

# The Book of Job

I sincerely hope and pray that you profit from this material. It contains an introduction to the book, notes on each section, reviews of chapters 1-11 and 12-25, and the entire book. One thing you'll notice in the material is my attempt to paraphrase all the speeches in this book, paragraph by paragraph. It was a difficult challenge for several reasons, not the least of which is the difficulty involved in translating Hebrew poetry (just check the different translations). To paraphrase these speeches in the most accurate way, I considered carefully the context; I checked with various translations; and of course I consulted various experts on the Hebrew language. So I offer these paraphrases, not as the final word, but in the hope that it will at least help you get the gist of what these various men (and God) had to say. Please let me know if you spot any errors in the material, not just in the paraphrases, but also in the conclusions drawn.

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## Introduction to the Book of Job

### A. Wisdom Literature

1. The Book of Job can be placed in the category of *Wisdom Literature*, along with Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.
2. These books discuss man's approach to life "under the sun," covering many different aspects of that life (very practical).
3. Much of what's contained in these books is written as **poetry**, which is often more difficult to interpret than **prose**.

### B. Summary

1. Job was a righteous man, whom God blessed with many riches, a large family, and the respect of many.
2. One day, God asked Satan if he had observed Job. Satan responded by saying that Job served God only because God blessed him, that if stripped of his blessings, he would curse God to His face.
3. God allowed Satan to take his possessions and his children, but Job did not sin.
4. Satan didn't give up—said Job would curse God if his health were taken away. God allowed Satan to strike Job with painful boils, but Job remained faithful.
5. Adding to Job's misery, three friends came to "comfort" him, and then stayed to accuse him.
6. These three friends were Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. What follows are three rounds of speeches—one man speaks, Job answers; another speaks, Job answers him.
7. These three men argue that Job's suffering is because of sin, that if he would only confess his sin and repent, God would forgive him and restore him.
8. Job answers them, first, by protesting his innocence, and secondly, by showing the fallacy of their arguments. Job declares that if he could present his case to God, God would vindicate him.
9. These three rounds of speeches completed, a man named Elihu speaks up. He listened to what the others said, and he offers objections to their reasoning. He also rebukes Job for questioning God.
10. God finally speaks—out of a whirlwind, and He addresses Job. His main point: Job, you are in no position to question me, or what I do. Job humbly accepts the rebuke.
11. Then, God rebukes the three friends— "you have not spoken of Me what is right." He orders them to go to Job, offer up a burnt offering, and have Job pray for them.
12. God restored Job's wealth—twice as much as before. He also blessed him with more children—7 sons and 3 daughters. And, his brothers and sisters and friends came to him as they had done before.

C. When, and by whom written?

1. We simply don't know WHO wrote it.
2. As to WHEN, again we don't know, but some evidence suggests it was during the days of Solomon.
  - a. Wisdom literature flourished during this time (1 Kings 4:30-33).
  - b. Vocabulary used in Job very similar to that used in other wisdom literature.
  - c. Issues discussed in Job also discussed in Psalms and Proverbs.
3. When does the **story** take place? Most likely during the age of the patriarchs.
  - a. Chaldeans still living a nomadic lifestyle (1:17).
  - b. Job's lifestyle fits patriarchal period.
  - c. No mention of the law, covenant, priesthood, etc.—things which originated at Sinai.
  - d. God spoke directly to Job, and Job offered sacrifices for his children and friends—things characteristic of the patriarchal age.
  - e. Job lived a long life (140 years AFTER his ordeal). This was certainly uncharacteristic of men during post patriarchal days.

D. Job, the Man

1. He did have a relationship with God—a covenant with Him.
  - a. “Have you considered My servant Job...” (1:8; 2:3).
  - b. Called on God and God answered him (12:4).
  - c. Described God as “my witness”—One who vouched for him (16:19).
  - d. Job was dedicated to keeping God's commandments (23:11-12).
  - e. Called on God at all times, unlike the “hypocrite” (27:8-10).
2. Job remained faithful in his commitment to God.
  - a. Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong (1:22).
  - b. “Shall we indeed accept good from God...and not accept adversity?” Did not sin with his lips (2:10).
  - c. “I have not denied the words of the Holy One” (6:10).
  - d. “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” (13:15).
  - e. “I have kept His way and not turned aside” (23:11).
  - f. “Long as breath is in me...my lips will not speak wickedness...till I die I will not put away my integrity...my righteousness I hold fast” (27:1-6).
3. Statements made elsewhere in Scripture about Job:
  - a. “Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness” (Ezekiel 14:14).

- b. “Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (James 5:11).

#### E. The Great Theme of the Book

1. Job made a covenant with God, and because of that, remained faithful to God—even when his earthly blessings had been stripped from him, even when he didn’t understand why he suffered, even when he thought God sent his suffering.
  - a. He learned to serve God because of who He is.
  - b. He is a great example to us, then, of faithfulness and constancy in a relationship.
2. The New Testament commends Job for his patience, or endurance (James 5:11).
  - a. Not because he never expressed pain and grief over His suffering—because He did. Not because he never wondered why he had such troubles—because He did.
  - b. Commended, because through it all, even when things were at their darkest, he remained steadfast in his relationship to God.

#### F. Questions Raised in the Book

1. Do men serve God only for the blessings He gives?
2. How do we harmonize the tremendous suffering in this world with the providence of an all-wise, all-powerful, and loving God?
3. Is suffering always a sign of God’s wrath?
4. Is prosperity always a sign of God’s pleasure?
5. Do we have a right to question God about why He does the things He does, or why He allows the things He allows?

# Job 1-3

## A. Job—His Character

1. “There was a man in the land of Uz...that man was **blameless** and **upright**, and one who **feared God** and **shunned evil**” (1:1).
2. God, to Satan: “There is **none like him** on the earth, a **blameless** and **upright** man, one who **fears God** and **shuns evil**” (1:8).
3. Remember the way God described him when his friends begin to describe him.

## B. Job—His Family

1. Had brothers and sisters (42:11).
2. Married (2:9-10) with “seven sons and three daughters” (1:2).
3. “Job would send and sanctify them (sons)...rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all” (1:5).
  - a. “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts” (1:5).
  - b. So a very conscientious father. Is it reasonable to assume he would have offered sacrifices for himself, too?

## C. Job—His Possessions

1. “His possessions were 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys...very large household...this man was the greatest of all the people of the East” (1:3).
  - a. Many animals and many servants to attend to them.
2. “Oxen were plowing” (1:14)—so he would have had crops, too.

## D. Satan—His Activity

1. The Hebrew word translated Satan means “opponent,” or “adversary.”
2. The LORD to Satan: “From where do you come?” (1:7; 2:2).
  - a. Satan’s answer: “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it” (1:7; 2:2).

