



This book consists almost entirely of a series of poetic speeches about the problem of suffering. The title character is a wealthy man who suffers a series of calamities, eventually losing everything that matters to him. Job's friends try to explain the reasons for his suffering. But Job insists that he is an innocent and righteous man. In the end, God speaks to Job and presents him with an overwhelming impression of God's majesty and wisdom.

Job and His Family

1 Many years ago, a man named Job lived in the land of Uz. He was a truly good person, who respected God and refused to do evil.

2 Job had seven sons and three daughters. **3** He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 pair of oxen, 500 donkeys, and a large number of servants. He was the richest person in the East.

4 Job's sons took turns having feasts in their homes, and they always invited their three sisters to join in the eating and drinking. **5** After each feast, Job would send for his children and perform a ceremony, as a way of asking God to forgive them of any wrongs they may have done. He would get up early the next morning and offer a sacrifice for each of them, just in case they had sinned or silently cursed God.

Angels, the LORD, and Satan

6 One day, when the angels had gathered around the LORD, and Satan¹ was there with them, **7** the LORD asked, "Satan, where have you been?"

Satan replied, "I have been going all over the earth."

8 Then the LORD asked, "What do you think of my servant Job? No one on earth is like him—he is a truly good person, who respects me and refuses to do evil."

9 "Why shouldn't he respect you?" Satan remarked. **10** "You are like a wall protecting not only him, but his entire family and all his property. You make him successful in whatever he does, and his flocks and herds are everywhere. **11** Try taking away everything he owns, and he will curse you to your face."

12 The LORD replied, "All right, Satan, do what you want with anything that belongs to him, but don't harm Job."

Then Satan left.

Job Loses Everything

13 Job's sons and daughters were having a feast in the home of his oldest son, **14** when someone rushed up to Job and said, "While your servants were plowing with your oxen, and your donkeys were nearby eating grass, **15** a gang of Sabeans attacked and stole the oxen and donkeys! Your other servants were killed, and I was the only one who escaped to tell you."

16 That servant was still speaking, when a second one came running up and saying, "God sent down a fire that killed your sheep and your servants. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

17 Before that servant finished speaking, a third one raced up and said, "Three gangs of Chaldeans attacked and stole your camels! All of your other servants were killed, and I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

¹⁸ That servant was still speaking, when a fourth one dashed up and said, "Your children were having a feast and drinking wine at the home of your oldest son, ¹⁹ when suddenly a windstorm from the desert blew the house down, crushing all of your children. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

²⁰ When Job heard this, he tore his clothes and shaved his head because of his great sorrow. He knelt on the ground, then worshiped God ²¹ and said:

"We bring nothing at birth;
we take nothing
with us at death.
The LORD alone gives and takes.
Praise the name of the LORD!"

²² In spite of everything, Job did not sin or accuse God of doing wrong.

Job Loses His Health

2 When the angels gathered around the LORD again, Satan[>] was there with them, ² and the LORD asked, "Satan, where have you been?"

Satan replied, "I have been going all over the earth."

³ Then the LORD asked, "What do you think of my servant Job? No one on earth is like him—he is a truly good person, who respects me and refuses to do evil. And he hasn't changed, even though you persuaded me to destroy him for no reason."

⁴ Satan answered, "There's no pain like your own.[>] People will do anything to stay alive. ⁵ Try striking Job's own body with pain, and he will curse you to your face."

⁶ "All right!" the LORD replied. "Make Job suffer as much as you want, but just don't kill him."⁷ Satan left and caused painful sores to break out all over Job's body—from head to toe.

⁸ Then Job sat on the ash-heap to show his sorrow. And while he was scraping his sores with a broken piece of pottery, ⁹ his wife asked, "Why do you still trust God? Why don't you curse him and die?"

¹⁰ Job replied, "Don't talk like a fool! If we accept blessings from God, we must accept trouble as well." In all that happened, Job never once said anything against God.

Job's Three Friends

¹¹ Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuah, and Zophar from Naamah were three of Job's friends, and they heard about his troubles. So they agreed to visit Job and comfort him. ¹² When they came

near enough to see Job, they could hardly recognize him. And in their great sorrow, they tore their clothes, then sprinkled dust on their heads and cried bitterly. ¹³ For seven days and nights, they sat silently on the ground beside him, because they realized what terrible pain he was in.

Job's First Speech

Blot Out the Day of My Birth

- 3** Finally, Job cursed the day of his birth
- ² by saying to God:
- ³ Blot out the day of my birth and the night when my parents created a son.
- ⁴ Forget about that day, cover it with darkness,
- ⁵ and send thick, gloomy shadows to fill it with dread.
- ⁶ Erase that night from the calendar and conceal it with darkness.
- ⁷ Don't let children be created or joyful shouts be heard ever again in that night.
- ⁸ Let those with magic powers[>] place a curse on that day.
- ⁹ Darken its morning stars and remove all hope of light,
- ¹⁰ because it let me be born into a world of trouble.

Why Didn't I Die at Birth?

- ¹¹ Why didn't I die at birth?
- ¹² Why was I accepted[>] and allowed to nurse at my mother's breast?
- ¹³ Now I would be at peace in the silent world below
- ¹⁴ with kings and their advisors whose palaces lie in ruins,
- ¹⁵ and with rulers once rich with silver and gold.
- ¹⁶ I wish I had been born dead and then buried, never to see the light of day.
- ¹⁷ In the world of the dead, the wicked and the weary rest without a worry.
- ^{*18} Everyone is there—
- ¹⁹ where captives and slaves are free at last.

Why Does God Let Me Live?

- ²⁰ Why does God let me live
when life is miserable
and so bitter?
- ²¹ I keep longing for death
more than I would seek
a valuable treasure.
- ²² Nothing could make me happier
than to be in the grave.
- ²³ Why do I go on living
when God has me surrounded,
and I can't see the road?
- ²⁴ Moaning and groaning
are my food and drink,
²⁵ and my worst fears
have all come true.
- ²⁶ I have no peace or rest—
only troubles and worries.

Eliphaz's First Speech**Please Be Patient and Listen**

- 4** Eliphaz from Teman said:
² Please be patient and listen
to what I have to say.
- ³ Remember how your words
⁴ have guided and encouraged
many in need.
- ⁵ But now you feel discouraged
when struck by trouble.
- ⁶ You respect God and live right,
so don't lose hope!
- ⁷ No truly innocent person
has ever died young.
- ⁸ In my experience, only those
who plant seeds of evil
harvest trouble,
⁹ and then they are swept away
by the angry breath of God.
- ¹⁰ They may roar and growl
like powerful lions.
But when God breaks their teeth,
¹¹ they starve, and their children
are scattered.

A Secret Was Told to Me

- ¹² A secret was told to me
in a faint whisper—
¹³ I was overcome by sleep,
but disturbed by dreams;
¹⁴ I trembled with fear,
¹⁵ and my hair stood on end,

- as a wind blew past my face.
¹⁶ It stopped and stood still.
Then a form appeared—
a shapeless form.
And from the silence,
I heard a voice say,
¹⁷ 'No humans are innocent
in the eyes of God
their Creator.
¹⁸ He finds fault with his servants
and even with his angels.
¹⁹ Humans are formed from clay
and are fragile as moths,
so what chance do you have?
²⁰ Born after daybreak,
you die before nightfall
and disappear forever.
²¹ Your tent pegs are pulled up,
and you leave this life,
having gained no wisdom.'

Eliphaz Continues**Call Out for Help**

- 5** Job, call out for help
and see if an angel comes!
- ² Envy and jealousy
will kill a stupid fool.
- ³ I have seen fools take root.
But God sends a curse,
suddenly uprooting them
⁴ and leaving their children
helpless in court.
- ⁵ 'Then hungry and greedy people
gobble down their crops
and grab up their wealth.'
- ⁶ Our suffering isn't caused
by the failure of crops;
⁷ it's all part of life,
like sparks shooting skyward.
- ⁸ Job, if I were you,
I would ask God for help.
- ⁹ His miracles are marvelous,
more than we can count.
- ¹⁰ God sends showers on earth
and waters the fields.
- ¹¹ He protects the sorrowful
and lifts up those
who have been disgraced.
- ^{*12} God swiftly traps the wicked
¹³ in their own evil schemes,
and their wisdom fails.

- 14 Darkness is their only companion,
hiding their path at noon.
15 God rescues the needy
from the words of the wicked
and the fist of the mighty.
16 The poor are filled with hope,
and injustice is silenced.

Consider Yourself Fortunate

- 17 Consider yourself fortunate
if God All-Powerful
chooses to correct you.
18 He may cause injury and pain,
but he will bandage and heal
your cuts and bruises.
19 God will protect you from harm,
no matter how often
trouble may strike.
20 In times of war and famine,
God will keep you safe.
21 You will be sheltered,
without fear of hurtful words
or any other weapon.
22 You will laugh at the threat
of destruction and famine.
And you won't be afraid
of wild animals—
23 they will no longer be fierce,
and your rocky fields
will become friendly.
24 Your home will be secure,
and your sheep will be safe.
25 You will have more descendants
than there are blades of grass
on the face of the earth.
26 You will live a long life,
and your body will be strong
until the day you die.
27 Our experience has proven
these things to be true,
so listen and learn.

