make a covenant with thee, That thou shouldest take him for a servant for ever? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? Will the bands of fishermen make traffic of him? Will they part him among the merchants?” (ASV).
 - 2) “Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak softly to you? Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him as a servant forever? Will you play with him as with a bird, Or will you leash him for your maidens? Will your companions make a banquet of him? Will they apportion him among the merchants?” (NKJV).
 - b. God asks Job whether this great beast would make supplications of the patriarch if Job were able to capture him. Would he beg to be released? Obviously, not. It is implied that his great strength and size would not require any soft words from him.
 - c. Would it be possible for a man to tame leviathan so that he became a pet? Could he be so domesticated that a man’s daughters could play with him without danger? Certainly not!
 - d. Could anyone make a covenant with him so as to tame him? Herodotus says the Egyptians tamed the crocodile. “The crocodile is esteemed sacred by some of the Egyptians, by others he is treated as an enemy. Those who live near Thebes, and those who dwell round Lake Moeris, regard them with especial veneration. In each of these places they keep one crocodile in particular, who is taught to be tame and tractable. They adorn his ears with ear-rings of molten stone or gold, and put bracelets on his fore-paws, giving him daily a set portion of bread, with a certain number of victims; and, after having thus treated him with the greatest possible attention while alive, they embalm him when he dies and bury him in a sacred repository. The people of Elephantine [a section of ancient Egypt] on the other hand, are so far from considering these animals as sacred that they even eat their flesh. In the Egyptian language they are not called crocodiles, but Champsae. The name of crocodiles was given them by the Ionians, who remarked their resemblance to the lizards, which in Ionia live in the walls and are called crocodiles” (Website). Herodotus lived from about 485 to 425 B.C.
 - e. His fierce nature would not make his flesh a commercial possibility. There would be too much danger and effort required to take him as prey—indeed the previous descriptions of leviathan make it obvious that he could not be taken.
 3. Verses 7-9: “Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears? Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more. Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not *one* be cast down even at the sight of him?”
 - a. Other translations:

- 1) “Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons, Or his head with fish-spears? Lay thy hand upon him; Remember the battle, and do so no more. Behold, the hope of him is in vain: Will not one be cast down even at the sight of him?” (ASV).
 - 2) “Can you fill his skin with harpoons, Or his head with fishing spears? Lay your hand on him; Remember the battle--Never do it again! Indeed, any hope of overcoming him is false; Shall one not be overwhelmed at the sight of him?” (NKJV).
- b. Leviathan had been so constructed that his tough hide was impervious to the usual means of hunting and fishing; the harpoons and spears would not penetrate. One effort to capture him would be enough to show that the struggle is too risky and non-productive. To make one losing attempt to take him would teach a lasting lesson to leave that monster alone in the future!

C. Job 41:10-17: God is Greater than Leviathan.

1. Verses 10-11: “None *is so* fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me? Who hath prevented me, that I should repay *him? whatsoever is* under the whole heaven is mine.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “None is so fierce that he dare stir him up; Who then is he that can stand before me? Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him? Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine” (ASV).
 - 2) “No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up. Who then is able to stand against Me? Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine” (NKJV).
 - b. The Lord makes this point by his remarks here—since leviathan is beyond man’s ability to capture or kill him, how much less would mortal man be able to oppose the Almighty. Job had wanted to discuss matters with God: “Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book. Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me. I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him” (Job 31:35-37).
 - c. “If one dare not stand before leviathan and stir him up, how can he expect to stand before the creature’s maker and challenge Him to a conflict? The results of a confrontation and battle with Jehovah would be such an awesome struggle and unforgettable event as not to be attempted again (v. 10). Job had asked for a show-down with God; he had virtually demanded an answer from Him (31:35-37)” [Hailey, p.359].
 - d. Leviathan could not be overpowered and subdued so as to render him helpless to a man; he could not be placed under obligation to a man. Neither can the Creator. No man has any power over Jehovah to obligate him to answer to him. No man can make God indebted to him. He owns everything in the entire universe. Man cannot give anything to God that God needs, and thus obligate the Creator to repay the created. As leviathan could not be harnessed and put in obligation to his captor, so God could not be controlled by mortal man and required to answer to him. God is the great Creator and the source of all good gifts (Jas. 1:17); he was on the scene before man was created—he preceded man in point of time and in power and wisdom.
2. Verses 12-17: “I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion. Who can discover the face of his garment? *or* who can come *to him* with his double bridle? Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth *are* terrible round about. *His scales are his* pride, shut up together *as with* a close seal. One is so near to another, that no air can come between them. They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “I will not keep silence concerning his limbs, Nor his mighty strength, nor his goodly frame. Who can strip off his outer garment? Who shall come within his jaws? Who can open the doors of his

face? Round about his teeth is terror. His strong scales are his pride, Shut up together as with a close seal. One is so near to another, That no air can come between them. They are joined one to another; They stick together, so that they cannot be sundered” (ASV).

- 2) “I will not conceal his limbs, His mighty power, or his graceful proportions. Who can remove his outer coat? Who can approach him with a double bridle? Who can open the doors of his face, With his terrible teeth all around? His rows of scales are his pride, Shut up tightly as with a seal; one is so near another That no air can come between them; They are joined one to another, They stick together and cannot be parted” (NKJV).
- b. To make the point even stronger, God begins to describe the awesome power of leviathan; he will not conceal from Job just how fierce and untamable that creature was. The stronger that leviathan is seen to be, the greater our appreciation of the infinite power of Jehovah. The Lord will therefore help Job to perceive just how great leviathan is. He mentions the beast’s parts [his limbs], his mighty strength, and his graceful proportions.
- c. Leviathan’s outer garment would be his tough hide—a virtual coat of mail. We have already been told that man’s weapons would be unable to inflict injury to him. This outer garment could not be stripped away [ASV] to expose his vital parts.
- d. What man would be able to pry open the great mouth of leviathan? The jaws of such creatures are powerful; could a man force them to open against the beast’s will? The mouth of a hippopotamus is the most impressive part of his makeup, but a hippo does not have scales (vs. 15), thus would not be leviathan. Leviathan’s teeth are a dangerous weapon which no man would be willing to face. What man would bring a double bridle and attempt to harness leviathan? Some scholars think this reference is to the dangerous double row of teeth the beast may have had.
- e. His scales are his pride. Whatever this beast may have been, it was protected by closely-fitted scales. While scales are part of the crocodile’s features, that is not the only creature possessing scales. We have no reason to doubt that some of the dinosaurs were likewise protected by scales. The scales of leviathan were so close that air could not penetrate between them, and they could not be parted.

D. Job 41:18-34: Leviathan is Frightening.

1. Verses 18-21: “By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lamps, *and* sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as *out* of a seething pot or caldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “His sneezings flash forth light, And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning torches, And sparks of fire leap forth. Out of his nostrils a smoke goeth, As of a boiling pot and burning rushes. His breath kindleth coals, And a flame goeth forth from his mouth” (ASV).
 - 2) “His sneezings flash forth light, And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lights; Sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke goes out of his nostrils, As from a boiling pot and burning rushes. His breath kindles coals, And a flame goes out of his mouth” (NKJV).
 - b. The following is from Wayne Jackson:
 - 1) “When he sneezes, light flashes forth, and his eyes are like the rising sun (18)—perhaps first to appear as he rises from the water. Fire streams out of his mouth and smoke boils from his nostrils (19-21).
 - 2) “[Note: It must not be assumed that this language implies a mythological nature. It may simply be poetic hyperbole which graphically portrays a blast of steam from the creature’s mouth and nose as he emerges from beneath the water. The Lord had spoken earlier of the war-horse ‘swallowing the ground’ (39:24)—a figurative expression, yet the meaning is clear. Additionally, Dr. Duane

Gish, in his interesting book, *Dinosaurs Those Terrible Lizards*, has made an unusual suggestion. First, he points out that there is precedent for a ‘fire-breathing’ creature in nature. The bombardier beetle [*Brachinus*] is equipped with a firing mechanism that allows him to shoot a fiery stream of hot [212°F] gases into his enemy’s face when attacked. This is accomplished by the mixture of two chemicals—hydrogen peroxide and hydroquinone—in little storage tanks in his tail. So, the *principle* is known. Second, Gish observes that there were three types of dinosaurs that had helmet-like bony crests on the tops of their heads. Their fossils reveal that these structures were hollow and they were connected by tubes to their noses. He suggests that it is not impossible that these great beasts possessed a firing apparatus somewhat analogous to that of the bombardier beetle, and that this may be the creature referred to in Job 41:19-21....One is inclined to wonder why so many widely separated ancient cultures had traditions of ‘fire-breathing dragons’] (*The Book of Job*, pp.87f).