## E. Satan—His Limitations

1. Possesses intelligence and reason, but he is NOT **omniscient** (all knowing) NOR **omnipotent** (all powerful).
  - a. He “knew” Job, but he didn’t REALLY know Job.
  - b. He brought suffering upon Job, but with limitations imposed by God (“all that he has in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person”—1:12; “he is in your hand, but spare his life”—2:6).

- F. Satan's first challenge: "Touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face" (1:11). And so begins the first wave of sufferings for Job.
1. Note especially the phrase, "while he was still speaking..."—not only did Job experience great sufferings, he experienced them in rapid succession.
    - a. The oxen and donkeys (500 each)—they've been taken away, and the servants killed.
    - b. The sheep (7000) and the servants attending them—fire fell from heaven and burned them up.
    - c. The camels (3000)—they've been taken away, and the servants killed.
    - d. Your children (10)—a great wind struck the house, fell on them and killed them.
- G. Job's Response: 1:20-22
1. Did he mourn?
    - a. Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head... (v. 20).
  2. But what else did he do/say?
    - a. Fell to the ground and worshiped (v. 20).
    - b. "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (v. 21).
    - c. In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong (v. 22).
    - d. God's statement about Job, to Satan: "And **still** he holds fast to his integrity although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause" (2:3).
- H. Satan's second challenge: "Touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face" (2:5).
1. And so begins the second wave of sufferings for Job.
  2. "So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with..." (2:7).  
What?
  3. And then his wife said what to him?
  4. Job's response? "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips (2:10).

I. The Three Friends Arrive (2:11-13)

1. WHEN did they come?
2. WHY did they come?
3. WHAT disturbed them “when they raised their eyes from afar”?
4. WHAT did they do for seven days and seven nights?

J. Job’s Long Lament (ch. 3): A Quick Summary

1. Cursed be the night of my conception and the day of my birth.
2. Why did I not die at birth, and be able then to enjoy the quiet of the grave—with princes and kings and counselors of the earth?
3. There are no distinctions in the grave—all are at rest.
4. Why is light and life given to those bitter of soul, those whose way is hidden, who long for death?
5. My worst fears have come upon me.

K. Considerations

1. Nowhere does Job say he will have nothing more to do with God.
2. Does the anguish have more to do with the intensity of his suffering, or with the fact that he feels forsaken by God? (see v. 23).
3. Remember, Job knows nothing of the conversations between God and Satan.
4. Would it have made a difference if Job had the revelation we do in the New Testament—the extensive teaching on suffering, and the hope which sustains us through it all, the hope of eternal life?
  - a. For example: “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18).
  - b. Watch for later statements from Job about the hope he has.

## Lesson 2: Job 4-7

### A. Review

1. The two challenges issued by Satan; Job's response; Job's friends arrive; Job breaks the silence with a long lamentation.

### B. Questions

1. How would you describe the tone used by Eliphaz?
2. Looking at his long lamentation in chapter 3, and his response to Eliphaz in chapters 6-7, what seems to trouble Job the most?
3. Does Job address his remarks only to Eliphaz, or to all three friends?

### C. Eliphaz's Speech (Job 4-5)

1. Will you become weary or impatient with me if I speak? I ask that, because I can't help but speak (4:2).
2. You have instructed, strengthened, and upheld others who were experiencing difficulty; but now that YOU experience it, you are weary and troubled (4:3-5).
3. You find confidence and hope in your reverence, in your integrity, but these troubles you have—when have they ever happened to the innocent? (4:6-7).
4. To the contrary, it's those who plow iniquity and sow trouble who reap such a bitter harvest. God destroys them with the breath of His anger, no matter how strong or fierce they may be (4:8-11).
5. I had a disturbing dream in which a spirit passed before my face and then stood still. There was silence; then I heard a voice say, "Can a man be more righteous, more pure than God? If He puts no trust in His angels, and charges them with error, how much more so those who live on this earth? They are broken in pieces; they perish forever; they die without wisdom (4:12-21).
6. Call out now; is there anyone who will answer? (5:1).
7. Foolish people may take root, but they wither quickly—they are crushed in the gate, their harvest and wealth eaten or seized by others. Such affliction does not come from the dust; nor does trouble spring from the ground (5:3-7).
8. As for me, I would seek God. He does great and marvelous things, beyond what He does to replenish the earth. The poor and lowly, the needy, those who mourn—He lifts them up and saves them from trouble, but the wise and cunning—He catches them in their own devices (5:8-16).
9. Don't despise the Lord's chastening. Yes, he wounds, but He also heals. Heed His correction and in time He will abundantly bless you and your descendants (5:17-26).

10. We have given this serious thought and know it's true. Hear it so you can know it for yourself (5:27).

D. Job's Response (Job 6-7)

1. Does a wild donkey bray when it has grass? Does an ox bellow when it has fodder? Yes, my words have been rash, but I have a right to complain. If grief and calamity could be weighed on a scale, it would be heavier than the sand of the sea. God's poisonous arrows are within me; His terrors are arrayed against me (6:1-5).
2. Oh that God would grant my request, that He would cut me loose and let me die. At least I have this consolation—that I have not denied the words of the Holy One. But how much longer can I endure, for I do not have the strength of stones, or flesh of bronze? (6:8-13).
3. One who is afflicted should be shown kindness, but my brothers have dealt deceitfully, just like a brook that dries up in the summer heat. Just when things get hot and dry, just when its water is needed most, it dries up. By the same token, what I need most you have not given (6:14-23).
4. If you'll just show me where I have erred, I'll keep quiet. Look at me; I am not someone who would lie to your face. My righteousness still stands! (6:24-30).
5. Like a soldier, a hired man, and a servant, I long for relief from my toil—but it never comes. Night, a time of rest for most, brings no relief because I toss and turn till dawn (7:1-4).
6. My flesh is caked with worms and dust, my skin is cracked and breaks out afresh. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and spent without hope. My life is but a breath; those who see me now will soon see me no more; I will never see good again. One who dies will never return; he will never return to his house (7:5-10).
7. Therefore, I will not keep silent; I will cry out in anguish and bitterness. (Begins now to address God directly). Why do you set a guard over me? If I say my bed will comfort me, I then have terrible dreams and visions. I would rather have death. Leave me alone, for my days are but a breath (7:11-16).
8. God, why do you single me out for attention? How long will this continue? Will you ever turn your gaze away from me? Have I sinned? What have I done to You? Why do you not pardon my iniquity, while you can still find me? (7:17-21).