Job's Reply to Eliphaz

It's Impossible

- 6 Job said:
2 It's impossible to weigh
my misery and grief!
3 They outweigh the sand
along the beach,
and that's why I have spoken
without thinking first.

- 4 The fearsome arrows
of God All-Powerful
have filled my soul
with their poison.
5 Do oxen and wild donkeys
cry out in distress
unless they are hungry?
6 What is food without salt?
7 What is more tasteless
than the white of an egg?
7 That's how my food tastes,
and my appetite is gone.
*8 How I wish that God
would answer my prayer
9 and do away with me.
10 Then I would be comforted,
knowing that in all of my pain
I have never disobeyed God.
11 Why should I patiently hope
when my strength is gone?
12 I am not strong as stone
or bronze,
13 and I have finally reached
the end of my rope.

My Friends, I Am Desperate

- 14 My friends, I am desperate,
and you should help me,
even if I no longer respect
God All-Powerful.▷
*15 But you are treacherous
16 as streams that swell
with melting snow,
17 then suddenly disappear
in the summer heat.
18 I am like a caravan,
lost in the desert
while searching for water.
19 Caravans from Tema and Sheba
20 thought they would find water.
But they were disappointed,
21 'just as I am with you.'
Only one look at my suffering,
and you run away scared.

What Have I Done Wrong?

- 22 Have I ever asked any of you
to give me a gift
23 or to purchase my freedom
from brutal enemies?
24 What have I done wrong?

- Show me,
and I will keep quiet.
- 25 The truth is always painful,
but your arguments
prove nothing.
- 26 Here I am desperate,
and you consider my words
as worthless as wind.
- 27 Why, you would sell an orphan
or your own neighbor!
- 28 Look me straight in the eye;
I won't lie to you.
- 29 Stop accusing me falsely;
my reputation is at stake.
- 30 I know right from wrong,
and I am not telling lies.

Job Continues

Why Is Life So Hard?

- 7** Why is life so hard?
Why do we suffer?
- 2 We are slaves in search of shade;
we are laborers longing
for our wages.
- 3 God has made my days drag on
and my nights miserable.
- 4 I pray for night to end,
but it stretches out
while I toss and turn.
- 5 My parched skin is covered
with worms, dirt, and sores,
6 and my days are running out
quicker than the thread
of a fast-moving needle.

Don't Forget!

- 7 I beg you, God, don't forget!
My life is just a breath,
and trouble lies ahead.
- 8 I will vanish from sight,
and no one, including you,
will ever see me again.
- 9 I will disappear in the grave
or vanish from sight
like a passing cloud.
- 10 Never will I return home;
soon I will be forgotten.
- 11 And so, I cry out to you
in agony and distress.
- 12 And I the sea or a sea monster?
Is that why you imprison me?

- 13 I go to bed, hoping for rest,
14 but you torture me
with terrible dreams.
- *15 I'd rather choke to death
than live in this body.
- 16 Leave me alone and let me die;
my life has no meaning.
- 17 What makes you so concerned
about us humans?
- 18 Why do you test us
from sunrise to sunset?
- 19 Won't you look away
just long enough
for me to swallow?
- 20 Why do you watch us so closely?
What's it to you, if I sin?
Why am I your target
and such a heavy burden?
- 21 Why do you refuse to forgive?
Soon you won't find me,
because I'll be dead.

Bildad's First Speech

How Long Will You Talk?

- 8** Bildad from Shuah said:
- 2 How long will you talk
and keep saying nothing?
- 3 Does God All-Powerful
stand in the way of justice?
- 4 He made your children pay
for their sins.
- 5 So why don't you turn to him
6 and start living right?
Then he will decide
to rescue and restore you
to your place of honor.
- 7 Your future will be brighter
by far than your past.

Our Ancestors Were Wise

- 8 Our ancestors were wise,
so learn from them.
- 9 Our own time has been short,
like a fading shadow,
and we know very little.
- 10 But they will instruct you
with great understanding.
- 11 Papyrus reeds grow healthy
only in a swamp,
12 and if the water dries up,
they die sooner than grass.

- 13 Such is the hopeless future
of all who turn from God
14 and trust in something as frail
as a spider's web—
15 they take hold and fall
because it's so flimsy.
16 Sinful people are like plants
with spreading roots and plenty
of sun and water.
17 They wrap their roots tightly
around rocks.¹
18 But once they are pulled up,
they have no more place;
19 their life slips away,¹
and other plants grow there.
20 We know God doesn't reject
an innocent person
or help a sinner.
21 And so, he will make you happy
and give you something
to smile about.
22 But your evil enemies
will be put to shame
and disappear forever.

Job's Reply to Bildad

What You Say Is True



- Job said:
2 What you say is true.
No human is innocent
in the sight of God.
3 Not once in a thousand times
could we win our case
if we took him to court.
4 God is wise and powerful—
who could possibly
oppose him and win?
5 When God becomes angry,
he can move mountains
before they even know it.
6 God can shake the earth loose
from its foundations
7 or command the sun and stars
to hold back their light.
8 God alone stretched out the sky,
stepped on the sea,[▷]
9 and set the stars in place—
the Big Dipper and Orion,
the Pleiades and the stars
in the southern sky.

- 10 Of all the miracles God works,
we cannot understand a one.
11 God walks right past me,
without making a sound.
12 And if he grabs something,
who can stop him
or raise a question?
13 When God showed his anger,
the servants of the sea monster[▷]
fell at his feet.
14 How, then, could I possibly
argue my case with God?

Though I Am Innocent

- 15 Even though I am innocent,
I can only beg for mercy.
16 And if God came into court
when I called him,
he would not hear my case.
17 He would 'strike me with a storm'
and increase my injuries
for no reason at all.
18 Before I could get my breath,
my miseries would multiply.
19 God is much stronger than I am,
and who would call me into court
to give me justice?
20 Even if I were innocent,
God would prove me wrong.[▷]
21 I am not guilty,
but I no longer care
what happens to me.
22 What difference does it make?
God destroys the innocent
along with the guilty.
23 When a good person dies
a sudden death,
God sits back and laughs.
24 And who else but God
blindfolds the judges,
then lets the wicked
take over the earth?

My Life Is Speeding By

- 25 My life is speeding by,
without a hope of happiness.
26 Each day passes swifter
than a sailing ship
or an eagle swooping down.
27 Sometimes I try to be cheerful
and to stop complaining,

- 28 but my sufferings frighten me,
because I know that God
still considers me guilty.
- 29 So what's the use of trying
to prove my innocence?
- 30 Even if I washed myself
with the strongest soap,
- 31 God would throw me into a pit
of stinking slime, leaving me
disgusting to my clothes.
- 32 God isn't a mere human like me.
I can't put him on trial.
- 33 Who could possibly judge
between the two of us?
- 34 Can someone snatch away
the stick God carries
to frighten me?
- 35 Then I could speak up
without fear of him,
'but for now, I cannot speak.'

Job Complains to God

I Am Sick of Life!

- 19** I am sick of life!
And from my deep despair,
I complain to you, my God.
- 2 Don't just condemn me!
Point out my sin.
- 3 Why do you take such delight
in destroying those you created
and in smiling on sinners?
- 4 Do you look at things
the way we humans do?
- 5 Is your life as short as ours?
- 6 Is that why you are so quick
to find fault with me?
- 7 You know I am innocent,
but who can defend me
against you?
- 8 Will you now destroy
someone you created?
- 9 Remember that you molded me
like a piece of clay.
So don't turn me back
into dust once again.
- 10 As cheese is made from milk,
you created my body
from a tiny drop.
- 11 Then you tied my bones together
with muscles and covered them
with flesh and skin.

- 12 You, the source of my life,
showered me with kindness
and watched over me.

You Have Not Explained

- 13 You have not explained
all of your mysteries,
14 but you catch and punish me
each time I sin.
- 15 Guilty or innocent,
I am condemned and ashamed
because of my troubles.
- 16 'No matter how hard I try,
you keep hunting me down
like a powerful lion.'
- 17 You never stop accusing me;
you become furious and attack
over and over again.
- 18 Why did you let me be born?
I would rather have died
before birth
- 19 and been carried to the grave
without ever breathing.
- 20 'I have only a few days left.
Why don't you leave me alone?'
Let me find some relief,
*21 before I travel to the land
22 of darkness and despair,
the place of no return.

Zophar's First Speech

So Much Foolish Talk

- 11** Zophar from Naamah said:
- 2 So much foolish talk
cannot go unanswered.
- 3 Your words have silenced others
and made them ashamed;
now it is only right for you
to be put to shame.
- 4 You claim to be innocent
and argue that your beliefs
are acceptable to God.
- 5 But I wish he would speak
6 and let you know that wisdom
has many different sides.
You would then discover
that God has punished you
less than you deserve.
- 7 Can you understand the mysteries
surrounding God All-Powerful?
- 8 They are higher than the heavens

and deeper than the grave.
 So what can you do
 when you know so little,
 9 and these mysteries outreach
 the earth and the ocean?
 10 If God puts you in prison
 or drags you to court,
 what can you do?
 11 God has the wisdom to know
 when someone is worthless
 and sinful,
 12 but 'it's easier to tame
 a wild donkey
 than to make a fool wise.'