- c. God mentions the brightness of leviathan’s eyes in the morning. He states that burning torches go out of his mouth, that sparks of fire leap forth. He says that smoke proceeds out of his nostrils, as from a boiling pot, and that his breath kindles fires; a flame issues forth from his mouth. From the statement about “smoke” coming from his nostrils as from a boiling pot, we might get the idea that the smoke was only his breath turning to visible vapor as he breathes on a frosty morning; but how would we account for the flame that comes from his mouth? And how could we explain the fact that the flames from his mouth ignites fires? Mr. Gish may be right! Other commentators try to force every detail given to describe leviathan, to fit the crocodile. One prime objection to the crocodile is the statement that leviathan could not be captured and brought under man’s control—but the Egyptians were able to do that very thing with the crocodile (see the quote from Herodotus given earlier in this chapter).
2. Verses 22-24: “In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him. The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved. His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether *millstone*.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “In his neck abideth strength, And terror danceth before him. The flakes of his flesh are joined together: They are firm upon him; they cannot be moved. His heart is as firm as a stone; Yea, firm as the nether millstone” (ASV).
 - 2) “Strength dwells in his neck, And sorrow dances before him. The folds of his flesh are joined together; They are firm on him and cannot be moved. His heart is as hard as stone, Even as hard as the lower millstone” (NKJV).
 - b. There is great strength in his neck. This is certainly true with the crocodile, who is able after he seizes his prey, to thrash his head from side-to-side, as he rolls in the water, tearing off portions of his victim into pieces small enough for him to swallow. But there are other beasts with great strength in the neck, including presumably some of the extinct dinosaurs and sea beasts of long ago.
 - c. “[And sorrow is turned into joy before him] Margin, ‘rejoiceth.’ The proper meaning of the word used here *taaduwts* (OT:1750) is ‘to dance, to leap, to skip;’ and the sense is, that ‘terror dances before him.’ It does not refer to the motion of the animal, as if he were brisk and rapid. but it is a poetic expression, as if terror played or pranced along wherever he came. Strength ‘resided’ in his neck, but his approach made terror and alarm play before him wherever he went; that is, produced terror and dread. In his neck is permanent, calm strength; before him, everything trembles and is agitated. The beauty of the passage lies in this contrast between the strength and firmness which repose calmly in the neck of the animal, and the consternation which he everywhere produces, causing all to tremble as he approaches” (Barnes).
 - d. The “flakes of his flesh” are joined together. The scholars think this speaks of the parts of an animal’s body which normally is soft and yielding, perhaps hangs down and moves as the beast maneuvers

around. But in the case of leviathan, this part of his body is also firm and strong; there is nothing that is soft and yielding about this great creature. His entire body is a strong unit, with no weak points that could be attacked with deadly results.

- e. Leviathan's heart is also strong, as firm as stone; it is compared to the lower stone of a millstone. The lower [nether] millstone was stationary; the upper stone was turned, grinding the grain that was caught between the two. This stationary stone bore the weight of the upper stone and was therefore subject to heavier wear.
 - f. "The two most primitive methods of grinding grain were (1) by pounding it in a mortar, and (2) by rubbing it between two stones. In Num. 11:8 both methods are mentioned as used for rendering the manna more fit for cooking. Numerous examples of both mill and mortar have been found in ancient excavations. Bliss and Macalister in their excavations at Gezer and other places have found specimens of what is called the saddle-quern or mill, which consists of two stones. The 'nether' stone, always made of hard lava or basalt from the district of the Hauran, was a large heavy slab varying in length from 1 ½ ft. to 2 ¾ ft., and in width from 10 inches to 1 ⅓ ft. Its upper surface was hollowed out slightly, which made it look a little like a saddle and may have suggested the name of 'riding millstone' applied by the Hebrews to the upper stone which rested on it (Judg. 9:53). The 'upper stone' or 'rider' was much smaller, 4 inches to 8 in. long and 2 ¾ inches to 6 inches wide, and of varying shapes. This could be seized with the two hands and rubbed back and forth over the nether stone much the same as clothes are scrubbed on a wash-board. Such a stone could be used as a weapon (Judg. 9:53; 2 Sam. 11:21), or given as a pledge (Deut. 24:6)" [ISBE, Biblesoft].
 - 1) Numbers 11:8: "And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil."
 - 2) Judges 9:53: "And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull."
 - 3) 2 Samuel 11:21: "Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."
 - 4) Deuteronomy 24:6: "No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh a man's life to pledge."
 - g. Another arrangement was for the upper stone to be fitted with handles which could be used to turn the stone, while grain was fed between the two stones, crushing the grain into flour or meal. "That used by the Hebrews consisted of two circular stones, each 2 feet in diameter and half a foot thick, the lower of which was called the 'nether millstone' (Job 41:24) and the upper the 'rider.' The upper stone was turned round by a stick fixed in it as a handle. There were then no public mills, and thus each family required to be provided with a hand-mill. The corn was ground daily, generally by the women of the house (Isa 47:1,2; Matt 24:41)" [Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003 Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
3. Verses 25-30: "When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. He esteemeth iron as straw, *and* brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear. Sharp stones *are* under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) "When he raiseth himself up, the mighty are afraid: By reason of consternation they are beside themselves. If one lay at him with the sword, it cannot avail; Nor the spear, the dart, nor the