## Job 8-11

### A. Review of Chapters 4-7

#### 1. Eliphaz's Speech (chs. 4-5)

- a. His tone is somewhat respectful, especially compared to the tone he uses later.
- b. He doesn't directly **accuse** Job, but he does **insinuate** quite a bit. Here are some key points from his speech:
  - (1) "Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright ever cut off?" (4:7).
  - (2) "Now a word was secretly brought to me, and my ear received a whisper of it" (4:12).
  - (3) "Affliction does not come from the dust, nor does trouble spring from the ground" (5:6).
  - (4) "Happy is the man whom God corrects; therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. For He bruises, but He binds up; He wounds, but His hands make whole" (5:17-18).
  - (5) "Behold, this we have searched out; it is true. Hear it, and know for yourself" (5:27).

#### 2. Job's Response (chs. 6-7)

- a. "Oh, that my grief were fully weighed, and my calamity laid with it on the scales! For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea..." (6:2-3).
- b. "Oh, that I might have my request...that He would loose His hand and cut me off!" (6:8-9).
- c. "My brothers have dealt deceitfully like a brook, like the streams of the brooks that pass away" (6:15).
- d. "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; cause me to understand wherein I have erred...my righteousness still stands!" (6:24, 29).
- e. "Like a servant who earnestly desires the shade, and like a hired man who eagerly looks for his wages..." (7:2).
- f. "Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target?" (7:20).

### B. Bildad Speaks (ch. 8)

1. How long will you keep speaking like this—like a strong wind? Does God pervert justice or righteousness? If your children sinned, they got what they deserved (8:1-4).

2. If you will earnestly seek God and plead for mercy, He will restore your estate as before (8:5-7).
3. We know nothing, so let's see what lessons we can learn from our forefathers (8:8-10).
4. Can papyrus grow without marsh; can reeds flourish with no water? The same thing happens to those who forget God—like a spider's web, their confidence is fragile; like a vine whose roots wrap around rocks, they flourish for a time, but soon wither (8:11-18).
5. This brief "moment in the sun" IS their joy; soon others will spring up to take their place (8:19).
6. God will not cast away the blameless; He will not uphold evildoers. Job, turn to God and He will fill you again with joy and laughter. Those who hate you will be clothed with shame (8:20-22).

#### C. Job's Response (chs. 9-10)

1. Yes, I know God blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked, but how can a man be righteous before God? If I wished to contend with Him, I could not answer Him one time out of a thousand (9:1-3).
2. God is wise and mighty; He does great and marvelous things—removes mountains, shakes the earth, commands the sun not to shine, hides the stars, stretches out the heavens, treads the sea, makes constellations (9:4-10).
3. If He passed right by me, I wouldn't see Him. If He took something away, who could stop Him? Who could say to Him, "What are You doing?" (9:11-12).
4. God will not withdraw His anger, so how can I answer Him? What words could I possibly use? Even if righteous, I could not answer Him; I could only beg for mercy (9:13-15).
5. If He did answer, I wouldn't believe He listened to me, with all the suffering He's inflicted on me. He won't even let me catch my breath. If it's a matter of strength, who's stronger? If a matter of justice, who can argue with Him? Even if I am righteous, my words would condemn me (9:16-20).
6. I am blameless, but God destroys the blameless right along with the wicked. If not He, who else could it be? (9:21-24).
7. My days pass swiftly and see no good. I could make up my mind to smile instead, but the sufferings You put on me cause me too much fear. Why should I labor to maintain my innocence? I could wash myself with snow and scrub myself with lye, yet You would still plunge me into the pit (9:25-31).
8. God is not a man whom I can answer, especially with no mediator. Let Him remove His rod, and I would not fear Him (9:32-35).

9. I hate my life; I will speak freely in the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God, “Do not condemn me; tell me why You contend with me. Does it seem right to you to oppress me, the work of Your hands? And why do you smile on the counsel of the wicked? (10:1-3).
10. Are you looking at me with the eyes of men? Are you seeking my guilt and searching out my sin? You know I’m not wicked, yet there is no deliverance from You (10:4-7).
11. God, Your hands formed me, and yet now You would destroy me. You gave me life and lovingkindness; You preserved my spirit. If I sin, you mark me and won’t acquit me. If I’m wicked, woe to me; but even if I’m righteous, I dare not lift my head. You hunt me like a lion and keep bringing fresh troops against me (10:13-17).
12. Why was I even born? Oh that I had been carried from the womb to the tomb. I’ve just a few days left, so please leave me alone so I can have a few days of comfort before I leave—before I go the land of darkness from which there is no return (10:18-22).

D. Zophar Speaks (ch. 11)

1. Your many words, your empty talk, your mocking—should it not be answered? You claim innocence, but oh that God might speak against you. He hasn’t even given you all you deserve (11:1-6).
2. Can you search the depths of God, or find His outer limits? When He arrests someone and brings them to trial, who can hinder Him? He doesn’t even have to investigate to see wickedness (11:7-12).
3. You have the opportunity to forget your misery and fear, for your life to be brighter than the noonday, to have hope, to lie down in peace, to have others court your favor. These blessings will be yours if you get your heart right, stretch out your hands toward heaven, and put iniquity far away from you (11:13-19).
4. Do this because the eyes of the wicked will fail, and there is no escape. Their hope—loss of life (11:20).

## Review—Job 1-11

- A. Let's see if we can answer the following three questions.
1. What has happened so far?
  2. What stands out in Job's speeches?
  3. What lessons have we learned?
- B. What has happened so far?
1. Satan destroyed all of Job's possessions, most of his servants, and all of his children—in one day! (1:13-19).
  2. Job responded in a remarkable way (1:20-22).
    - a. He mourned, but he also worshiped.
    - b. He continued to praise the Lord.
    - c. He did not sin nor charge God with wrong.
  3. Satan then struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head (2:7-8).
    - a. His wife said, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" (2:9).
    - b. Job then said to her: "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" (2:10).
  4. Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, when they heard about his adversity, went to mourn with him and comfort him (2:11).
    - a. "When they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they...wept...each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven" (2:12).
    - b. They sat with Job on the ground for seven days, in complete silence, "for they saw that his grief was very great" (2:13).
  5. Job broke the silence with a long lamentation, basically saying he wished he had never been born (ch. 3).
  6. Eliphaz answered Job (4-5), and Job responded (6-7). Bildad answered (8), and again Job responded (9-10). Zophar answered (11), and in next week's lesson we will see Job's response (12-14). And that will take us through the first "cycle" of speeches.
- C. What stands out in Job's speeches?
1. He has expressed almost unbearable grief and anguish, mainly due to his perception that God is against him.
  2. He has expressed disappointment and dissatisfaction with the arguments of his friends.
  3. He has asked them to produce evidence of his sin.
  4. He would love the opportunity to plead his case before God.