Surrender Your Heart to God

13 Surrender your heart to God,
 turn to him in prayer,
 14 and give up your sins—
 even those you do in secret.
 15 Then you won't be ashamed;
 you will be confident
 and fearless.
 16 Your troubles will go away
 like water beneath a bridge,
 17 and your darkest night
 will be brighter than noon.
 18 You will rest safe and secure,
 filled with hope
 and emptied of worry.
 19 You will sleep without fear
 and be greatly respected.
 20 But those who are evil
 will go blind and lose their way.
 Their only escape is death!

Job's Reply to Zophar

You Think You Are So Great

12 *1 Job said to his friends:
 2 You think you are so great,
 with all the answers.
 3 But I know as much as you do,
 and so does everyone else.

4 I have always lived right,
 and God answered my prayers;
 now friends make fun of me.
 5 It's easy to condemn
 those who are suffering,
 when you have no troubles.
 6 Robbers and other godless people

live safely at home and say,
 "God is in our hands!"

If You Want To Learn

7 If you want to learn,
 then go and ask
 the wild animals and the birds,
 8 the flowers and the fish.
 9 Any of them can tell you
 what the LORD has done.
 10 Every living creature
 is in the hands of God.
 11 We hear with our ears,
 taste with our tongues,
 12 and gain some wisdom from those
 who have lived a long time.
 13 But God is the real source
 of wisdom and strength.
 14 No one can rebuild
 what he destroys, or release
 those he has imprisoned.
 15 God can hold back the rain
 or send a flood,
 16 just as he rules over liars
 and those they lie to.
 17 God destroys counselors,
 turns judges into fools,
 18 and makes slaves of kings.
 19 God removes priests and others
 who have great power—
 20 he confuses wise,
 experienced advisors,
 21 puts mighty kings to shame,
 and takes away their power.
 22 God turns darkness to light;
 23 he makes nations strong,
 then shatters their strength.
 24 God strikes their rulers senseless,
 then leaves them to roam
 through barren deserts,
 25 lost in the dark, staggering
 like someone drunk.

Job Continues

I Know and Understand

13 1 I know and understand
 every bit of this.
 2 None of you are smarter
 than I am;
 there's nothing you know
 that I don't.

- 3 But I prefer to argue my case
with God All-Powerful—
4 you are merely useless doctors,
who treat me with lies.
5 The wisest thing you can do
is to keep quiet ⁶ and listen
to my argument.
7 Are you telling lies for God
8 and not telling the whole truth
when you argue his case?
9 If he took you to court,
could you fool him,
just as you fool others?
10 If you were secretly unfair,
he would correct you,
11 and his glorious splendor
would make you terrified.
12 Your wisdom and arguments
are as delicate as dust.

Be Quiet While I Speak

- 13 Be quiet while I speak,
then say what you will.
14 I will be responsible
for what happens to me.
15 God may kill me, but still
I will trust him [>]
and offer my defense.
16 This may be what saves me,
because no guilty person
would come to his court.
17 Listen carefully to my words!
18 I have prepared my case well,
and I am certain to win.
19 If you can prove me guilty,
I will give up and die.

Job Prays

I Ask Only Two Things

- 20 I ask only two things
of you, my God,
and I will no longer
hide from you—
21 stop punishing
and terrifying me!
22 Then speak, and I will reply;
or else let me speak,
and you reply.
23 Please point out my sins,
so I will know them.
24 Why have you turned your back
and count me your enemy?

- 25 Do you really enjoy
frightening a fallen leaf?
26 Why do you accuse me
of horrible crimes
and make me pay for sins
I did in my youth?
27 You have tied my feet down
and keep me surrounded;
28 I am rotting away like cloth
eaten by worms.

Job Continues his Prayer

Life Is Short and Sorrowful

- 14** Life is short and sorrowful
for every living soul.
2 We are flowers that fade
and shadows that vanish.
3 And so, I ask you, God,
why pick on me?
4 There's no way a human
can be completely pure.
5 Our time on earth is brief;
the number of our days
is already decided by you.
6 Why don't you leave us alone
and let us find some happiness
while we toil and labor?

When a Tree Is Chopped Down

- 7 When a tree is chopped down,
there is always the hope
that it will sprout again.
8 Its roots and stump may rot,
9 but at the touch of water,
fresh twigs shoot up.
10 Humans are different—
we die, and that's the end.
11 We are like streams and lakes
after the water has gone;
12 we fall into the sleep of death,
never to rise again,
until the sky disappears.
13 Please hide me, God,
deep in the ground—
and when you are angry no more,
remember to rescue me.

Will We Humans Live Again?

- 14 Will we humans live again?
I would gladly suffer
and wait for my time.
15 My Creator, you would want me;

- you would call out,
and I would answer.
- 16 You would take care of me,
but not count my sins—
- 17 you would put them in a bag,
tie it tight,
and toss them away.
- 18 But in the real world,
mountains tumble,
and rocks crumble;
19 streams wear away stones
and wash away soil.
And you destroy our hopes!
- 20 You change the way we look,
then send us away,
wiped out forever.
- 21 We never live to know
if our children are praised
or disgraced.
- 22 We feel no pain but our own,
and when we mourn,
it's only for ourselves.

Eliphaz's Second Speech

If You Had Any Sense

- 15 Eliphaz from Teman said:
*2 Job, if you had any sense,
3 you would stop spreading
all of this hot air.
- 4 Your words are enough
to make others turn from God
and lead them to doubt.
- 5 And your sinful, scheming mind
is the source of all you say.
- 6 I am not here as your judge;
your own words are witnesses
against you.
- 7 Were you the first human?
Are you older than the hills?
- 8 Have you ever been present
when God's council meets?
Do you alone have wisdom?
- 9 Do you know and understand
something we don't?
- 10 We have the benefit of wisdom
older than your father.
- 11 And you have been offered
comforting words from God.
Isn't this enough?
- 12 Your emotions are out of control,
making you look fierce;

- 13 that's why you attack God
with everything you say.
- 14 No human is pure and innocent,
15 and neither are angels—
not in the sight of God.
If God doesn't trust his angels,
16 what chance do humans have?
We are so terribly evil
that we thirst for sin.

Just Listen to What I Know

- 17 Just listen to what I know,
and you will learn
- 18 wisdom known by others
since ancient times.
- 19 Those who gained such insights
also gained the land,
and they were not influenced
by foreign teachings.
- 20 But suffering is in store
each day for those who sin.
- 21 Even in times of success,
they constantly hear
the threat of doom.
- 22 Darkness, despair, and death
are their destiny.
- 23 They scrounge around for food,
all the while dreading
the approaching darkness.
- 24 They are overcome with despair,
like a terrified king
about to go into battle.
- 25 This is because they rebelled
against God All-Powerful
- 26 and have attacked him
with their weapons.
- 27 They may be rich and fat,
28 but they will live in the ruins
of deserted towns.
- 29 Their property and wealth
will shrink and disappear.
- 30 They won't escape the darkness,
and the blazing breath of God
will set their future aflame.
- *31 They have put their trust
in something worthless;
now they will become worthless
- 32 'like a date palm tree
without a leaf.'
- 33 Or like vineyards or orchards
whose blossoms and unripe fruit

drop to the ground.

- ³⁴ Yes, the goddess and the greedy
will have nothing but flames
feasting on their homes,
³⁵ because they are the parents
of trouble and vicious lies.

Job's Reply to Eliphaz

I Have Often Heard This

16

- Job said:
² I have often heard this,
and it offers no comfort.
³ So why don't you keep quiet?
What's bothering you?
⁴ If I were in your place,
it would be easy to criticize
or to give advice.
⁵ But I would offer hope
and comfort instead.
⁶ If I speak, or if I don't,
I hurt all the same.
My torment continues.
⁷ God has worn me down
and destroyed my family;
⁸ my shriveled up skin proves
that I am his prisoner.
⁹ God is my hateful enemy,
glaring at me and attacking
with his sharp teeth.
¹⁰ Everyone is against me;
they sneer and slap my face.
¹¹ And God is the one
who handed me over
to this merciless mob.

Everything Was Going Well

- ¹² Everything was going well,
until God grabbed my neck
and shook me to pieces.
God set me up as the target
¹³ for his arrows,
and without showing mercy,
he slashed my stomach open,
spilling out my insides.
¹⁴ God never stops attacking,
¹⁵ and so, in my sorrow
I dress in sackcloth
and sit in the dust.
¹⁶ My face is red with tears,
and dark shadows
circle my eyes,

- ¹⁷ though I am not violent,
and my prayers are sincere.
¹⁸ If I should die,
I beg the earth not to cover
my cry for justice.
¹⁹ Even now, God in heaven
is both my witness
and my protector.
²⁰ My friends have rejected me,
but God is the one I beg[▷]
²¹ to show that I am right,
just as a friend should.
²² Because in only a few years,
I will be dead and gone.