- pointed shaft. He counteth iron as straw, And brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: Sling-stones are turned with him into stubble. Clubs are counted as stubble: He laugheth at the rushing of the javelin. His underparts are like sharp potsherds: He spreadeth as it were a threshing-wain upon the mire” (ASV).
- 2) “When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; Because of his crashings they are beside themselves. Though the sword reaches him, it cannot avail; Nor does spear, dart, or javelin. He regards iron as straw, And bronze as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee; Slingstones become like stubble to him. Darts are regarded as straw; He laughs at the threat of javelins. His undersides are like sharp potsherds; He spreads pointed marks in the mire” (NKJV).
- b. Leviathan is pictured as a mighty beast that is impervious to the weapons men may bring against him. When he is subjected to attack, he raises himself up against his enemies; they are filled with terror; they do not have sufficient courage to continue the assault. This fearsome beast would laugh at a man who shook a spear at him; such an action might cause another man to shake with fear, but it would be of no consequence to leviathan.
 - c. But if some hardy soul persists, and tries to use a sword, a spear, a dart, or a pointed shaft, leviathan is unimpressed; the enemy might as well try to bring him down with straw, or rotten wood. He is not afraid of an arrow, and slingstones are no more dangerous to him than straw. In ordinary combat, the sling was a dreadful weapon in the hands of one who was skilled in its use:
 - 1) Judges 20:16: “Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men lefthanded; every one could sling stones at an hair breadth, and not miss.”
 - 2) 1 Samuel 17:40, 49: “And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine....And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.”
 - d. “Darts are counted as stubble; rather, the club is counted as stubble. Maces, either of hard wood or of metal, were used by the Assyrians ('Ancient Monarchies,' vol. 2. p. 64). They had heavy heads, and were quite as effective weapons as either swords or spears....He laugheth at the shaking of a spear; rather, at the rushing of the javelin (see the Revised Version). Sharp stones are under him; rather, jagged potsherds are under him; i.e. ‘his belly is covered with jagged scales’He spreadeth sharp pointed things (rather, a threshing-wain, or a corn-drag) upon the mire. He leaves on the mud on which he has lain, i.e. an impression as of an Oriental threshing-wain, or corn-drag, which is ‘a thick plank of timber, stuck full on the under side, of flints or hard cutting stones arranged in the form of the palate or rough tongue of a cow’ (Sir C. Fellows, 'Asia Minor,' p. 70). The mud-banks on which crocodiles have been lying are said to be scored all over with such impressions” [Pulpit Commentary]. [The Pulpit Commentary writer supposes that leviathan is a crocodile, but for reasons we have already discussed, the depiction appears to describe some creature associated with the dinosaur family].
 - e. Leviathan might have had hard scales [or some such things] on his underside, which could leave marks on the mire with which he might have come in contact, as he left or entered the water.
4. Verses 31-34: “He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; *one* would think the deep *to be* hoary. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high *things*: he *is* a king over all the children of pride.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; One would think the deep to be hoary. Upon earth there is not his like, That is made without fear. He beholdeth everything that is high: He is king over all the sons of pride”
-

- (ASV).
- 2) “He makes the deep boil like a pot; He makes the sea like a pot of ointment. He leaves a shining wake behind him; one would think the deep had white hair. On earth there is nothing like him, Which is made without fear. He beholds every high thing; He is king over all the children of pride” (NKJV).
- b. Jehovah now gives a description of the movements of leviathan, when he moves in the water; he causes the water to boil like a pot that has been placed over a hot fire. The “pot of ointment” is difficult; the scholars allege that this is a reference to the smell emitted by the beast [which they think is a crocodile]. Since the thought is used in direct connection with the water boiling like a pot, it seems to this scribe that the pot of ointment might picture the bubbling that would result when someone was preparing some sort of ointment over a fire.
- c. As leviathan moves through the water, he leaves behind a discernible wake; the bubbles that would be created as he swims would have a shining appearance, a white trail in the water. Large ships leave such trails as they travel over the sea, a wake that might stretch out for a long distance behind them. The beast God describes would be of great size, and would leave a trail of bubbles in his wake caused by his passage through the water.
- d. The statement of verse thirty-three seems to eliminate the crocodile, for there are greater, stronger, and more fearsome beasts on earth today than the largest crocodile. What damage could a crocodile do to a bull elephant? Or to a rhinoceros? The crocodile is certainly fearsome and fearless, but this can also be said about the elephant and rhinoceros, and these two are much bigger and stronger than their amphibious counterpart.
- e. “[He is a king over all the children of pride] Referring, by ‘the children of pride,’ to the animals that are bold, proud, courageous—as the lion, the panther, etc. The lion is often spoken of as ‘the king of the forest,’ or ‘the king of beasts,’ and in a similar sense the leviathan is here spoken of as at the head of the animal creation. He is afraid of none of them; he is subdued by none of them; he is the prey of none of them. The whole argument, therefore, closes with this statement, that he is at the head of the animal creation; and it was by this magnificent description of the power of the creatures which God had made, that it was intended to impress the mind of Job with a sense of the majesty and power of the Creator. It had the effect. He was overawed with a conviction of the greatness of God, and he saw how wrong it had been for him to presume to call in question the justice, or sit in judgment on the doings, of such a Being. God did not, indeed, go into an examination of the various points which had been the subject of controversy; he did not explain the nature of his moral administration so as to relieve the mind from perplexity; but he evidently meant to leave the impression that he was vast and incomprehensible in his government, infinite in power, and had a right to dispose of his creation as he pleased. No one can doubt that God could with infinite ease have so explained the nature of his administration as to free the mind from perplexity, and so as to have resolved the difficulties which hung over the various subjects which had come into debate between Job and his friends. ‘Why’ he did not do this, is nowhere stated, and can only be the subject of conjecture” (Barnes).
-

Job 42

Job's Response and Conclusion

A. Job 42:1-6: Job Acknowledges God's Greatness.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee. Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not" (KJV).
 - a. "Then Job answered Jehovah, and said, I know that thou canst do all things, And that no purpose of thine can be restrained. Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not, Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not" (ASV).
 - b. God has shown Job that He is not absent from the workings of the universe. He operates in and sustains his creations. He has impressed on Job the majesty and power that pertains to deity. No one has the right to accuse God of being unrighteous or uncaring. Instead, man must learn to trust the Lord, love him, and serve him faithfully and reverently. The effect of God's conversation with Job is seen in the following verses.
 - c. The patriarch acknowledges the omnipotence and omnipresence and omniscience of God; he can know everything he chooses to know; no one can hide anything from him. Job is aware that God knows all that has happened to Job, and has heard all that passed between Job and his friends. An awareness has descended upon him that his complaints have been heard by Jehovah—a thought that produced consternation within the heart of the grand old patriarch.
 - d. God has asked a question in Job 38:1-2: "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Job raises this point here: "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?" Job admits that he has been guilty of this very thing; he confesses that he has spoken of things which he did not understand. These things were too wonderful for him to handle. The word *wonderful* in the Hebrew denotes something that is hard to grasp, too high to comprehend, marvelous and wondrous matters.
2. Verses 4-6: "Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (KJV).
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) "Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; But now mine eye seeth thee: Wherefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes" (ASV).
 - 2) "Listen, please, and let me speak; *You said*, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.' I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes" (NKJV).
 - b. In his lamentations, Job had said some things he now regrets. He admits that there are things that are beyond his comprehension, as there are with us all. He is admitting the humbling effect of Jehovah's questions; he has been greatly educated as to the depth of his ignorance. Formerly, he had only heard, but now he has seen. One of our favorite songs includes this line, "I once was blind, but now I see."
 - c. We are not to take Job's statement that he *abhors himself* as literal; his point was that he detests those words he had spoken hastily which reflected badly on the goodness of the Lord; he now renounces those words and the spirit with which they were uttered.
 - d. "Wherefore I abhor myself; or, I loathe my words (see the Revised Version). And repent in dust and ashes. Job was still sitting on the ash-heap on which he had thrown himself when his disease first smote him (Job 2:8). He had thrown himself on it in grief and despair; he will remain seated on it in

compunction and penitence. His self-humiliation is now complete. He does not retract what he has said concerning his essential integrity, but he admits that his words have been overbold, and his attitude towards God one unbefitting a creature. God accepts his submission, and proceeds to vindicate him to his ‘friends,’ and to visit them with condemnation” (Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft).