D. What lessons have we learned?

1. Satan is a formidable adversary, searching high and low for any opportunity.
  - a. And, he is persistent. When Job withstood the first onslaught, Satan had another go at him.
2. BUT, he does have limits, being neither omniscient (all knowing) nor omnipotent (all powerful).
  - a. He thought he knew Job, but he really didn't.
  - b. God limited the extent to which Satan could go.
3. Suffering presents a great opportunity to shut Satan up, to silence his accusations.
  - a. Job did; Peter did; Paul did...and so can we!
  - b. "For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may **put to silence** the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Peter 2:15).
  - c. "Sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, **having nothing evil to say of you**" (Titus 2:8).
4. Going through the most awful time imaginable doesn't necessarily mean God is against us—that our suffering is punishment for sin.
  - a. Yes, God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, but those rewards/punishments are not always evident in THIS life, at least not in our outward circumstances.
5. God is worthy of our full allegiance, even if we never have another "good" day on this earth.
6. The "prosperity preachers," the health and wealth crowd, are DEAD WRONG.
7. We MUST develop a deeper appreciation for the spiritual blessings He gives us. These blessings are CONSTANT, if we continue to live by faith.
8. Job was right—a man pleading His case against God is an impossible situation. We do need a mediator between us and Him, someone to "lay his hand on us both" (9:33).
9. "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the face of the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (1:8).
  - a. Are there any on the earth TODAY like him? If so, am I one of them?
10. Do **we** instruct many, do **we** strengthen weak hands and feeble knees, do **we** uphold those who are stumbling? (4:3-4).
11. Dreams, visions, the wisdom and tradition of forefathers—none of these are a substitute for divine wisdom. "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11).
12. "To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty" (6:14).

13. When grief is heavy (6:2-3), when bitterness and anguish of spirit take over (7:11; 10:4), it's easy to speak rashly (6:3).
14. Concerning God...
  - a. God “does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things without number” (5:8).
  - b. “God is wise in heart and mighty in strength...He does great things past finding out, yes, wonders without number” (9:4, 10).
  - c. “Can you search out the deep things of God...find out the limits of the Almighty? They are higher than the heaven—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know? Their measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea” (11:7-9).

## Job 12-15

[Note: The end of chapter 14 concludes the first cycle of speeches. Chapter 15 begins the second cycle of speeches, when we start over with Eliphaz.]

### A. Job's Third Response

1. You guys are the bomb; when you die, that'll be the end to wisdom! I'm just as smart as you are, and I'm not the only one, because what you know is common knowledge (12:1-3).
2. Here I am, a man who has relied on God, a just and blameless man, being mocked and ridiculed by his friends. It just goes to show that "he who is at ease holds calamity in contempt" (NASV) (12:4-5).
3. If you "would not let wickedness dwell in your tents...you would be secure" (11:13, 18)—that's what you said, but what I see is that the "tents of robbers prosper, and those who provoke God are secure" (12:6).
4. As to the wisdom and power of God, speak to the earth, the beasts, the fish of the sea, the birds of the air—these all speak to the wisdom of their Creator and His power to govern them (12:7-10).
5. Do wisdom and understanding come with old age? Yes, but only to those who "test" and "taste"—those who carefully weigh every conclusion against the facts (12:11-12).
6. God is the source of all wisdom and strength, counsel and understanding. Watch Him work. What He tears down can't be rebuilt; what He does can't be undone. He exercises control over all the great and mighty, and in His wisdom determines their destiny (12:13-25).
7. Again, I'm not inferior to you. I've seen and heard these things for myself; I know what you know (13:1-2).
8. I want to speak to God, to argue my point. All YOU do is smear me with lies, you worthless physicians. The wisest thing you could do is be silent. Aren't you afraid to speak for God? Aren't you afraid you will speak deceitfully, and aren't you afraid He will see that? "Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes, your defenses are defenses of clay" (NAS) (13:3-12).
9. Be silent and let me speak to God; I know I'm putting my life in my hands, but I'm prepared to face the consequences. Though He slay me, I will still trust in Him. A godless man cannot approach Him, but I can. Listen carefully while I present my case to Him; I've prepared it carefully, and I know I will be vindicated (13:13-19).
10. God, please do two things for me: (1) Remove your hand from me and the fear that comes with it, so I can call on you and know you will answer; and, (2) tell me what I've done wrong so I can know why you're hiding Your face from me. You've got

me so hemmed up; you're making me suffer for every iniquity I've committed from my youth till now (13:20-27).

11. Man's life is short and full of trouble, so why set Your eyes on him and bring him into judgment? You've determined his days, appointed his limits, so why not let him have a day of rest? (14:1-6).
12. At least there's hope for a tree when it's cut down. A stump becomes old and dry, but give it a little moisture and it sprouts again. But man—when he dies, he never returns, like water evaporating into the air (14:7-12).
13. If You could just hide me in the grave till your wrath is past, and then remember me. If a man dies, shall he live again? I will wait till my change comes, and when You call, I will answer You. **You will desire the work of Your hands.** But for now, You watch my every step; You seal my transgressions up in a bag (14:13-17).
14. You destroy man's hope—like a crumbling mountain, like water that wears away stone, like torrents of rain that wash away soil. You overpower him, change his countenance (in death?), and then send him away. Whether his sons come to honor, or are brought low, he knows nothing of it. "He feels only the pain of his own body, and he mourns only for himself" (ESV) (14:18-22).

#### B. Eliphaz's Second Speech

1. Your mouth is like the east wind—blowing hot air. You do no good with your speeches; in fact, your mouth is full of deceit and iniquity. You show no fear of God, and therefore cannot pray to Him. Your own mouth condemns you, not I (15:1-6).
2. Were you the first man born? Does God tell you His secrets? What do you know that we don't? There are men here much older than you—do their words not console you? Why do you speak such words and turn away from God? (15:7-13).
3. Who is man that he can be pure before God? If God puts no trust in His holy ones (angels?), and even the heavens are not pure in His sight, how much less man, abominable and filthy as he is, and who drinks iniquity like water! (15:14-16).
4. Listen to what wise men have been told by their fathers. Wicked men have pain all their days. They wander around looking for food. Trouble, anguish, and fear accompany them. They get nothing accomplished. They live in shacks. God will consume them (15:17-35).

## Job 16-19

### A. INTRODUCTION

1. The first cycle included speeches from Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, and responses each time from Job (chs. 4-14).
2. Chapter 15, which we covered last week, began the second cycle of speeches, because we started over with Eliphaz. In this lesson...
3. Job's response is recorded in chapters 16-17, followed by Bildad's second speech in ch. 18, and then another response from Job in ch. 19.