Job Complains to God

My Hopes Have Died

17

- My hopes have died,
my time is up,
and the grave is ready.
² All I can see are angry crowds,
making fun of me.
³ If you, LORD, don't help,
who will pay the price
for my release?
⁴ My friends won't really listen,
all because of you,
and so you must be the one
to prove them wrong.
⁵ They have condemned me,
just to benefit themselves;
now blind their children.
⁶ You, God, are the reason
I am insulted and spit on.
⁷ I am almost blind with grief;
my body is a mere shadow.
⁸ 'People who are truly good
would feel so alarmed,
that they would become angry
at my worthless friends.
⁹ They would do the right thing
and because they did,
they would grow stronger.'¹
¹⁰ But none of my friends
show any sense.
¹¹ My life is drawing to an end;
hope has disappeared.
¹² 'But all my friends can do
is offer empty hopes.'¹

- 13 I could tell the world below
to prepare me a bed.
14 Then I could greet the grave
as my father
and say to the worms,
"Hello, mother and sisters!"
15 But what kind of hope is that?
16 Will it keep me company
in the world of the dead?

Bildad's Second Speech

How Long Will You Talk?

- 18** Bildad from Shuah said:
2 How long will you talk?
Be sensible! Let us speak.
3 Or do you think that we
are dumb animals?
4 You cut yourself in anger.
Will that shake the earth
or even move the rocks?
*5 The lamps of sinful people
soon are snuffed out,
6 leaving their tents dark.
7 Their powerful legs become weak,
and they stumble on schemes
of their own doing.
*8 Before they know it,
9 they are trapped in a net,
10 hidden along the path.
11 Terror strikes and pursues
from every side.
12 Starving, they run,
only to meet disaster,
13 then afterwards to be eaten alive
by death itself.
14 Those sinners are dragged
from the safety of their tents
to die a gruesome death.
15 Then their tents and possessions
are burned to ashes,
16 and they are left like trees,
dried up from the roots.
17 They are gone and forgotten,
18 thrown far from the light
into a world of darkness,
19 without any children
to carry on their name.
20 Everyone, from east to west,
is overwhelmed with horror.
21 Such is the fate of sinners

and their families
who don't know God.

Job's Reply to Bildad

How Long Will You Torture Me?

- 19** Job said:
2 How long will you torture me
with your words?
3 Isn't ten times enough
for you to accuse me?
Aren't you ashamed?
4 Even if I have sinned,
you haven't been harmed.
5 You boast of your goodness,
claiming I am suffering
because I am guilty.
6 But God is the one at fault
for finding fault with me.
7 Though I pray to be rescued
from this torment,
no whisper of justice
answers me.
8 God has me trapped
with a wall of darkness
9 and stripped of respect.
10 God rips me apart,
uproots my hopes,
11 and attacks with fierce anger,
as though I were his enemy.
12 His entire army advances,
then surrounds my tent.

I Am Forgotten

- *13 God has turned relatives
and friends against me,
14 and I am forgotten.
15 My guests and my servants
consider me a stranger,
16 and when I call my servants,
they pay no attention.
17 My breath disgusts my wife;
everyone in my family
turns away.
18 Young children can't stand me,
and when I come near,
they make fun.
19 My best friends and loved ones
have turned from me.
20 I am skin and bones—
just barely alive.
21 My friends, I beg you for pity!
God has made me his target.

22 Hasn't he already done enough?
Why do you join the attack?

23 I wish that my words
could be written down

24 or chiseled into rock.

25 'I know that my Savior² lives,
and at the end
he will stand on this earth.

26 My flesh may be destroyed,
yet from this body
I will see God.¹

27 Yes, I will see him for myself,
and I long for that moment.

28 My friends, you think up ways
to blame and torment me, saying
I brought it on myself.

29 But watch out for the judgment,
when God will punish you!

Zophar's Second Speech

Your Words Are Disturbing

20

Zophar from Naamah said:

2 Your words are disturbing;
now I must speak.

3 You have accused
and insulted me,
and reason requires a reply.

4 Since the time of creation,
everyone has known

5 that sinful people are happy
for only a while.

6 Though their pride and power
may reach to the sky,

7 they will disappear like dust,
and those who knew them
will wonder what happened.

8 They will be forgotten
like a dream

9 and vanish from the sight
of family and friends.

10 Their children will have to repay
what the parents took
from the poor.

11 Indeed, the wicked will die
and go to their graves
in the prime of life.

Sinners Love the Taste of Sin

12 Sinners love the taste of sin;
they relish every bite

13 and swallow it slowly.

14 But their food will turn sour
and poison their stomachs.

15 Then God will make them lose
the wealth they gobbled down.

16 They will die from the fangs
of poisonous snakes

17 and never enjoy rivers flowing
with milk and honey.

18 Their hard work will result
in nothing gained,

19 because they cheated the poor
and took their homes.

20 Greedy people want everything
and 'are never satisfied.'

21 But when nothing remains
for them to grab,
they will be nothing.

22 Once they have everything,
distress and despair

will strike them down,

23 'and God will make them swallow
his blazing anger.'

24 While running from iron spears,
they will be killed

by arrows of bronze,

25 whose shining tips go straight
through their bodies.

They will be trapped by terror,

26 and what they treasure most
will be lost in the dark.

God will send flames
to destroy them in their tents
with all their property.

27 The heavens and the earth
will testify against them,

28 and all their possessions
will be dragged off

when God becomes angry.

29 This is what God has decided
for those who are evil.

Job's Reply to Zophar

If You Want To Offer Comfort

21

Job said:

2 If you want to offer comfort,
then listen to me.

3 And when I have finished,
you can start your insults
all over again.

- 4 My complaint is against God;
that's why I am impatient.
- 5 Just looking at me is enough
to make you sick,
- 6 and the very thought of myself
fills me with disgust.
- 7 Why do evil people live so long
and gain such power?
- 8 "Why are they allowed to see
their children grow up?"
- 9 They have no worries at home,
and God never punishes them.
- 10 Their cattle have lots of calves
without ever losing one;
- 11 their children play and dance
safely by themselves.
- 12 These people sing and celebrate
to the sound of tambourines,
small harps, and flutes,
- 13 and they are successful,
without a worry,
until the day they die.

Leave Us Alone!

- 14 Those who are evil say
to God All-Powerful,
"Leave us alone! Don't bother us
with your teachings.
- 15 What do we gain from praying
and worshiping you?
- 16 We succeeded all on our own."
And so, I keep away from them
and their evil schemes.
- 17 How often does God become angry
and send disaster and darkness
to punish sinners?
- 18 How often does he strike them
like a windstorm
that scatters straw?
- 19 You say, "God will punish
those sinners' children
in place of those sinners."
But I say, "Let him punish
those sinners themselves
until they really feel it.
- 20 Let God All-Powerful force them
to drink their own destruction
from the cup of his anger.
- 21 Because after they are dead,
they won't care what happens
to their children."

Who Can Tell God What To Do?

- 22 Who can tell God what to do?
He judges powerful rulers.
- *23 Some of us die prosperous,
24 enjoying good health,
25 while others die in poverty,
having known only pain.
- 26 But we all end up dead,
beneath a blanket of worms.
- 27 My friends, I know that you
are plotting against me.
- 28 You ask, "Where is the home
of that important person
who does so much evil?"
- 29 Everyone, near and far, agrees
30 that those who do wrong
never suffer disaster,
when God becomes angry.
- 31 No one points out their sin
or punishes them.
- 32 Then at their funerals,
they are highly praised;
- 33 the earth welcomes them home,
while crowds mourn.
- 34 But empty, meaningless words
are the comfort you offer me.

Eliphaz's Third Speech

What Use Are We Humans to God?

22

- Eliphaz from Teman said:
- 2 What use are we humans to God,
even the wisest of us?
- 3 If you were completely sinless,
that would still mean nothing
to God All-Powerful.
- 4 Is he correcting you
for worshiping him?
- 5 No! It's because
of your terrible sins.
- 6 To guarantee payment of a debt,
you have taken clothes
from the poor.
- 7 And you refused bread and water
to the hungry and thirsty,
8 although you were rich,
respected, and powerful.
- 9 You have turned away widows
and have broken the arms
of orphans.
- 10 That's why you were suddenly
trapped by terror,

¹¹ blinded by darkness,
and drowned in a flood.

God Lives in the Heavens

¹² God lives in the heavens
above the highest stars,
where he sees everything.
¹³ Do you think the deep darkness
hides you from God?
¹⁴ Do thick clouds cover his eyes,
as he walks around heaven's dome
high above the earth?
¹⁵ Give up those ancient ideas
believed by sinners,
¹⁶ who were swept away
without warning.
¹⁷ They rejected God All-Powerful,
feeling he was helpless,
¹⁸ although he had been kind
to their families.
The beliefs of these sinners
are truly disgusting.
¹⁹ When God's people see
the godless swept away,
they celebrate, ²⁰ saying,
"Our enemies are gone,
and fire has destroyed
their possessions."

Surrender to God All-Powerful

²¹ Surrender to God All-Powerful!
You will find peace
and prosperity.
²² Listen to his teachings
and take them to heart.
²³ If you return to God
and turn from sin,
all will go well for you.
²⁴ So get rid of your finest gold,
as though it were sand.
²⁵ Let God All-Powerful
be your silver and gold,
²⁶ and you will find happiness
by worshiping him.
²⁷ God will answer your prayers,
and you will keep the promises
you made to him.
²⁸ He will do whatever you ask,
and life will be bright.
²⁹ When others are disgraced,
God will clear their names
in answer to your prayers.