- e. Hailey comments of Job’s repentance: “Job was neither confessing to nor repenting of sins charged by the friends, because he was not guilty of them. It is often said in Scripture, ‘Jehovah repented’ (e.g., Gen. 6:6-7; Ex. 32:14, et al.), which meant that He changed His mind, or, that He would not change it (e.g., Ps. 110:4). It was in this sense that Job repented: he regretted how he had felt, how he had acted, what he had said, and charges he had made in ignorance; he changed his mind completely. He is now fully aware of the vast difference between the creature and the Creator, though unfathomable mysteries concerning God continued to abound” (p.366).
- f. The Hebrew word for repent [Strong’s number 5162] which is used in this passage: *Nacham*—a primitive root; properly, to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge (oneself): (Biblesoft’s New Exhaustive Strong’s Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.).
- g. The patriarch put dust on his head and sat in ashes; as he mourned, he sat down in ashes at the onset of his troubles (Job 2:8); his friends sprinkled dust upon their own heads, rent their garments, and sat on the ground in mourning with him (Job 2:12-13). Job here mourns in penitence, and expresses it by the use of dust and ashes.
- h. Some facts regarding Job’s repentance:
 - 1) God declares that he was right in what he said in the discussions between himself and his three friends; we are plainly told that they were wrong in their charges against Job (vs. 7).
 - 2) The three friends were told to go to Job and offer up seven bullocks and seven rams; Job would pray in their behalf in connection with that sacrifice (vs. 8); his prayer would be heard (cf. John 9:31).
 - 3) Job is not told to offer any animal sacrifices for himself.
 - 4) Job’s integrity is indicated in other Biblical references where he is named.
 - a) Job 1:1: “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.”
 - b) Ezekiel 14:20: “Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.”
 - c) James 5:11: “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

B. Job 42:7-9: God Commends Job.

1. Verse 7: “And it was *so*, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is right*, as my servant Job *hath*.”
 - a. “And it was so, that, after Jehovah had spoken these words unto Job, Jehovah said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath” (ASV).
 - b. It is obvious that God accepted Job’s repentance. Though the patriarch had stumbled in the midst of his great pain and sorrow, and spoke hastily about matters in which he knew little, as soon as he saw the situation more clearly, he made the proper confession and corrected his blunder. Four times in two

- verses (7-8) God spoke of the patriarch as “my servant Job.”
- c. But God did not have such words for Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. They had not spoken of God as Job had done. Job had spoken the truth, that God [in some cases] sends hardships upon the righteous and allows the wicked to go unpunished [as far as man can tell].
 - 1) The three maintained that punishment is sent only upon the wicked. But Job upheld the truth about this. His arguments vindicated God’s good character, while the friends upheld the faulty view that all evil is directly punished and all righteousness if directly rewarded, and that we can know whether a man is acceptable to God by his outward circumstances.
 - 2) Job’s three friends spoke from a comfortable position, somewhat like a “Monday morning quarterback” might speak about the play of the team the preceding Saturday; it is easy to speak boldly from a safe and comfortable place, but it is another matter to be on the field and directly face the animosity of the opposing players. Job spoke from the painful condition of having lost much of his property, all of his children, and was terribly afflicted by the sore boils.
 - 3) The wise man from Uz has uttered some sentiments about God which he admits he ought not to have said. He spoke with too much boldness in making his complaints about his condition. But those words came from a heart that was broken over the loss of his children and possessions, and was weighed down with the agony of his physical malady. When his friends accused him of having been secretly living in sin, he was provoked to make some hasty remarks. Instead of trying to encourage their friend, the three had endeavored to undermine the spiritual strength that had carried him through the troubles thus far. They offered little help but much discouragement.
 - 4) Job acknowledged his error when he saw it, but the three friends never admitted that they were wrong about their charges. However, when they followed God directions to make the sacrifice he told them to make, that would have indicated an admission of guilt—if they were sincere in the offering [which we assume to be the case].
 - d. The Almighty stated that his holy wrath was kindled against Eliphaz and his two companions. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31), for our God is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29). It is good for mankind that God is slow to anger.
 - 1) Exodus 34:6: “And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”
 - 2) Numbers 13:18: “And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many.”
 - 3) Psalms 86:15: “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”
 - 4) Nehemiah 9:17: “And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.”
 - 5) Romans 2:4: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
 - 6) 2 Peter 3:9: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
2. Verses 8-9: “Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according
-

as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.”

- a. “Now therefore, take unto you seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept, that I deal not with you after your folly; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as Jehovah commanded them: and Jehovah accepted Job” (ASV).
- b. Eliphaz and his friends were told to take seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to Job; they were to offer these as a burnt offering, and Job would pray for them. In effect, Job would serve as a priest for this occasion. This shows that their arguments against Job were wrong, and that Job had been right in taking issue with them. In response to Job’s intercessory prayer, God would not do to them as they deserved. The large number of animals to be used in the sacrifice suggests the serious nature of the offense of these three men. God would accept Job’s intercessory prayer.
 - 1) Psalms 66:18: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”
 - 2) Proverbs 28:9: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”
 - 3) John 9:31: “Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”
 - 4) 1 Peter 3:12: “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”
- c. The number seven is used in the Scriptures as a perfect number, a number indicating completeness. The number figures prominently in the Book of Revelation. It was held in esteem by the Jews and Gentiles.
 - 1) Leviticus 23:18: “And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD.”
 - 2) Numbers 23:1, 29: “And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams....And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.”
- d. They did as God had ordered them to do. They went to Job, offered the animals God identified, and Job prayed for them. It must have been an humbling experience for them to go to Job, a man they had vilified as being corrupt and unfit to stand before God. But they went!
- e. “The Lord also accepted Job; i.e., looked favourably on Job's intercession, and for his sake pardoned those for whom he made his prayer. Job is thus a type of Christ, not merely in his sufferings, but also in his mediatorial character” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].

C. Job 42:10-17: Job is Restored to His Former Status.

1. Verses 10-11: “And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.”
 - a. “And Jehovah turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: and Jehovah gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him concerning all the evil that Jehovah had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one a ring of gold” (ASV).
-

- b. Job had spoken of being hedged in earlier: “Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?” (Job 3:23). But now God restored Job to his former status. This evidently means that the patriarch’s health was returned to him, and he was now free to pursue his former activities.
 - c. We are told that God did this when Job prayed for his friends. Job’s willingness to pray in behalf of these men who had reviled and rejected him is a distinct mark of great spiritual advancement. Under the gospel system, we are required to love our friends and our enemies; if we are willing and able to pray sincerely for an enemy, we will shed all feelings of hatred and malice toward him. Ill will toward an enemy will not hurt the enemy, but will destroy us; having the right attitude toward him will do us an immense amount of good, and he might even derive some benefit from it. Without that forgiving attitude, we ourselves will be in great difficulty.
 - 1) Matthew 6:12-15: “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”
 - 2) Matthew 18:32-35: “Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”
 - d. Job’s brothers and sisters now return to comfort him. Again we see the greatness of the patriarch when he received them back without any rebuke. We are made to wonder, however, where they were when our friend Job was under so much duress and trouble. He not only received them back without any reported censure, but he shared his table with them. Along with these relatives, there came his former acquaintances.
 - e. All of these brethren and friends bemoaned and comforted him concerning the troubles God had sent upon him. Words of sorrow and encouragement may be late in coming, but they can be accepted and appreciated.
 - f. These relatives and friends each gave to Job a piece of money and a ring of gold. This may have been an ancient custom, perhaps with the added benefit of helping to defray the cost of entertaining a large group of visitors.
 - g. No mention is made of his wife. Nor are we told whether Job learned [before he died] about the heavenly assemblies of Job 1-2.
2. Verses 12-15: “So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.”
- a. God gave to Job a double portion of the material possessions he formerly owned. He now had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand female donkeys.
 - b. “The only thing which is omitted here, and which it is not said was doubled, was his ‘household,’ or ‘husbandry’ (Job 1:3, margin), but it is evident that this must have been increased in a corresponding manner to have enabled him to keep and maintain such flocks and herds. We are not to suppose that these were granted to him at once, but as he lived an hundred and forty years after his afflictions, he had ample time to accumulate this property” (Barnes, Biblesoft).
 - c. He was also given seven sons and three daughters. One child cannot replace another child that has
-