### B. Job's Fourth Response

1. I keep hearing the same old thing. You are a sorry (miserable) bunch of comforters. Do your empty words have an end? What exactly provokes you to say such things? If I were in your place, I *could* say the same things, but I wouldn't. I would say things to lessen your pain (16:1-5).
2. Speaking doesn't relieve my grief, but neither would silence. God has worn me out, destroyed my company (see 19:13-19), filled me with wrinkles (KJV). My lean, shriveled up body testifies against me (16:6-8).
3. God has torn me apart like a savage beast; He has betrayed me into the hands of the wicked; He has taken me by the neck and shaken me to pieces; He has made me target practice for His archers; and like a besieging army, he breaks through me with breach after breach (think of breaches in a wall caused by a battering ram (16:9-14).
4. I have cried until my face is flushed and my eyelids dark. How can this be, when there is no violence in my hands and my prayer is pure? (16:15-17).
5. Ground, do not hide my blood! Let my cry be heard! My witness is in heaven. My friends scoff, but my cry is to God, not them. If I could only plead with God the way a man pleads with his neighbor, for my time is short (16:18-22).
6. My spirit is broken; my days are few; the grave is ready for me. Mockers are all around me, and my eye is fixed on their provocation. God, please do what no one else can do—be security for me. My friends will not win, for you have concealed understanding from them. (NAS) He who informs against friends for a share of the spoil, the eyes of his children also will languish (17:1-5).
7. God has made me a byword, one on whom men spit. It's hard to see through all my tears and my body is wasting away. Upright men are appalled at this, and yet they hold fast and become stronger and stronger (17:6-9).
8. Come back, all of you, for I will not find one wise man among you. My days are past, the desires of my heart gone. My only hope now is the grave (17:10-16).

### C. Bildad's Second Speech

1. How long will you keep speaking (hunt for words)? Gain some understanding and then we can talk. Why do you count us as beasts, as men who have no sense? You who tear yourself in anger, should everything be changed to accommodate you? Is that even possible? (18:1-5).
2. The wicked man—he is the one who suffers. He has no light; his strength diminishes; his own counsel is his downfall; he is surrounded by snares. Terrors frighten him on every side; his strength is exhausted; he is ravaged by disease; his tent is destroyed. Memories of him are forgotten, and he leaves no children behind. From east to west, everyone is appalled by his fate. This is what happens to one who does not know God (18:5-21).

### D. Job's Fifth Response

1. How long will you torment me? Ten times you have insulted me, and you're not ashamed of it. You exalt yourselves against me, but please understand, if I have sinned, it is known only to me. God has wronged me; He has closed His net around me (19:1-6).
2. I cry out for help, but there is no justice. God has walled me up so I cannot pass; He has set darkness in my paths. He has stripped me of honor, broken me down on every side, uprooted my hope like a tree, and brought His troops against me. He counts me as one of His enemies (19:7-12).
3. God has taken away my brothers, acquaintances, relatives, and all my close friends. People in my own house treat me like a stranger. My servants ignore me. My breath is offensive to my wife; my own brothers find me repulsive; young children despise me; those whom I love have turned against me. My bone clings to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. Pity me, don't persecute me, for God has struck me! (19:13-22).
4. Oh, that my words were written in a book, that they were engraved forever on a rock! I know my Redeemer lives, and that at last He will stand upon the earth. Even after my flesh is destroyed, I will see God. This is the thought that consumes me. Friends, if you continue to persecute me, you had better be afraid of God's wrath (19:23-29).

## Job 20-25

### A. Zophar's Second Speech

1. To set the stage for this speech, remember Job's last speech, especially the last part, when he warned his friends of God's wrath upon them (19:28-29).
2. Job, I have heard your rebuke, and therefore "agitation" (NAS) is driving me to speak, and my answer comes from the spirit of my understanding (20:1-3).
3. Do you not know what others have always known? The wicked man's triumph and joy is short. Even if exalted for a short time, he perishes forever like his own dung. People forget about him, as if he were nothing but a dream. His children will be indebted to the poor, because they will have to give back what he took. Youthful vigor will not sustain him, for it will lie down with him in the dust (20:4-11).
4. Evil is sweet in his mouth, but turns to poison in his stomach. He swallows riches and vomits them up. What he works for, or takes from others, he can't enjoy. Consumed by his own desires, he knows no quietness—he's never content. God's wrath will rain upon him just as he gets ready to eat. He will flee from one weapon, but be struck by another. Everything he has will depart, flow away, be consumed. This is God's portion for the wicked man (20:12-29).

### B. Job's Sixth Response

1. Why should I not be impatient? (recall previous charges against Job in 15:12-13; 18:14). Put your hand over your mouth and listen carefully to my speech. This will be your consolation (recall 15:11). When I'm done, you can keep mocking (21:1-5).
2. What you said about the wicked man is not always true. I'm disturbed by what I see. Why does he live long and become powerful? His descendants grow and prosper around him; his house is safe from fear. His bull never fails; his cow never miscarries. His children play and sing in the streets. He wants nothing to do with God; he sees no profit in prayer; and yet, he spends his days in wealth and then goes to the grave (21:6-16).
3. How often do you see the wicked in darkness—how often do you see them get what's coming to them? You say his children will be punished for **his** iniquity, but what does he care what happens to his offspring? Shouldn't **he** be the one to face God's wrath? (21:17-21).
4. [We can't make one rule that applies to everyone.] One person lives in comfort and dies in full strength; another has little or no pleasure and dies in bitterness. Both go down to the dust, both eaten by worms. Ask anyone, even the man passing through, and he will tell you that the wicked man's day of wrath is coming. His punishment, though, is not always in this life. Your lies offer no comfort to me (21:22-34).

[That ends the second cycle of speeches, so chapter 22 begins the third cycle (which starts over with Eliphaz.)]

### C. Eliphaz's Third Speech

1. Can a man be useful to God? Have you brought pleasure to God with your righteousness? What gain is it to him that you make your ways blameless? Do you think He corrects you and judges you, because of your righteousness? (22:1-4).
2. Your wickedness is great—you've taken pledges from the poor; you've stripped men naked; you've given no food to the hungry, no drink to the thirsty; you've sent widows away empty; you've crushed orphans. That's why you have snares all around you; that's why your way is so dark (22:5-11).
3. Isn't God in the highest part of heaven? Do you not think He can see through the clouds, to see your deeds? Are you going to keep walking the way of the wicked, the way of men who think they're immune to punishment? When cut down and consumed by fire, the righteous will rejoice (22:12-20).
4. Yield to God, and good will come to you. Listen to **Him**; lay up **His** words in your heart; and you will be restored. Put **your** gold and silver in the dust, and **He** will become your gold and silver. You can then lift your face to God; you can pray to Him and He will hear. Humble yourself and He will save you, and then you in turn can be the means of saving others (22:21-30).