³⁰ Even those who are guilty
will be forgiven,
because you obey God.¹

Job's Reply to Eliphaz

Today I Complain Bitterly

23 Job said:
² Today I complain bitterly,
because God has been cruel
and made me suffer.
³ If I knew where to find God,
I would go there
⁴ and argue my case.
⁵ Then I would discover
what he wanted to say.
⁶ Would he overwhelm me
with his greatness?
No! He would listen
⁷ because I am innocent,
and he would say,
"I now set you free!"
⁸ I cannot find God anywhere—
in front or back of me,
⁹ to my left or my right.
God is always at work,
though I never see him.
¹⁰ But he knows what I am doing,
and when he tests me,
I will be pure as gold.
^{*11} I have never refused to follow
any of his commands,
¹² and I have always treasured
his teachings.¹
¹³ But he alone is God,
and who can oppose him?
God does as he pleases,
¹⁴ and he will do exactly
what he intends with me.
^{*15} Merely the thought
of God All-Powerful
¹⁶ makes me tremble with fear.
¹⁷ God has covered me
with darkness,
but I refuse to be silent.¹

Job Continues

Why Doesn't God Set a Time?

24 Why doesn't God
set a time for court?
Why don't his people know

- where he can be found?
 2 Sinners remove boundary markers
 and take care of sheep
 they have stolen.
 3 They cheat orphans and widows
 by taking their donkeys
 and oxen.
 4 The poor are trampled
 and forced to hide
 5 in the desert,
 where they and their children
 must live like wild donkeys
 and search for food.
 6 If they want grain or grapes,
 they must go to the property
 of these sinners.
 7 They sleep naked in the cold,
 because they have no cover,
 8 and during a storm
 their only shelters are caves
 among the rocky cliffs.
 9 Children whose fathers have died
 are taken from their mothers
 as payment for a debt.
 10 Then they are forced to work
 naked in the grain fields
 because they have no clothes,
 and they go hungry.
 11 They crush olives to make oil
 and grapes to make wine—
 but still they go thirsty.
 12 And along the city streets,
 the wounded and dying cry out,
 yet God does nothing.

Some Reject the Light

- 13 Some rebel and refuse
 to follow the light.
 14 Soon after sunset they murder
 the poor and the needy,
 and at night they steal.
 15 Others wait for the dark,
 thinking they won't be seen
 if they sleep with the wife
 or husband of someone else.
 16 Robbers hide during the day,
 then break in after dark
 because they reject the light.
 17 They prefer night to day,
 since the terrors of the night
 are their friends.

Sinners Are Filthy Foam

- 18 Those sinners are filthy foam
 on the surface of the water.
 And so, their fields and vineyards
 will fall under a curse
 and won't produce.
 19 Just as the heat of summer
 swallows the snow,
 the world of the dead
 swallows those who sin.
 20 Forgotten here on earth,
 and with their power broken,
 they taste sweet to worms.
 21 'Sinners take advantage of widows
 and other helpless women.'
 22 But God's mighty strength
 destroys those in power.
 Even if they seem successful,
 they are doomed to fail.
 23 God may let them feel secure,
 but they are never
 out of his sight.
 24 Great for a while; gone forever!
 Sinners are mowed down
 like weeds,
 then they wither and die.
 25 If I haven't spoken the truth,
 then prove me wrong.

Bildad's Third Speech

God Is the One To Fear

- 25** Bildad from Shuah said:
 2 God is the one to fear,
 because God is in control
 and rules the heavens.
 3 Who can count his army of stars?
 Isn't God the source of light?
 4 How can anyone be innocent
 in the sight of God?
 5 To him, not even the light
 of the moon and stars
 can ever be pure.
 6 So how can we humans,
 when we are merely worms?

Job's Reply to Bildad

You Have Really Been Helpful

- 26** Job said:
 2 You have really been helpful
 to someone weak and weary.
 3 You have given great advice

- and wonderful wisdom
to someone truly in need.
- 4 How can anyone possibly speak
with such understanding?
- 5 Remember the terrible trembling
of those in the world of the dead
below the mighty ocean.
- 6 Nothing in that land
of death and destruction
is hidden from God,
7 who hung the northern sky
and suspended the earth
on empty space.
- 8 God stores water in clouds,
but they don't burst,
9 and he wraps them around
the face of the moon.
- 10 On the surface of the ocean,
God has drawn a boundary line
between light and darkness.
- 11 And columns supporting the sky
tremble at his command.
- 12 By his power and wisdom,
God conquered the force
of the mighty ocean.▷
- 13 The heavens became bright
when he breathed,
and the escaping sea monster▷
died at the hands of God.
- 14 These things are merely a whisper
of God's power at work.
How little we would understand
if this whisper
ever turned into thunder!

Job Continues

I Am Desperate

27

Job said:

- 2 I am desperate because
God All-Powerful refuses
to do what is right.
As surely as God lives,
3 and while he gives me breath,
4 I will tell only the truth.
- 5 Until the day I die,
I will refuse to do wrong
by saying you are right,
6 because each day my conscience
agrees that I am innocent.
- 7 I pray that my enemies

will suffer no less
than the wicked.

- 8 Such people are hopeless,
and God All-Powerful
will cut them down,
9 without listening
when they beg for mercy.
- 10 And that is what God should do,
because they don't like him
or ever pray.
- 11 Now I will explain in detail
what God All-Powerful does.
- 12 All of you have seen these things
for yourselves.
So you have no excuse.

How God Treats the Wicked

- 13 Here is how God All-Powerful
treats those who are wicked
and brutal.
- 14 They may have many children,
but most of them will go hungry
or suffer a violent death.
- 15 Others will die of disease,
and their widows
won't be able to weep.
- 16 The wicked may collect riches
and clothes in abundance
as easily as clay.
- 17 But God's people will wear
clothes taken from them
and divide up their riches.
- 18 No homes built by the wicked
will outlast a cocoon
or a shack.
- 19 Those sinners may go to bed rich,
but they will wake up poor.▷
- 20 Terror will strike at night
like a flood or a storm.
- 21 Then a scorching wind
will sweep them away
- 22 without showing mercy,
as they try to escape.
- 23 At last, the wind will celebrate
because they are gone.

Job Continues

Gold and Silver Are Mined

28

- Gold and silver are mined,
then purified;
2 the same is done
with iron and copper.

3 Miners carry lanterns
 deep into the darkness
 to search for these metals.
 4 They dig tunnels
 in distant, unknown places,
 where they dangle by ropes.
 5 Far beneath the grain fields,
 fires are built
 to break loose those rocks
 6 that have jewels or gold.¹
 7 Miners go to places unseen
 by the eyes of hawks;
 8 they walk on soil unknown
 to the proudest lions.
 9 With their own hands
 they remove sharp rocks
 and uproot mountains.
 10 They dig through the rocks
 in search of jewels
 and precious metals.
 11 They also uncover
 the sources of▷ rivers
 and discover secret places.

Where Is Wisdom Found?

12 But where is wisdom found?
 13 No human knows the way.▷
 14 Nor can it be discovered
 in the deepest sea.
 *15 It is worth much more
 than silver or pure gold
 16 or precious stones.
 17 Nothing is its equal—
 not gold or costly glass.
 18 Wisdom is worth much more than
 coral, jasper, or rubies.
 19 All the topaz of Ethiopia▷
 and the finest gold
 cannot compare with it.
 20 Where then is wisdom?
 21 It is hidden from human eyes
 and even from birds.
 22 Death and destruction
 have merely heard rumors
 about where it is found.
 23 God is the only one who knows
 the way to wisdom,
 24 because he sees everything
 beneath the heavens.
 25 When God divided out
 the wind and the water,

26 and when he decided the path
 for rain and lightning,
 27 he also determined the truth
 and defined wisdom.
 28 God told us, "Wisdom means
 that you respect me, the Lord,
 and turn from sin."

Job Continues

I Long for the Past

29 Job said:
 2 I long for the past,
 when God took care of me,
 3 and the light from his lamp
 showed me the way
 through the dark.
 4 I was in the prime of life,
 God All-Powerful
 was my closest friend,
 5 and all of my children
 were nearby.
 6 My herds gave enough milk
 to bathe my feet,
 and from my olive harvest
 flowed rivers of oil.
 *7 When I sat down at the meeting
 of the city council,
 8 the young leaders stepped aside,
 *9 while the older ones stood
 10 and remained silent.

Everyone Was Pleased

11 Everyone was pleased
 with what I said and did.
 12 When poor people or orphans
 cried out for help,
 I came to their rescue.
 13 And I was highly praised
 for my generosity to widows
 and others in poverty.
 14 Kindness and justice
 were my coat and hat;
 15 I was good to the blind
 and to the lame.
 16 I was a father to the needy,
 and I defended them in court,
 even if they were strangers.
 17 When criminals attacked,
 I broke their teeth
 and set their victims free.
 18 I felt certain that I would live

a long and happy life,
then die in my own bed.