- been taken from us, but the new addition can be loved for its own sake.
- d. “Nothing is said of his wife, or whether these children were, or were not, by a second marriage. The last mention that is made of his wife is in Job 19:17, where he says that ‘his breath was strange to his wife, though he entreated her for the children's sake of his own body.’ The character of this woman does not appear to have been such as to have deserved further notice than the fact, that she contributed greatly to increase the calamities of her husband. It falls in with the design of the book to notice her only in this respect, and having done this, the sacred writer makes no further reference to her. The strong presumption is, that the second family of children was by a second marriage” (Barnes, Biblesoft). We cannot know whether his wife repented and bore Job these ten children, or whether Job had another wife. We would prefer to think that his wife changed her attitude toward Job and that their marriage produced ten more children.
 - e. We are told the names of the three daughters of Job, but the sons are not identified by name. We are also told that Job’s daughters had no superiors in terms of fairness. Another interesting statement is made that Job gave them an inheritance along with their brothers. “
 - 1) This is mentioned as a proof of his special regard, and is also recorded because it was not common. Among the Hebrews the daughter inherited only in the case where there was no son, Num. 27:8. The property was divided equally among the sons, with the exception that the oldest received a double portion...” (ibid.).
 - 2) Numbers 27:8: “And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.”
3. Verses 16-17: “After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations. So Job died, *being* old and full of days.”
- a. We are not told what Job’s full age was, but we know he lived one hundred and forty more years after his ordeal was over. When we were first introduced to the wise man of Uz, he had ten children who were old enough to live on their own, apart from their father. They were in the house of the oldest son engaging in a feast when the strong wind destroyed the house and killed Job’s children. He could have been sixty years of age at that time, putting his lifespan at two hundred years or more—an age that firmly places his time well within the Patriarchal Dispensation. Abraham died at the age of 175, Isaac was 180, and Jacob lived to be 147.
 - b. Job was blessed to see his grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Not everyone lives to see four generations. This is significant in Job’s case since he was an old man when his second group of children were born.
-

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

A. INTRODUCTION.

1. Where are the dead? A fascinating and absorbing question!
 - a. Men have always been interested in the question, and have sought the answer. No doubt, every person in the Bible who was brought back to life was asked questions about their *other world* experiences. "And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:3-4).
 - b. Thousands of years of effort by scores of brilliant men cannot answer the question.
 - c. But you can learn the answer in a few minutes of Bible study.
2. First, we need to know something about man: What is he?
 - a. He is a physical being:
 - 1) Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was...."
 - b. He is a spiritual being:
 - 1) Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 12:5: "...man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."
 - 3) Daniel 7:15: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me."
 - 4) Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
 - 5) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

B. DISCUSSION.

1. What constitutes life and death?
 - a. If the body and spirit are separated, death is the result: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26).
 - b. When the body and spirit are united, life is the result.
 - c. *Death means separation:*
 - 1) Colossians 3:3: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 5:6: "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."
 - 3) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
2. Soul or spirit is the word to identify the immortal part of man.
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) Genesis 35:18: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin."
 - 2) 1 Kings 17:21-22: "And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

- 4) Luke 23:43: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
- 5) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
- b. The spirit lives on after the body is dead:
 - 1) Acts 7:59: "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:1-10: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 4) What part of man departs at death to be "with Christ"?
 - a) Philippians 1:20-24: "According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death. For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you."
 - b) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - c) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
 - 5) God is the God even of those who are dead: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32).
- c. There was no need for the Bible to specifically say *immortal soul* (spirit) for its very nature is implied in the word itself.
3. Where does the spirit go at death?
 - a. The body goes into the grave and returns to the elements of the earth, but where does the spirit go?
 - b. The spirit does not cease to exist when the body dies.
 - 1) Exodus 3:6: "Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."
 - 2) 1 Samuel 28:7-15: "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me *him* up, whom I shall name unto thee. And the woman said

unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou *art* Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form *is* he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he *is* covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do." [Samuel continued to live, retained his memory, and was the same person in death as in life]/

- 3) Matthew 17:1-5: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." [Moses and Elijah continued to live and retain their identity even in eternity].
- c. The spirit does not go into the grave. The body of Jesus was buried, but his spirit was elsewhere.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 2) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:3-4: "And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." [Paul was enabled to peer into the hadean realm of Paradise, in the episode he described here. This was undoubtedly the same place the Lord's spirit resided while his body was entombed in the earth].
 - d. The spirit does not go into some purgatorial realm in which it is purged from sin through temporary suffering.
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." [When one dies, his eternal fate is sealed; it cannot be changed].
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." [The spiritual condition of the spirit at death will be the same condition it will have in the Judgment].
 - 3) Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
 - 4) Revelation 22:11-12: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." [As death finds us, so will the Judgment—nothing can be done to change our

spiritual condition once we die].

- e. The spirit does not go directly to its eternal destiny, for everyone will be in the Judgment together.
 - 1) It would be foolish for God to send everyone directly to their eternal destiny at the time of their death, and then, at the end of time, bring them all forth to stand in the Judgment to pass sentence on them.
 - 2) Many who died thousands of years ago have not yet faced the Judgment.
 - a) Matthew 11:23: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."
 - b) Matthew 12:41-42: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here."
 - 3) If we go directly to our destiny, why must there be a resurrection?
 - 4) But what about Philippians 1:23 ["For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better"] and 2 Corinthians 5:6 ["Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord"]? These only tell part of the story; other verses fill in the details.
 - a) Luke 14:14: "And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."
 - b) John 14:2-3: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there ye may be* also." [The Lord said he would receive his saints when he returned—he did not say he would do so the instant of their death].
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:7-8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." [Paul said he would receive the crown of righteousness **at that day**—the last day].
 - d) Revelation 6:9: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." These martyrs were still in their disembodied state when John beheld them; they had not been resurrected].
 - 5) Thus, the ultimate destiny of each soul will not be affirmed until the end of the world.
 - a) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - b) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - c) 2 Peter 3:10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
4. Evidence pointing to the answer is given in the case of Christ.
-

- a. Where did the Lord go when he died?
- 1) Luke 23:39-43, 46: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise....And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 2) His body went into the tomb: "And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation *day*; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:38-42).
 - 3) His spirit went into Paradise.
 - a) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - b) Luke 23:43: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - c) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
- b. His spirit did not return to heaven while his body was in the grave: "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God" (John 20:17).
- 1) "Touch me not" (*hapto*: to fasten to; to cling to; to lay hold of).
 - 2) He would not allow Mary to cling to him for he must go to his Father, which implies he had not yet gone there.
 - 3) God is in heaven; Christ went to Paradise; he had not yet gone to his Father; therefore, this Paradise is not heaven.
 - 4) Since Paradise is not heaven and not the grave, where and what is **Paradise**?
- c. Additional evidence is given in Acts 2:25-31: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."
- 1) *Hell*: in the original the Greek word *hades* is used. The spirit of Christ was in a place called *hades*, while his body was in the tomb.
 - 2) Peter showed that the prophecy was fulfilled which said his body would not remain in the tomb and his spirit would not remain in *hades*.
-