### D. Job's Seventh Response

1. My complaint today is rebellious (defiant, bitter), because God's hand is still heavy upon me. If I could just find God and present my case to Him. If I could just hear what He says. Would He oppose me with His great power? No! Surely He would pay attention to me and deliver me (23:1-7).
2. But I can't find Him—whichever way I turn, I can't see Him. Yes, I know He sees my ways, but I also know that when He has tested me, I shall be like refined gold. I have treasured His words more than food, and I have kept His ways. But He is unique, and who can oppose Him? What He desires to do, He does, including what He's done to me. I am terrified at His presence, "but I am not silenced by the deep darkness, nor deep gloom which covers me" (NAS) (23:8-17).
3. Why does God not set times of judgment? Look at what the wicked do, and yet God does not charge them with wrong. They remove landmarks; they seize animals from the poor; they push the needy away. They neglect the very people who work for them, who harvest their fields and tread their winepresses. And yet, when the wounded cry out, God does not hear them (24:1-12).
4. Those who rebel against the light—murderers, thieves, adulterers, those who oppress the helpless—these people should be cursed, consumed, broken like a tree. And yet, God sustains them and they die like all others. If this is not so, who will prove me a liar? (24:13-25).

E. Bildad's Third Speech

1. Dominion and fear belong to God; He gives order to everything. If the moon and stars are dim in comparison to Him, how can **man** have any glory before Him? Man is nothing but a maggot, a worm (25:1-6).

## Review of Job 12-25

- A. Is it fair to say that Job is fed up with his friends?
1. “No doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you” (12:2).
  2. “But you forgers of lies, you are all worthless physicians” (13:2).
  3. “Your platitudes are proverbs of ashes, your defenses are defenses of clay” (13:12).
  4. “Miserable comforters are you all!” (16:2).
  5. “Are not mockers with me? And does not my eye dwell on their provocations?” (17:2).
  6. “Please, come back again, all of you, for I shall not find one wise man among you” (17:10).
  7. “How long will you torment my soul, and break me in pieces with words? These ten times you have reproached me; you are not ashamed that you have wronged me” (19:2-3).
  8. “Why do you persecute me as God does?” (19:22).
  9. “Look, I know your thoughts...the schemes with which you would wrong me” (21:27).
- B. Why does Job feel this way?
1. The lack of pity he received from them.
    - a. “Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends” (21:21).
    - b. What they considered consolation (15:11), Job considered mocking, ridicule, reproach, persecution.
  2. The fact that they considered him among the wicked.
    - a. They started off with insinuations, generalizations, but then became more specific (22:4-11).
    - b. Job maintained his innocence: “I am one mocked by his friends, who called on God, and He answered him, the just and blameless who is ridiculed” (12:4).
    - c. Believed God would vindicate him: “I have prepared my case, I know I shall be vindicated” (13:18).
  3. Their false statements about the wicked, which we will deal with in the next point.
- C. Points Made by Job’s Friends Concerning the Wicked
1. **Eliphaz:** “The wicked man writhes in pain all his days...trouble and anguish make him afraid...he will not be rich...will not depart from darkness” (15:20, 24, 29-30).
  2. **Bildad:** “The steps of his strength are shortened...terrors frighten him on every side...he is uprooted from the shelter of his tent...he is driven from light into darkness...has neither son nor posterity among his people” (18:7, 11, 14, 18-19).

3. **Zophar:** “The triumphing of the wicked is short...will not see the streams, the rivers flowing with honey and cream...knows no quietness in his heart...when he is about to fill his stomach, God will cast on him the fury of His wrath” (20:5, 17, 20, 23).

#### D. Counter Points Made by Job

1. **Job, previously:** “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? (9:24).
2. **Job:** “The tents of robbers prosper, and those who provoke God are secure—in what God provides by His hand” (12:6).
3. **Job:** “Why do the wicked live and become old, yes, become mighty in power?...their descendants are established...their houses safe from fear...their children dance...they sing to the tambourine and harp...spend their days in wealth...how often is the lamp of the wicked put out?...one dies in his full strength, being wholly at ease and secure...another man dies in the bitterness of his soul” (21:7-8, 11-13, 17, 23-25).
4. **Job:** “Some remove landmarks...seize flocks violently...push the needy off the road...cause the poor to go naked...**yet** God does not charge them with wrong” (24:2, 4, 10, 13).
5. If the wicked sometimes DO prosper in this life, and the righteous sometimes DON'T, what then should we emphasize when we teach the gospel—the benefits in this life, or the next?
  - a. The DEFINING promise in the gospel is eternal redemption in Jesus Christ.
  - b. This promise can sustain us through WHATEVER we face in this life.

#### E. The Ups and Downs of Job

1. At times he despaired of hope.
  - a. “There is **hope** for a tree, if it is cut down, that will sprout again...at the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches...but man dies and is laid away...he breathes his last and where is he?...man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more, they will not awake nor be roused from their sleep” (14:7, 9-10, 12).
  - b. “As water wears away stones...so You destroy the **hope** of man” (14:19).
  - c. “My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart...Where then is my **hope**? As for my **hope**, who can see it?” (17:11, 15).
  - d. “He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; my **hope** He has uprooted like a tree” (19:10).
2. Other times he would cling to hope.
  - a. “Oh that You would hide me in the grave, that You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that You would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, till

my change comes. You shall call, and I will answer You; You shall desire the work of Your hands” (14:13-15).

- b. “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (19:25-27).

F. Job believes that God has inflicted all this suffering on him, that God is treating him like an enemy.

1. “He has worn me out...shriveled me up...He tears me in His wrath, and **hates me**...He also has taken me by my neck and shaken me...set me up for His target...runs at me like a warrior...” (16:7-14).
2. “He has made me a byword of the people...one in whose face men spit” (17:6).
3. “He has...kindled His wrath against me, and he counts me as one of His enemies (19:11).

G. And yet Job is determined to hold fast to God.

1. “Though He slay me, yet I will trust (hope in) Him” (13:15).
2. “My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and not turned aside. I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food” (23:11-12).

H. More lessons

1. Brothers, acquaintances, relatives, close friends, servants, wife, small children—none of them wanted anything to do with him (19:13-19).
  - a. This gives us further insight into Job’s suffering, in particular to his emotional distress.
2. “Will you speak falsely for God and speak deceitfully for Him?...Will it be well with you when He searches you out?...” (ESV) (13:7, 9).
  - a. We better be real careful when speaking for God. “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11).
3. “Does not the ear test words and the mouth taste its food? Wisdom is with aged men, and with length of days, understanding” (12:11-12).
  - a. Wisdom doesn’t necessarily come with age; it comes to those who “test” and “taste”— “those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14).
4. **Eliphaz:** “Yield now and be at peace with Him; thereby good will come to you...you will be restored...the Almighty will be gold and choice silver to you...you will pray to Him, and He will hear you...the humble person He will save” (22:21, 25, 27, 29).
  - a. Wise words from Eliphaz, even though they didn’t precisely apply to Job’s situation.