- 19 In those days I was strong
like a tree with deep roots
and with plenty of water,
20 or like an archer's new bow.
21 Everyone listened in silence
to my welcome advice,
22 and when I finished speaking,
nothing needed to be said.
23 My words were eagerly accepted
like the showers of spring,
24 and the smile on my face
renewed everyone's hopes.
25 My advice was followed
as though I were a king
leading my troops,
or someone comforting
those in sorrow.

Job Continues

Young People Now Insult Me

30

Young people now insult me,
although their fathers
would have been a disgrace
to my sheep dogs.

- 2 And those who insult me
are helpless themselves.
3 'They must claw the desert sand
in the dark for something
to satisfy their hunger.'
4 They gather tasteless shrubs
for food and firewood,
5 and they are run out of towns,
as though they were thieves.
6 Their only homes are ditches
or holes between rocks,
7 where they bray like donkeys
gathering around shrubs.
8 And like senseless donkeys
they are chased away.

Those Worthless Nobodies

- 9 Those worthless nobodies
make up jokes and songs
to disgrace me.
10 They are hateful
and keep their distance,
even while spitting
in my direction.
11 God has destroyed me,

and so they don't care
what they do.▷

- 12 'Their attacks never stop,
though I am defenseless,
and my feet are trapped.'
13 Without any help,
they prevent my escape,
'destroying me completely'
14 and leaving me crushed.
15 Terror has me surrounded;
my reputation and my riches
have vanished like a cloud.

I Am Sick at Heart

- 16 I am sick at heart!
Pain has taken its toll.
17 Night chews on my bones,
causing endless torment,
18 and God has shrunk my skin,
choking me to death.
19 I have been thrown in the dirt
and now am dirt myself.
20 I beg God for help,
but there is no answer;
and when I stand up,
he simply stares.
21 God has turned brutal,
22 stirring up a windstorm
to toss me about.
23 Soon he will send me home
to the world of the dead,
where we all must go.
24 'No one refuses help to others,
when disaster strikes.'
25 I mourned for the poor
and those who suffered.
26 But when I beg for relief
and light,
all I receive are disaster
and darkness.
27 My stomach is tied in knots;
pain is my daily companion.
28 Suffering has scorched my skin,
and in the city council
I stand and cry out,
29 making mournful sounds
like jackals and owls.
30 My skin is so parched,
that it peels right off,
and my bones are burning.
31 My only songs are sorrow
and sadness.

Job Continues

I Promised Myself

- 31 I promised myself
never to stare with desire
at a young woman.
2 God All-Powerful punishes
men who do that.
3 In fact, God sends disaster
on all who sin,
4 and he keeps a close watch
on everything I do.
5 I am not dishonest or deceitful,
6 and I beg God to prove
my innocence.
7 If I have disobeyed him
or even wanted to,
8 then others can eat my harvest
and uproot my crops.
9 If I have desired someone's wife
and chased after her,
10 then let some stranger
steal my wife from me.
11 If I took someone's wife,
it would be a horrible crime,
12 "sending me to destruction
and my crops to the flames."
13 When my servants
complained against me,
I was fair to them.
14 Otherwise, what answer
would I give to God
when he judges me?
15 After all, God is the one
who gave life to each of us
before we were born.

I Have Never Cheated Anyone

- 16 I have never cheated widows
or others in need,
17 and I have always shared
my food with orphans.
18 "Since the time I was young,
I have cared for orphans
and helped widows."
19 I provided clothes for the poor,
20 and I was praised
for supplying woolen garments
to keep them warm.
21 If I have ever raised my arm
to threaten an orphan
when the power was mine,

- 22 I hope that arm will fall
from its socket.
23 I could not have been abusive;
I was terrified at the thought
that God might punish me.
24 I have never trusted
the power of wealth,
25 or taken pride in owning
many possessions.
*26 I have never openly or secretly
27 worshiped the sun or moon.
28 Such horrible sins
would have deserved
punishment from God.
29 I have never laughed
when my enemies
were struck by disaster.
30 Neither have I sinned
by asking God
to send down on them
the curse of death.
31 No one ever went hungry
at my house,
32 and travelers
were always welcome.
33 Many have attempted to hide
their sins from others –
but I refused.
34 And the fear of public disgrace
never forced me to keep silent
about what I had done.

Why Doesn't God Listen?

- 35 Why doesn't God All-Powerful
listen and answer?
If God has something against me,
let him speak up
or put it in writing!
36 Then I would wear his charges
on my clothes and forehead.
37 And with my head held high,
I would tell him everything
I have ever done.
38 I have never mistreated
the land I farmed
and made it mourn.
39 "Nor have I cheated
my workers
and caused them pain."
40 If I had, I would pray
for weeds instead of wheat

to grow in my fields.
After saying these things,
Job was silent.

Elihu Is Upset with Job's Friends

32 Finally, these three men stopped arguing with Job, because he refused to admit that he was guilty.

² Elihu from Buz[>] was there, and he had become upset with Job for blaming God instead of himself. ³ He was also angry with Job's three friends for not being able to prove that Job was wrong. ⁴ Elihu was younger than these three, and he let them speak first. ⁵ But he became irritated when they could not answer Job, ⁶ and he said to them:

I am much younger than you,
so I have shown respect
by keeping silent.
⁷ I once believed age
was the source of wisdom;
⁸ now I truly realize
wisdom comes from God.
⁹ Age is no guarantee of wisdom
and understanding.
¹⁰ That's why I ask you
to listen to me.

I Eagerly Listened

^{*11} I eagerly listened
to each of your arguments,
¹² but not one of you proved
Job to be wrong.
¹³ You shouldn't say,
"We know what's right!
Let God punish him."
¹⁴ Job hasn't spoken against me,
and so I won't answer him
with your arguments.
¹⁵ All of you are shocked;
you don't know what to say.
¹⁶ But am I to remain silent,
just because you
have stopped speaking?
¹⁷ No! I will give my opinion,
¹⁸ because I have so much to say,
that I can't keep quiet.
¹⁹ I am like a swollen wineskin,
and I will burst
²⁰ if I don't speak.

^{*21} I don't know how to be unfair
or to flatter anyone—

²² if I did, my Creator
would quickly destroy me!

Elihu Speaks

Job, Listen to Me!

33 Job, listen to me!
Pay close attention.
^{*2} Everything I will say
³ is true and sincere,
⁴ just as surely as the Spirit
of God All-Powerful[>]
gave me the breath of life.
⁵ Now line up your arguments
and prepare to face me.
⁶ We each were made from clay,
and God has no favorites,
⁷ so don't be afraid of me
or what I might do.

I Have Heard You Argue

⁸ I have heard you argue
⁹ that you are innocent,
guilty of nothing.
¹⁰ You claim that God
has made you his enemy,
¹¹ that he has bound your feet
and blocked your path.
¹² But, Job, you're wrong—
God is greater
than any human.
¹³ 'So why do you challenge God
to answer you?'
¹⁴ God speaks in different ways,
and we don't always
recognize his voice.
^{*15} Sometimes in the night,
he uses terrifying dreams
¹⁶ to give us warnings.
¹⁷ God does this to make us turn
from sin and pride
¹⁸ and to protect us
from being swept away
to the world of the dead.
¹⁹ Sometimes we are punished
with a serious illness
and aching joints.
²⁰ Merely the thought
of our favorite food
makes our stomachs sick,

- 21 and we become so skinny
that our bones stick out.
- 22 We feel death and the grave
taking us in their grip.
- 23 One of a thousand angels
then comes to our rescue
by saying we are innocent.
- 24 The angel shows kindness,
commanding death to release us,
because the price was paid.
- 25 Our health is restored,
we feel young again,
- 26 and we ask God to accept us.
Then we joyfully worship God,
and we are rewarded
because we are innocent.
- 27 When that happens,
we tell everyone,
“I sinned and did wrong,
but God forgave me
28 and rescued me from death!
Now I will see the light.”
- 29 God gives each of us
chance after chance
30 to be saved from death
and brought into the light
that gives life.
- 31 So, Job, pay attention
and don't interrupt,
32 though I would gladly listen
to anything you say
that proves you are right.
- 33 Otherwise, listen in silence
to my wisdom.

Elihu Continues

You Men Think You Are Wise

34

Elihu said:

- 2 You men think you are wise,
but just listen to me!
- 3 Think about my words,
as you would taste food.
- 4 Then we can decide the case
and give a just verdict.
- 5 Job claims he is innocent
and God is guilty
of mistreating him.
- 6 Job also argues that God
considers him a liar
and that he is suffering severely
in spite of his innocence.

- 7 But to tell the truth,
Job is shameless!
- 8 He spends his time with sinners,
9 because he has said,
“It doesn't pay to please God.”

If Any of You Are Smart

- 10 If any of you are smart,
you will listen and learn
that God All-Powerful
does what is right.
- 11 God always treats everyone
the way they deserve,
12 and he is never unfair.
- 13 From the very beginning,
God has been in control
of all the world.
- 14 If God took back the breath
that he breathed into us,
15 we humans would die
and return to the soil.
- 16 So be smart and listen!
- 17 The mighty God is the one
who brings about justice,
and you are condemning him.
- 18 Indeed, God is the one
who condemns unfair rulers.
- 19 And God created us all;
he has no favorites,
whether rich or poor.
- 20 Even powerful rulers die
in the darkness of night
when they least expect it,
just like the rest of us.