- d. We have the following evidence from these passages:
 - 1) His spirit was not in the tomb.
 - 2) His spirit was in Paradise.
 - 3) Paradise (in this case) is not heaven.
 - 4) Paradise is located in hades (*place of the unseen dead*).
 5. Evidence pointing to the answer is given in the case of Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
 - a. Some will object to using this story, by claiming that it is "only a parable."
 - 1) There is no proof it is a parable; it still teaches the truth even if it were a parable.
 - 2) A parable was taken from the common occurrences of life, from things that either did happen or could happen.
 - 3) Lazarus is given a regular name. If the story is parabolic, it is the only one in all the Bible in which a character is given a name.
 - 4) Actually, Lazarus, the rich man, and the rich man's five brothers, were real human beings, just as real as Abraham! Lazarus still resides in the place of comfort and the rich man still writhes in the agony of the punishment the Lord described.
 - b. We have seen that at death the body returns to the earth and the spirit passes into God's keeping.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 2) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 3) Philippians 1:23: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
 - c. Where did God keep these men?
 - 1) He kept Lazarus in *Abraham's bosom*, which was a place of comfort and happiness.
 - a) In ancient terminology, the guest of honor at a feast occupied the highest place of honor, which was at the right hand of the host; this was called "the bosom" of the host. Christ used the term figuratively.
 - b) To be in the "bosom of Abraham" in Jewish thought was to have the greatest honor (for a Jew). Hence, Lazarus (a Jew) is described as having the highest possible honor and blessing.
 - 2) He kept the rich man in a place of torment, called *hades* (verse 23).
 - 3) The rich man could see Lazarus, but could not join him because of the great gulf fixed between the two places.
 - d. Putting the evidence together, we have this information at hand:
 - 1) At death, Christ entered hades.
 - 2) He also described this place as Paradise.
 - 3) The evil rich man also went to hades, but into a place of punishment.
 - 4) Lazarus entered the spirit world, into a place called Abraham's bosom, a state of comfort and happiness.
 - 5) Lazarus and Christ entered a different place from that of the rich man, yet both places are called *Hades*.
 - e. Some conclusions can be reliably reached from this evidence.
 - 1) The spirits of the individuals involved in these stories were disembodied.
 - 2) They were all in the place called hades (the *hadean realm*).
-

- 3) Christ left the hadean realm at his resurrection; these others were not raised.
 - 4) The rich man, Lazarus, and every other dead person resides in this hadean realm awaiting the resurrection and Judgment.
 - a) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 15:52: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
6. The Hadean Realm.
- a. It is called *Hades*, a Greek word meaning "the place of the unseen dead."
 - 1) The word occurs in these passages:
 - a) Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - b) Luke 16:23: "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."
 - c) Revelation 1:18: "I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
 - 2) The KJV uses the word *hell* to translate *hades*. This old word in English means "to cover up." Thus, "He hellied the potatoes." The place of eternal punishment is translated from the Greek word *Gehenna* (Mark 9:43; Matt. 25:41).
 - 3) The equivalent Hebrew word for hades in the Old Testament is *Sheol*.
 - 4) The KJV uses *hell* to translate hades, Gehenna, sheol, and Tartarus; it was the only available English word at the time. Since then, the Hebrew and Greek words have been adopted as English words.
 - b. The word *Paradise* means "pleasure garden" or "pleasure park."
 - 1) It is a Persian word which has also been transliterated into both Greek and English.
 - 2) Any place of pleasure could be called *paradise*. The word is applied to heaven (Rev. 2:7) and to that place of comfort in hades called "Abraham's bosom."
 - 3) Paradise is a general term like *city*; heaven is called a city, but every time the word *city* is used heaven is not meant.
 - 4) Paradise is used to describe a place of comfort and pleasure, where the holy dead await the resurrection and Judgment of the last day.
 - c. The Greek word *Tartarus* is used to describe the place where the unholy beings are kept.
 - 1) Passages:
 - a) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
 - b) 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
 - c) 2 Peter 3:7: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."
 - 2) Tartarus is not the final abode, but is the place of retention and punishment of those who await the end of time, the resurrection, and the Judgment.
 - 3) If Tartarus is the final destiny of the condemned, why remove them for the Judgment, and then return them to the same place?
-

- 4) This Greek word means "an abyss, a dungeon, a prison house." It is described in Luke 16:23-24 as a state of intense discomfort [torment]: "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:23-24).
- d. In hades, a great gulf is fixed (*made fast*) between paradise and Tartarus: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence" (Luke 16:26). This gulf is a chasm, a broad yawning space (Barnes).
 - 1) It is impossible to pass over this great chasm; thus, once a lost person is confined to *Tartarus* at death, there is no leaving until the resurrection and Judgment.
 - 2) One's fate is forever sealed the instant he enters the hadean realm; if he is righteous when he dies, he will never be lost; if he dies unrighteous, he cannot be saved.
 - a) Luke 16:26-31: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."
 - b) Revelation 22:11-12: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."
- e. The Greek word *Gehenna* (hell) describes the place of final punishment for the wicked.
 - 1) This Greek word represents the Hebrew word, *Ge-hinnom*, which is derived from the valley Hinnom just outside Jerusalem, which was used as the city dump. It had a horribly foul odor and a continual smoldering fire: "And he defiled Topheth, which *is* in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech" (2 Kings 23:10).
 - 2) The repulsiveness and horrors of the place was a fitting depiction for the place of final punishment for rebellion against God.
 - 3) The word occurs twelve times in the New Testament, of which Christ used it eleven times.
 - a) Matthew 5:22: "But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."
 - b) Matthew 5:29-30: "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell."
 - c) Matthew 18:8-9: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."

- d) Matthew 23:15: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."
 - e) Matthew 23:33: "*Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*"
 - f) Mark 9:43-48: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
 - g) Luke 12:5: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - h) James 3:6: "And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."
- 4) It is into this dreadful place the ungodly will be ultimately cast.
- a) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - b) Matthew 25:41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
 - c) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - d) Luke 12:5: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - e) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
 - f) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
- f. *Heaven* is that place of eternal reward, which includes nothing unpleasant (Rev. 21:4), and everything that is glorious, pleasant, and joyful (Rom. 8:18).
- 1) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - 2) Revelation 21:4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."
7. Since our eternal destiny is known immediately after death, why have the Judgment?
-

- a. That great day is set aside for the final and formal sentencing.
- b. The Judgment will not be for the purpose of determining guilt or innocence.
 - 1) It is to show all why the lost are lost and the saved are saved: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).
 - 2) It is to give each the opportunity to give account of himself: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10-12).
 - 3) It is to vindicate the saints before all mankind.
- c. One's influence will continue to the end of time, hence Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
 - 1) Paul has been gone from the earth more than 1900 years, but his influence is still alive and powerful through his inspired writings.
 - 2) Your influence will remain behind when you leave earth; it is part of your legacy to your family and friends.
 - 3) The sum total of your life's influence will not be fully accomplished until the very end of time.

C. CONCLUSION.

1. The dead are conscious.

- a. The rich man was very much aware of his condition: "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:23-24).
- b. This rich man remembered his earthly connections: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented....For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment" (Luke 16:25,28).
- c. The martyred saints were conscious: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9-10).
- d. Some teach that the wicked dead are annihilated at death, and are not punished further. This is false.

2. Memory can be both wonderful and terrible.

- a. We can recall and relive happy moments and joys of the past.
 - b. We can recall things we had rather forget but cannot.
 - 1) There are many aspects of punishment in Gehenna, including darkness, intense pain, weeping - and memory.
 - 2) They will be able to remember sermons they heard, invitations they spurned, songs that were sung to encourage obedience, prayers offered in their behalf, and the tears their loved ones shed over their lost condition.
 - c. No doubt memory was and continues to be a great torment to the lost rich man of Luke 16.
-

- d. And Lazarus yet rests in the bosom of Abraham, joyfully anticipating the full glory and joy of heaven!
-

OUR PHYSICAL BODY—Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

A. Consider these Bible statements:

1. Genesis 1:26-28: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."
2. Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
3. 1 Corinthians 12:18: "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."
4. Psalms 139:14-15: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."

B. The common man often gazes in awe at the wisdom, knowledge, and skill of our race.

1. We marvel at the great bridges, highways, communication equipment, automobiles, aircraft, ships, spacecraft, and buildings. All of these are wisely designed and carefully constructed; they are indeed marvelous and complex.
2. Magnificent as these are, they are far surpassed by the ingenuity of design, complexity, and abilities of the human body.