## Job 26-31

This is Job's eighth and FINAL response (see 31:40), EXCEPT for his responses to the LORD (40:3-5; 42:1-6).

- A. Job's Eighth Response [Note: The "you" in 26:1-4 is singular (KJV—thou). So it would seem that Job is directing these remarks to Bildad in particular.]
1. What a big help you are to the weak! What great insight you have provided! To whom do you speak these words, and from whom did you get them? (26:1-4).
  2. Even the dead tremble before God, in that this realm is open to His eyes. He stretches out the north over empty space, and hangs the earth on nothing. He wraps up water in the clouds, yet they do not burst under the weight. He hides the face of the **moon** (ESV, NASV) with a cloud. He has marked out the horizon as the boundary between day and night. The pillars of heaven tremble before Him. And these are just the fringes of His ways, a mere whisper. Who can understand the thunder of His power? (26:5-14).
  3. As God lives, who has taken away my **right** (ASV, NASV, ESV), and the Almighty, who has made me bitter, as long as I live, I will not speak unjustly, nor deceitfully. Therefore, I will not admit **you** (plural) are right; I will continue to maintain my integrity till the day I die. I will hold fast to my righteousness; my conscience will not reproach me (27:1-6).
  4. May my enemy be treated like the wicked and the unrighteous. For what hope does a godless man have when he dies? Will God hear his cry in times of trouble? Will he delight in the Almighty; will he always call upon Him? Let me teach you about the ways of the Almighty. You've seen it yourself, so why do you argue so vainly? (27:7-12).
  5. This is what God assigns to the wicked man: though he has many sons, they will die by the sword; his survivors will die from the plague. Though he piles up silver and clothes, the just will wear the clothes and the innocent will divide the silver. Uncertainty and instability mark his life. Terrors overtake him like a flood; the east wind carries him away, and he is gone (27:13-23).
  6. Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place where gold is refined. Iron comes from dirt; copper from rocks; food from the earth; and sapphires from stones. Man searches diligently for all these things, no matter how remote the location may be; and uses great ingenuity to uncover them (28:1-11).
  7. But where can wisdom and understanding be found? Both the deep and the sea say, "It is not with me." It's too valuable to be bought with gold or silver—too valuable to be measured by any other precious article. From where then does wisdom and understanding come? The living don't know, and death and destruction have only heard a report about it (28:12-22).

8. Only God knows its way and its place. He sees everything under heaven, and regulates it all according to His wisdom—the wind, the waters, the rain, and the thunder and lightning. He alone has declared it, prepared it, and searched it out. To man He says, “To fear the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding” (28:23-28).
9. How I long for the way things once were—when God watched over me, when by the light of His lamp I walked through darkness. Back to the days of my prime—when God was a friend to me, when my children were around me, when prosperity surrounded me, when young men stepped aside and old men stood in my presence, when princes stopped talking to hear my words (29:1-11).
10. Men approved me because I delivered the poor, because I helped the orphan, because I made the widows rejoice. I adorned myself with righteousness and justice. I was eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, father to the needy, deliverer to the oppressed. I thought I would die in my own home after a long life—that my root would spread out to the waters, and that dew would be on my branches all night (29:12-20).
11. Men waited for my words, comforting words, like they wait for the spring rain, and when they heard my words, they did not speak again. I chose the way for them, and so I was their chief, like a king in the army (29:21-25).
12. But now, young men mock me—even the sons of those who roamed the wastelands in search of food. I have become their taunting song, their byword. They abhor me; they stand aloof from me; they even spit in my face—because God has loosed His bowstring and afflicted me. They seek my destruction and no one stops them. Terrors turn upon me; they pursue my honor as the wind; my prosperity passes like a cloud (30:1-15).
13. My soul is poured out; days of affliction seize me; my gnawing pains have no rest. God has cast me into the mire; I have become like dust and ashes. O God, I cry to you for help, but you do not listen. You have become cruel to me; You use your strength to **persecute** (NAS, ESV) me. I know You will bring me to death (30:16-23).
14. Doesn't one in a heap of ruins stretch out his hand for help? Have I not wept for one in trouble, and grieved for one in need? I looked for good, but evil came; I waited for light, but only darkness came. **I am seething within and cannot relax** (NAS). I stand in the assembly and cry for help, but I'm regarded as a brother of jackals. My skin turns black; my bones burn with fever. My harp is turned to mourning, my flute to the sound of weeping (30:24-31).
15. I made a covenant with my eyes, a covenant that I would not look lustfully at a young virgin (31:1-4).
16. I have not walked with falsehood or deceit (31:5-8).

17. My heart has not been enticed to commit adultery, for that would be a **heinous crime** (ASV) (31:9-12).
18. I have treated my servants very well, because the same One who made me made them (31:13-15).
19. Poor people, widows, orphans—I have been kind and benevolent toward them (31:16-23).
20. I have not put my confidence in gold, nor have I directed my worship toward the sun and moon, because if I did, I would have denied God who is above (31:24-28).
21. I have not rejoiced at the hard times for my enemy, nor have I asked for his life in a curse (31:29-30).
22. I have been hospitable—toward both the men of my tent and sojourners (31:31-32).
23. I have not tried to hide my sins because I feared the contempt of others (31:33-34).
24. Oh that someone would hear me! Here is the signature on my defense. Let the Almighty answer me; let Him bring His indictment against me. I would wear it like a crown. I would declare to Him my ways; I would approach Him like a prince. If my land cries out against me, if I have eaten its fruit without payment, or if I caused its owners to lose their lives, then let thistles grow instead of wheat, and weeds instead of barley (31:35-40).

## Job 32-37

### A. A New Character, Elihu

1. Does he show more wisdom than Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar?
2. What is his principal charge against Job?
3. Did he get everything perfectly right?