God Watches Everything We Do

- 21 God watches everything we do.
- 22 No evil person can hide
in the deepest darkness.
- 23 And so, God doesn't need
to set a time for judgment.
- 24 Without asking for advice,
God removes mighty leaders
and puts others in their place.
- 25 He knows what they are like,
and he wipes them out
in the middle of the night.
- 26 And while others look on,
he punishes them
because they were evil
- 27 and refused to obey him.

- 28 The persons they mistreated
had prayed for help,
until God answered
their prayers.
- 29 "When God does nothing,
can any person or nation
find fault with him?"
- 30 But still, he punishes rulers
who abuse their people.¹
- 31 Job, you should tell God
that you are guilty
and promise to do better.
- 32 Then ask him to point out
what you did wrong,
so you won't do it again.
- 33 Do you make the rules,
or does God?
You have to decide—
I can't do it for you;
now make up your mind.
- 34 Job, anyone with good sense
can easily see
- 35 that you are speaking nonsense
and lack good judgment.
- 36 So I pray for you to suffer
as much as possible
for talking like a sinner.
- 37 You have rebelled against God,
time after time,
and have even insulted us.

Elihu Continues

Are You Really Innocent?

- 35** Elihu said:
2 Job, are you really innocent
in the sight of God?▷
- 3 Don't you honestly believe
it pays to obey him?
- 4 I will give the answers
to you and your friends.
- *5 Look up to the heavens
6 and think!
Do your sins hurt God?
- 7 Is any good you may have done
at all helpful to him?
- 8 The evil or good you do
only affects other humans.
- 9 In times of trouble,
everyone begs the mighty God
to have mercy.
- 10 But after their Creator

- helps them through hard times,
they forget about him,
11 though he makes us wiser
than animals or birds.
- 12 God won't listen to the prayers
of proud and evil people.
- 13 If God All-Powerful refuses
to answer their empty prayers,
14 he will surely deny
your impatient request
to face him in court.
- 15 Job, you were wrong to say
God doesn't punish sin.
- 16 Everything you have said
adds up to nonsense.

Elihu Continues

Be Patient a While Longer

- 36** Elihu said:
2 Be patient a while longer;
I have something else to say
in God's defense.
- 3 God always does right—
and this knowledge
comes straight from God.▷
- 4 You can rest assured
that what I say is true.
- 5 Although God is mighty,
he cares about everyone
and makes fair decisions.
- 6 The wicked are cut down,
and those who are wronged
receive justice.
- 7 God watches over good people
and places them in positions
of power and honor forever.
- 8 But when people are prisoners
of suffering and pain,
*9 God points out their sin
and their pride,
- 10 then he warns them
to turn back to him.
- 11 And if they obey,
they will be successful
and happy from then on.
- 12 But if they foolishly refuse,
they will be rewarded
with a violent death.

Godless People Are Too Angry

- 13 Godless people are too angry

- to ask God for help
when he punishes them.
- 14 So they die young
in shameful disgrace.
- 15 Hard times and trouble
are God's way
of getting our attention!
- 16 And at this very moment,
God deeply desires
to lead you from trouble
and to spread your table
with your favorite food.
- 17 Now that the judgment
for your sins
has fallen upon you,
18 'don't let your anger
and the pain you endured
make you sneer at God.
- 19 Your reputation and riches
cannot protect you
from distress,
20 nor can you find safety
in the dark world below.¹
- 21 Be on guard! Don't turn to evil
as a way of escape.
- 22 God's power is unlimited.
He needs no teachers
- 23 to guide or correct him.

Others Have Praised God

- 24 Others have praised God
for what he has done,
so join with them.
- 25 From down here on earth,
everyone has looked up and seen
- 26 how great God is—
God is more than we imagine;
no one can count the years
he has lived.
- *27 God gathers moisture
into the clouds
- 28 and supplies us with rain.
- 29 Who can understand
how God scatters the clouds
and speaks from his home
in the thunderstorm?
- 30 And when God sends lightning,
it can be seen
at the bottom of the sea.
- 31 By producing such rainstorms,
God rules the world

- and provides us with food.
- 32 Each flash of lightning
is one of his arrows
striking its target,
- 33 'and the thunder tells
of his anger against sin.'

Elihu Continues

I Am Frightened

- 37** I am frightened
and tremble all over,
2 when I hear the roaring voice
of God in the thunder,
3 and when I see his lightning
flash across the sky.
- 4 'God's majestic voice
thunders his commands,'
5 creating miracles too marvelous
for us to understand.
- 6 Snow and heavy rainstorms
7 make us stop and think
about God's power,
8 and they force animals
to seek shelter.
- 9 The windstorms of winter strike,
10 and the breath of God
freezes streams and rivers.
- 11 Rain clouds filled with lightning
appear at God's command,
12 traveling across the sky
13 to release their cargo—
sometimes as punishment for sin,
sometimes as kindness.

Consider Carefully

- 14 Job, consider carefully
the many wonders of God.
- 15 Can you explain why lightning
flashes at the orders
16 of God who knows all things?
Or how he hangs the clouds
in empty space?
- 17 You almost melt in the heat
of fierce desert winds
when the sky is like brass.
- 18 God can spread out the clouds
to get relief from the heat,
but can you?
- 19 Tell us what to say to God!
Our minds are in the dark,

and we don't know how
to argue our case.

- 20 Should I risk my life
by telling God
that I want to speak?
21 No one can stare at the sun
after a breeze has blown
the clouds from the sky.
22 Yet the glorious splendor
of God All-Powerful
is brighter by far.
23 God cannot be seen—
but his power is great,
and he is always fair.
24 And so we humans fear God,
because he shows no respect
for those who are proud
and think they know so much.

The LORD Speaks

From Out of a Storm

- 38** From out of a storm,
the LORD said to Job:
2 Why do you talk so much
when you know so little?
3 Now get ready to face me!
Can you answer
the questions I ask?
4 How did I lay the foundation
for the earth?
Were you there?
5 Doubtless you know who decided
its length and width.
6 What supports the foundation?
Who placed the cornerstone,
7 while morning stars sang,
and angels rejoiced?
8 When the ocean was born,
I set its boundaries
9 and wrapped it in blankets
of thickest fog.
10 Then I built a wall around it,
locked the gates, 11 and said,
"Your powerful waves stop here!
They can go no farther."

Did You Ever Tell the Sun To Rise?

- 12 Did you ever tell the sun to rise?
And did it obey?
13 Did it take hold of the earth

and shake out the wicked
like dust from a rug?

- 14 Early dawn outlines the hills
like stitches on clothing
or sketches on clay.
15 But its light is too much
for those who are evil,
and their power is broken.
16 Job, have you ever walked
on the ocean floor?
17 Have you seen the gate
to the world of the dead?
18 And how large is the earth?
Tell me, if you know!
19 Where is the home of light,
and where does darkness live?
20 Can you lead them home?
21 I'm certain you must be able to,
since you were already born
when I created everything.

- 22 Have you been to the places
where I keep snow and hail,
23 until I use them to punish
and conquer nations?
24 From where does lightning leap,
or the east wind blow?
25 Who carves out a path
for thunderstorms?
Who sends torrents of rain
26 on empty deserts
where no one lives?
27 Rain that changes barren land
to meadows green with grass.
28 Who is the father of the dew
and of the rain?
29 Who gives birth to the sleet
and the frost
30 that fall in winter,
when streams and lakes
freeze solid as a rock?

Can You Arrange Stars?

- 31 Can you arrange stars in groups
such as Orion
and the Pleiades?
32 Do you control the stars
or set in place the Big Dipper
and the Little Dipper?
33 Do you know the laws
that govern the heavens,

and can you make them rule
the earth?

34 Can you order the clouds
to send a downpour,

35 or will lightning flash
at your command?

36 'Did you teach birds to know
that rain or floods
are on their way?'

37 Can you count the clouds
or pour out their water

38 on the dry, lumpy soil?

39 When lions are hungry,
do you help them hunt?

40 Do you send an animal
into their den?

41 And when starving young ravens
cry out to me for food,
do you satisfy their hunger?

The LORD Continues

When Do Mountain Goats Give Birth?

39

When do mountain goats
and deer give birth?

Have you been there
when their young are born?

*2 How long are they pregnant
3 before they deliver?

4 Soon their young grow strong
and then leave
to be on their own.

5 Who set wild donkeys free?

6 I alone help them survive
in salty desert sand.

7 They stay far from crowded cities
and refuse to be tamed.

8 Instead, they roam the hills,
searching for pastureland.

9 Would a wild ox agree
to live in your barn
and labor for you?

10 Could you force him to plow
or to drag a heavy log
to smooth out the soil?

11 Can you depend on him
to use his great strength
and do your heavy work?

12 Can you trust him
to harvest your grain

or take it to your barn
from the threshing place?

An Ostrich Proudly Flaps Her Wings

13 An ostrich proudly
flaps her wings,

but not because
she loves her young.