C. The human body has many parts which all work in perfect harmony under the direction of the brain.

1. The skeletal system has 206 bones which can outlast the best steel; its joints produce its own lubrication; it provides the structure for the body itself and at the same time offers protection (ribs guard the vital chest organs, the skull guards the brain); it forms the foundation to which many muscles are attached; yet in a 160-pound man this whole framework only weighs 29 pounds.
 - a. Bones act like levers. "When our muscles move us about, they do it by working a series of articulated levers that make a most efficient use of every ounce of muscular motive power. The levers are the bones of the body's framework, fitted together with the neatness of jigsaw pieces and hinged by joints that must win the admiration of any mechanic" (Miller and Goode, 1960, p.25; in Jackson, pp.19f).
 - b. Bones are strong, but light; they grow; they repair themselves; they are able to lubricate themselves; they have no down-time, but can operate continually.
 - c. The joints are marvelous and complex; the shoulders, knees, hands, and feet are able to move in various direction, and possess remarkable strength and durability.
 - d. "Perhaps an engineer will someday develop a substance as strong and light and efficient as bone, but what engineer could devise a substance that, like bone, can grow continuously, lubricate itself, require no shut-down time, and repair itself when damage occurs?" (Brand & Yancy, 1980, p.91; Jackson, p.20).
 - e. "As a specific example of bone design, consider the bones of the foot. One-fourth of all the body's bones are in the feet. Each human foot contains 26 bones. The feet have been ingeniously designed to facilitate a number of mechanical functions. They support, with arches comparable to an engineered bridge. They operate as levers when one presses an automobile accelerator peddle. Feet act like hydraulic jacks when one tip-toes. They catapult a person as he jumps. And feet act as a cushion for the legs when one is running" (Jackson, p.21).
 2. The muscle system is made up of more than 600 members with the ability to contract and release; these
-

are placed by design into two subsystems: voluntary and involuntary (for example, we can reach out and pick up some item, but our heart muscle beats without any conscious effort on our part).

- a. "In the automobile engine, the spark ignites vaporized gasoline, the piston moves, and keeps moving in response to a series of explosions. 'A muscle cell performs the functions of both the spark and the piston; the cell itself splits a molecule of fuel and also exerts the resulting physical power' (Miller & Goode, 1960, p 23). It is clear that the automobile engine was intelligently designed, why is it not reasonable to draw the same conclusion with reference to the muscles" (Jackson, pp.23f).
 - b. Muscles demonstrate modern engineering principles. This was admitted by the evolutionist John Lenihan. Another evolutionist made this admission: "...If the most gifted scientists cudged their brains they probably could not come up with a stronger or more perfect tool for grasping and delicate manipulation than the human hand. And seen from an engineering standpoint, the loveliest hand actually is a highly complex mechanical device composed of muscle, bone, tendon, fat, and extremely sensitive nerve fibers, capable of performing thousands of jobs with precision" (Wylie, 1962, p 25; Jackson, p.25).
3. The human ear can distinguish over 2,500 different tones; the average piano can distinguish the sounds of only 88 keys. The ear can detect sound waves which vibrate the ear drum only one-billionth of a centimeter (the diameter of a hydrogen atom). If we were in a completely soundproof room, the ear could hear the blood coursing through the veins. Over 100,000 hearing receptors in the ears are sending impulses to the brain to be decoded and answered.
- a. "The balancing ability of the auditory system has been compared to the 'inertial system used in missiles and submarines' (Lenihan, 1974, p.90). So the ear-mechanism is actually designed to accomplish two functions—hearing and balance. This feature of the body demonstrates incredible planning" (Jackson, p.59). No one can logically maintain that the ear resulted from blind forces of nature!
 - b. Psalms 94:9: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"
4. The human eye is a perfect camera. Even Darwin, the father of modern evolutionary thought, admitted: "That the eye with all its inimitable contrivances...could have been formed by natural selection seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree...If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down" (*The Origin of Species*, pp. 167,170). The human eye is such an organ, thus by his own admission, Darwin's theory collapses.
- a. The human eye is composed of over 107 million cells with 7 million cones (allowing the eye to see in full, living color), and 100 million rods (which gives the eye the ability to see in blacks, whites, and greys). The eyes are connected to the brain by over 300,000 nerves, and can detect light as feeble as 1/100 trillionth of a watt.
 - b. No "intermediate state" or long sequence of such can explain this perfect camera which is able to see in full color, full motion, in splendid depth, in 3-dimension, and has a means of storing pictures for instant recall.
 - c. An evolutionists made this admission: "The eye is a marvelous instrument, resembling a telescope of the highest quality, with a lens, an adjustable focus, a variable diaphragm for controlling the amount of light, and optical corrections for spherical and chromatic aberration. The eye appears to have been designed; no designer of telescopes could have done better. How could this marvelous instrument have evolved by chance, through a succession of random events?" (Jastrow, 1981, pp 96-97)" (Jackson, p.56).
 - d. G.K. Chesterton said: "When men stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing. They believe in anything." Mark Twain said: "It's amazing what men will believe, so long as it's not in the Bible!"
-

- e. Psalms 94:9: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"
 5. The human brain is a wondrous creation, so complex, so powerful, and so compact that it demands the existence of a Divine Creator.
 - a. Isaac Asimov, world-famous atheist, admitted that our brain is "the most complex and orderly arrangement of matter in the universe" (1970, p.10; Jackson, p.50). An atheistic professor (Paul Davies), conceded that the human brain is "the most developed and complex system known to science" (1992, Jackson, p.50). Carl Sagan states: "The equivalent of twenty million books is inside the heads of every one of us. The brain is a very big place in a very small space" (Jackson, p.50).
 - b. The brain contains over 10 billion nerve cells and 100 glia cells (which provide the biological "batteries" for brain activity). These cells sift through information, store memories, creating what we call consciousness (May, 1982). More than 120 trillion connections tie these cells together.
 - c. The brain sends out electrical impulses at a speed of 393 feet per second (270 mph), and receives nerve impulses at a rate of over 2,000 per second. It continuously receives information from 130,000 light receptors in the eyes, 100,000 hearing receptors in the ears, 3,000 tastebuds, 30,000 heat spots on the skin, 250,000 cold spots and 500,000 touch spots.
 - d. The brain does not move but consumes 25% of the blood's oxygen supply. Its vessels receive 20% of all the blood pumped from the heart. If the blood's oxygen supply is interrupted for 15-30 seconds, unconsciousness results. Brain damage occurs if the blood is cut off for up to 4 minutes. Four major arteries carry blood to the brain as a sort of "fail-safe" system.
 - e. The brain is protected from damage by three systems: the outer skull bone, the protective lining around the brain (the dura mater), and the absorbing fluid which keeps the brain from hitting against the inside of the skull.
 - f. A few years ago it was estimated that the Pentagon building would hardly hold the computer with as many synapses (synapse: the point of contact between adjacent neurons, where nerve impulses are transmitted from one to the other) as are found in the human brain; and all the power generated at Grand Coulee would be needed to operate such a computer (*Genes, Genesis and Evolution*, pp.516f).
 - g. "It has been suggested that it would take a bookshelf 500 miles long—from San Francisco, California to Portland, Oregon—to house the information stored in man's brain. Does anyone actually believe that this kind of a library just happens?" (Jackson, p.51). "The Cray-2 super-computer has a storage capacity about 1,000 times less than that of the human brain. One authority states that 'problem solving by a human brain exceeds by far the capacity of the most powerful computers'" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1989, 2:189; Jackson, p.51).
 - h. "One of the astounding features of the brain is its ability to process and react to so many different circumstances at once. While an artist is working on a painting (using his voluntary muscles at the behest of the brain), he can: smell food cooking and know whether it is turnip greens or steak; hear a dog barking and determine if it is his dog or a neighbor's; feel a breeze upon his face and sense that rain is near; and, be reflecting on a warm friendship of the past. Even while all of this is going on, the brain is regulating millions of internal bodily activities that the person never even 'thinks' about" (Jackson, p.54).
 - i. We are asked to believe that the marvelous creation we call the brain "just happened!" A prominent brain surgeon, Dr. Robert White, observed: "I am left with no choice but to acknowledge the existence of a Superior Intellect, responsible for the design and development of the incredible brain-mind relationship—something far beyond man's capacity to understand" (1978, p.99; Jackson, p.54).
 6. The cells of the human body form a strong argument for the Creator.
 - a. There are more than 30 different types of cells in the human body, totaling more than 100 trillion cells in the average adult. These cells come in different sizes and shapes, with different functions and life
-