14 She abandons her eggs
and lets the dusty ground
keep them warm.

15 And she doesn't seem to worry
that the feet of an animal
could crush them all.

16 She treats her eggs as though
they were not her own,
unconcerned that her work
might be for nothing.

17 I myself made her foolish
and without common sense.

18 But once she 'starts running,'
she laughs at a rider
on the fastest horse.

Did You Give Horses Their Strength?

19 Did you give horses their strength
and the flowing hair
along their necks?

20 Did you make them able
to jump like grasshoppers
or to frighten people
with their snorting?

21 Before horses are ridden
into battle,
they paw at the ground,
proud of their strength.

22 Laughing at fear, they rush
toward the fighting,

23 while the weapons of their riders
rattle and flash in the sun.

24 Unable to stand still,
they gallop eagerly into battle
when trumpets blast.

25 Stirred by the distant smells
and sounds of war, they snort
in reply to the trumpet.

26 Did you teach hawks to fly south
for the winter?

*27 Did you train eagles to build
28 their nests on rocky cliffs,

- 29 where they can look down
to spot their next meal?
30 Then their young gather to feast
wherever the victim lies.

The LORD Continues

I Am the LORD All-Powerful

- 40** *1 I am the LORD All-Powerful,
2 but you have argued
that I am wrong.
Now you must answer me.
3 Job said to the LORD:
4 Who am I to answer you?
5 I did speak once or twice,
but never again.
6 Then out of the storm
the LORD said to Job:
7 Face me and answer
the questions I ask!
8 Are you trying to prove
that you are innocent
by accusing me of injustice?
9 Do you have a powerful arm
and a thundering voice
that compare with mine?
10 If so, then surround yourself
with glory and majesty.
*11 Show your furious anger!
Throw down and crush
12 all who are proud and evil.
13 Wrap them in grave clothes
and bury them together
in the dusty soil.
14 Do this, and I will agree
that you have won
this argument.

I Created You

- 15 I created both you
and the hippopotamus.▷
It eats only grass like an ox,
16 but look at the mighty muscles
in its body 17 and legs.
Its tail is like a cedar tree,
and its thighs are thick.
18 The bones in its legs
are like bronze or iron.
19 I made it more powerful
than any other creature,
yet I am stronger still.

- 20 'Undisturbed, it eats grass
while the other animals
play nearby.'

- *21 It rests in the shade of trees
along the riverbank
22 or hides among reeds
in the swamp.
23 It remains calm and unafraid
with the Jordan River rushing
and splashing in its face.
24 There is no way to capture
a hippopotamus—
not even by hooking its nose
or blinding its eyes.

The LORD Continues

Can You Catch a Sea Monster?

- 41** Can you catch a sea monster▷
by using a fishhook?
Can you tie its mouth shut
with a rope?
2 Can it be led around
by a ring in its nose
or a hook in its jaw?
3 Will it beg for mercy?
4 Will it surrender
as a slave for life?
5 Can it be tied by the leg
like a pet bird
for little girls?
6 Is it ever chopped up
and its pieces bargained for
in the fish-market?
7 Can it be killed
with harpoons or spears?
8 Wrestle it just once—
that will be the end.
9 Merely a glimpse of this monster
makes all courage melt.
10 And if it is too fierce
for anyone to attack,
who would dare oppose me?
11 I am in command of the world
and in debt to no one.
12 What powerful legs,
what a stout body
this monster possesses!
13 Who could strip off its armor
or bring it under control
with a harness?

¹⁴ Who would try to open its jaws,
full of fearsome teeth?

¹⁵ Its back[>] is covered
with shield after shield,

¹⁶ firmly bound and closer together

¹⁷ than breath to breath.

When This Monster Sneezes

¹⁸ When this monster sneezes,
lightning flashes, and its eyes
glow like the dawn.

¹⁹ Sparks and fiery flames
explode from its mouth.

²⁰ And smoke spews from its nose
like steam

²¹ while its blazing breath
scorches everything in sight.

²² Its neck is so tremendous
that everyone trembles,

²³ the weakest parts of its body
are harder than iron,

²⁴ and its heart is stone.

²⁵ When this noisy monster appears,
even the most powerful[>]
turn and run in fear.

²⁶ No sword or spear can harm it,

²⁷ and weapons of bronze or iron
are as useless as straw
or rotten wood.

²⁸ Rocks thrown from a sling
cause it no more harm
than husks of grain.

This monster fears no arrows,

²⁹ it simply smiles at spears,
and striking it with a stick
is like slapping it with straw.

³⁰ As it crawls through the mud,
its sharp and spiny hide
tears the ground apart.

³¹ And when it swims down deep,
the sea starts churning
like boiling oil,

³² and it leaves behind a trail
of shining white foam.

³³ No other creature on earth
is so fearless.

³⁴ It is king of all proud creatures,
and it looks upon the others
as nothing.

Job's Reply to the LORD

No One Can Oppose You

42

Job said:

² No one can oppose you,
because you have the power
to do what you want.

³ You asked why I talk so much
when I know so little.

I have talked about things
that are far beyond
my understanding.

⁴ You told me to listen
and answer your questions.¹

⁵ I heard about you from others;
now I have seen you
with my own eyes.

⁶ That's why I hate myself
and sit here in dust and ashes
to show my sorrow.

The LORD Corrects Job's Friends

⁷ The LORD said to Eliphaz:

What my servant Job has said about me is true, but I am angry at you and your two friends for not telling the truth. ⁸ So I want you to go over to Job and offer seven bulls and seven goats on an altar as a sacrifice to please me. After this, Job will pray, and I will agree not to punish you for your foolishness.

⁹ Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar obeyed the LORD, and he answered Job's prayer.

A Happy Ending

¹⁰ After Job had prayed for his three friends, the LORD made Job twice as rich as he had been before.

¹¹ Then Job gave a feast for his brothers and sisters and for his old friends. They expressed their sorrow for the suffering the LORD had brought on him, and they each gave Job some silver and a gold ring.

¹² The LORD now blessed Job more than ever; he gave him 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 pair of oxen, and 1,000 donkeys.

¹³ In addition to seven sons, Job had three daughters, ¹⁴ whose names were Jemimah, Keziah, and Keren Happuch. ¹⁵ They were the most beautiful women in that part of the world, and Job gave them shares of his property, along with their brothers.

¹⁶ Job lived for another 140 years—long enough to see his great-grandchildren have children of their own—¹⁷ and when he finally died, he was very old.

Notes

*An asterisk preceding a verse number in a poetic passage of this book indicates that the contents of two or more verses have been joined together and rearranged beginning with the verse so marked.

Phrases enclosed in half square superscript brackets (" ") are those that are difficult to translate from the original Hebrew with great certainty. Consequently, the English rendering given should be understood as only one possible way of translating such texts.

- ▷ **1.6; 2.1** *Satan*: Hebrew "the accuser."
- ▷ **2.4** *There's no pain like your own*: The Hebrew text has "Skin for skin."
- ▷ **3.8** *those with magic powers*: The Hebrew text has "those who can place a curse on the day and rouse up Leviathan."
- ▷ **3.12** *Why was I accepted*: The Hebrew text has "Why were there knees to receive me."
- ▷ **6.14** *and you should help me ... God All-Powerful*: Or "and if you don't help me, you no longer respect God All-Powerful."
- ▷ **9.8** *sea*: Or "sea monster."
- ▷ **9.13** *the sea monster*: The Hebrew text has "Rahab."
- ▷ **9.20** *God ... wrong*: Or "my own words would prove me wrong."
- ▷ **13.15** *God ... trust him*: Or "God will surely kill me; I have lost all hope."
- ▷ **16.20** *My friends ... beg*: Or "God is my friend, and he is the one I beg."
- ▷ **19.25** *Savior*: Or "Defender."
- ▷ **26.12** *the force of the mighty ocean*: The Hebrew text has "the ocean ... Rahab."
- ▷ **26.13** *sea monster*: The Hebrew text has "snake."
- ▷ **27.19** *poor*: Or "dead."
- ▷ **28.11** *uncover the sources of*: Two ancient translations; Hebrew "dam up."
- ▷ **28.13** *the way*: Or "its worth."
- ▷ **28.19** *Ethiopia*: The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **30.11** *God ... do*: Or "They have destroyed me, and so they don't care what else they do."
- ▷ **31.31** *ever went hungry*: Or "was ever sexually abused."
- ▷ **32.2** *Elihu from Buz*: The Hebrew text has "Elihu son of Barachel from Buz of the family of Ram."
- ▷ **33.4** *the Spirit of God All-Powerful*: Or "God All-Powerful."
- ▷ **35.2** *are ... God*: Or "is it right for you to accuse God?"
- ▷ **36.3** *comes straight from God*: The Hebrew text has "comes from a distant place."
- ▷ **39.27** *eagles*: Or "vultures."
- ▷ **40.15** *the hippopotamus*: The Hebrew text has "Behemoth."
- ▷ **41.1** *sea monster*: The Hebrew text has "Leviathan."
- ▷ **41.15** *back*: Two ancient translations; Hebrew "pride."
- ▷ **41.25** *most powerful*: Or "gods."