expectancies. Some cells would be only 1 inch long if 6,000 were laid end to end; 20,000 of the smallest cells would fit inside the capital "O" of a standard typewriter. Yet if all the cells of a human body were set end to end, the line would encircle the earth 200 times. A cell is tiny but each contains 5 major systems: communication, waste disposal, nutrition, repair, and reproduction. Each cell is of itself a living organism.

- b. "The genetic information contained in each cell of the human body is roughly equivalent to a library of 4,000 volumes" ("NFD Journal," October 1987). Multiply this by the trillions of cells in a single human and see how complex one person is.
 - c. "Red blood cells (there are approximately 30 trillion of them) live about 120 days; white blood cells (the blood's defense system) live about 13 days; platelets (which help blood to clot) live about 4 days; nerve cells may live over 100 years! In any given 60-second period, approximately 3 billion cells have died and been replaced in the human body—replaced by the process we call mitosis, whereby the standard chromosome number (in the human, 46) is faithfully reproduced. A single cell contains a strip of DNA (placed in the nucleus in a spiral-staircase configuration) which is about one yard long, and which contains over 6 billion biochemical steps! Every cell of the body contains such DNA—over a billion miles total in one human....Although each cell contains the whole structure of DNA, only a part of that message is 'activated'—causing one cell to be a fingernail cell, another to be an eye cell, another to be a blood cell, etc. How this process occurs baffles even the most brilliant scientists....[DNA] provides, in coded form, every characteristic of every living person. How many people are there on the face of the earth?...If there are roughly 4 billion people on earth [more than 6 billion today—bw], it took two cells to make each of them [one male sperm and one female ovum], that's approximately 8 billion cells. Extract the DNA from those 8 billion cells (remember: this is the DNA it took to give every living person every characteristic he or she has), and that DNA would fit into no more than 1/8th of a cubic inch!! (*Reason and Revelation*, October 1987).
 - d. Yet we are told that life is an accident of nature! "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God" (Heb. 3:4).
7. The skin of the body is nearly a waterproof layer, enclosing the body; the body is about 60% water. The skin prevents too much moisture entering or exiting. It is both a radiator and retainer of heat, helping to regulate the body's temperature. It acts to protect the body against bacteria, etc. It has the power to regenerate itself.
 8. The heart is another amazing part of the body which argues for the Creator. "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11). It weighs less than a pound but is able to pump blood through 12,000 miles of blood vessels. The body has about 2.5 gallons of blood; the heart pushes about 650,000 gallons through the body in a year's time. It beats about 3 billion times in an average lifespan.
 - a. As blood moves from a chamber into arteries, a check valve prevents its return to the chambers. Man obtained knowledge of cameras by examining the eye; he learned about check valves by examining the heart.
 - b. There is an opening between the auricles of an unborn baby's heart which is open before birth, but instantly at birth this opening is closed by flaps; this is the only time that operation occurs (Baxter, pp.70-72). The muscle which allows the lungs to open only operates once: at birth, when it contracts.
-

Bibliography

- American Standard Version*, (ASV), Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, NY
- Analytical Greek Lexicon*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970
- Annual Lesson Commentaries* (ALC), Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, TN, 1959, 1973, 1980
- Apologetics Press Website
- Barnes, Albert, *Barnes on the Old Testament*, Job Volumes I & II, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1950
- Camp, Franklin, *Redemption Through the Bible: A Study of the Book of Job*, Brothers Inc., Adamsville, AL
- Christian Courier*, Wayne Jackson, Stockton, CA
- Christian Courier Website
- Daly, Reginald, *Earth's Most Challenging Mysteries*, The Craig Press, 1972
- Dixon, H.A., *Saving Faith and Other Sermons*, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, 1963
- Durant, Will, *Caesar and Christ*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1944
- Durant, Will, *The Life of Greece*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1939
- English Standard Version* [ESV], Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, Illinois
- Gatewood, Otis, *There is a God in Heaven*, Contact, Inc., Abilene, TX, 1970
- Hailey, Homer, *A Commentary on Job*, Religious Supply, Inc., 1994
- Halley, Henry, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1965
- Horne, Thomas Hartwell, *Introduction To The Scriptures, Vol. IV*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970
- International Bible Dictionary*, Logos International, Plainfield, NJ, 1977
- Jackson, Wayne, *The Book of Job*, Quality Publications, Abilene, Texas 79604, 1983
- Jamieson, Robert, Fausset, A.R., Brown, David, *A Commentary Critical, Experimental and Practical*, 3 Volumes (JFB), Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1973
- Job: A Topical Study*, The Twenty-Fifth Annual Southwest Lectures, 2006, Austin, TX, Rick Brumback Lectureship Director
- Josephus, Flavius, *Josephus, Complete Works*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1960
- Klotz, J.W., *Genes, Genesis, and Evolution*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1955, 1970
- Lipscomb, David, *Questions Answered*, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, 1969
- McGarvey, J.W., *Biblical Criticism*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1956
- Morris, Henry M., *Biblical Cosmology and Modern Science*, Craig Press, Nutley, NJ, 1967
- Nelson, Byron C., *The Deluge Story in Stone*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1968
- New Analytical Bible*, World Bible Publishers, Iowa Falls, Iowa, 1973
- PC Study Bible*, Complete Reference Library, BibleSoft, Seattle, WA
- Pfeiffer, Charles F., *The Biblical World*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1966
-

Pfeiffer, Charles F., *Baker's Bible Atlas*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1961

Reason and Revelation, Apologetics Press, Montgomery, AL

Rimmer, Harry, *The Harmony of Science & Scripture*, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1936

Rimmer, Harry, *Dead Men Tell Tales*, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1939

Rimmer, Harry, *Modern Science and the Genesis Record*, Eerdmans Publishing Co, Grand Rapids, 1937

Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, H.B. Hackett, Editor, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1971

Strongs Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, James Strong, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1990

Thayer, Henry, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, The National Foundation for Christian Education, Marshallton, DE

The New King James Version, Thomas Nelson Company, Nashville, 1987

Thompson, J.A., *The Bible and Archaeology*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1962

Unger, Merrill F., *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1954

Warren, Thomas B., *Have Atheists Proved There is No God?*, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, 1972

Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition, The World Publishing Company, New York and Cleveland, 1968

Whitcomb, John C., *The World that Perished*, [TWTP], Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1973

Whitcomb, John C., and Morris, Henry M, *The Genesis Flood*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1970

Woods, Guy N., *Questions and Answers Open Forum*, Freed Hardeman College, Henderson, TN, 1976

World Book Encyclopedia, Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, Chicago, IL, 1964

Young's Concordance, Robert Young, Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI

Young, Edward J., *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI 1970