### B. Elihu's First Speech

1. Being much younger than you, I was **timid** (ESV) about speaking up; I was afraid to tell you what I thought. I told myself the aged should speak and teach wisdom, but the breath of the Almighty gives wisdom. Older men are not always wise, nor do they always understand justice (32:6-9).
2. Listen to me and I'll tell you what I think. I listened carefully to all you said, but not one of you effectively answered his words. And don't say, "We have found wisdom, and God will refute Job." Job did not direct his words against me, so I will not use the same arguments you used (32:6-14).
3. They are dismayed, and therefore have nothing more to say. Should I wait, just because they don't speak? I am too full with words to stay quiet. My spirit compels me to speak; I'm like a wineskin about to burst. Let me speak so I can find relief. And in doing so, let me show neither partiality nor flattery (32:15-22).
4. Job, please hear all I say. I speak from an upright heart; **what my lips know they speak sincerely** (ESV). The Spirit of God made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. Answer me if you can; arrange your words before me and take a stand. **I belong to God like you; I too have been formed out of the clay** (NAS). You have no reason, then, to be afraid of me (33:1-7).
5. Job, I've heard you say you are pure and innocent, that there is no iniquity in you, that God **invents pretexts** (NAS) against you, that He counts you as an enemy and does all this to afflict you. You are not right in this, for God is greater than man. Why do you contend with God—that He doesn't give an account of all He does? God does speak, but man doesn't always listen. Sometimes He speaks in dreams, to turn men from their evil deeds, or from pride, to save them from destruction (33:8-18).
6. God may also chasten a man with pain on his bed, pain so intense he desires nothing to eat, causing his flesh to waste away, and bringing him very near to death. Graciously, God may send this man a messenger, someone to show him what is right. If the messenger says, "Let him live; I have found a ransom for him"—his flesh will be restored. He can then pray to God and God will accept him (33:19-26).
7. He will **sing** (ASV, NASV, ESV) before others and say, "I have sinned and perverted what is right, but God redeemed me from death. My life can now see light." God

does these things time and again to bring man back from the pit, to enlighten him with the light of life. Job, I want you to be cleared, so if you can answer me, speak up. If not, listen to me and I will teach you more wisdom (33:27-33).

### C. Elihu's Second Speech

1. Listen to me, wise men, you who have knowledge. Test my words—the way the mouth tastes food, and choose what is right. Job says, “I am righteous, but God takes away my right; He denies me justice. My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.” Is there a man like Job, who drinks scorn (derision—NASV) like water? He puts himself among the wicked when he says, “It does not profit a man to delight in God” (34:1-9).
2. Listen to me, men of understanding. Far be it from God to do anything wrong, to pervert justice in any way. He pays a man according to His work. Who gave Him authority over the earth? Who laid on Him the whole world? If He wanted to, He could gather to Himself His spirit and His breath, and man would return to dust—all flesh would perish together (34:10-15).
3. If you have understanding, listen to this. Should one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn **the righteous mighty One** (NAS)? Is He not the One who says to kings, “You are worthless,” and to princes, “You are wicked.” He shows no partiality to rich or poor, for they are all the work of His hands. In a moment, they all die, some even in the middle of the night (34:16-20).
4. His eyes are on man; He sees every step. Darkness cannot hide the wicked. There's no need for man to present his case before God, because He already knows everything he does. With no questions asked, He breaks the mighty in pieces and sets others in their place. He strikes the wicked publicly, because they turned away from Him. If He brings peace, who can condemn Him, and if He hides His face, who can see Him—whether against a nation or man alone? He does these things to keep the godless from reigning (34:21-30).
5. Suppose one says to God, “I have borne chastening; I will offend no more; teach me what I do not see, and if I've done iniquity, I won't do it again?” Should God reward you on your terms? That you must answer, not I. Wise men who listen to me say that Job speaks without knowledge and wisdom. Oh, that Job were put to trial, because He answers like a wicked man. He adds rebellion to his sin; He claps His hands among us; He multiplies His words against God (34:31-37).

### D. Elihu's Third Speech

1. Do you think this is just? Do you say, “My righteousness is more than God's?” For you say, “What profit do I get from serving Him, more than if I had sinned?” I will answer you. Look up in the sky and behold how much higher the clouds are than you. If you sin, in what way do you harm God? If you are righteous, what blessing do you give Him? Your wickedness affects a man like you, and your sin only the sons of men (35:1-8).

2. Folks cry out when oppressed, when they need help; but no one asks, “Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, who gives us more wisdom than animals and birds?” Surely God will not listen to empty talk. You say you don’t see Him, but your case is before Him, and you must wait for Him. Job opens his mouth in vain; he multiplies words without knowledge (35:8-16).

#### E. Elihu’s Fourth Speech

1. Bear with me, I’ve got more to say on God’s behalf. My words are not false, for they come from One who is perfect in knowledge. Look, God is mighty, but despises no one. He does not keep the wicked alive, but He gives justice to the oppressed, and exalts the righteous. For those held by cords of affliction, God tells them wherein they have erred. If they listen, they will end their days in prosperity; if they don’t, they will perish by the sword (36:1-12).
2. But the godless remain angry, because when He binds them, they don’t cry for help. They die in their youth. God delivers the afflicted—if they listen to Him. God is calling you back to Him, to a broad place where you can receive great blessings. But, you are filled with the judgment due the wicked. Don’t be enticed to scoffing; don’t let some great ransom turn you from God. Will riches keep you from distress? Don’t turn to iniquity, because it seems you have preferred this to affliction (36:13-21).
3. God is exalted by His power. Who is a teacher like Him? Who has appointed Him His way, and who has the right to say, “You have done wrong”? Exalt His work, of which men have sung, because they’ve all seen it. God is great, and we can’t fully comprehend Him. Can anyone understand how the clouds spread, or how He thunders from His pavilion? He spreads lightning around Him and covers the depth of the sea. He judges people, and gives food in abundance. He covers His hands with lightning and tells it to strike its mark (36:22-33).
4. My heart trembles at all this. Listen intently to the thunder of His voice, a voice which can be heard under the whole heaven and to the ends of the earth—through both His thunder and lightning. He does great things we can’t comprehend. He says to the snow, “Fall on the earth,” and to the rain, “Be strong.” He stops man from work, just so they can know His work. Beasts go into their dens. God makes ice with his breath, the clouds do whatever He commands them. Whether for correction or mercy, He causes it to happen (37:1-13).
5. Listen to this, Job; stand still and meditate on the wondrous works of God. Do you know how God does these things? Could you, with Him, spread out the skies? Teach us what we should say to Him, for we’re in darkness. Should I tell Him I want to speak, and risk being swallowed up? Man can’t even look at the bright sun, so how can we look at God? God comes from the north in golden splendor; around him is awesome majesty. We cannot find Him, because He is exalted in power. He does not act unjustly, therefore men fear Him; He shows no partiality to those wise of heart (37:14-24).

## Job 38-42

### A. What God Does Not Say

1. Not only does He NOT tell Job about Satan's challenge, He gives no indication as to why these terrible things happened to Job.

### B. In fact, He doesn't say a word about Job's suffering.

1. His aim was to humble Job, to rebuke Him for the charges he made against Him, and He definitely hit His target.

### C. God Speaks

1. Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins (prepare yourself) like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you understand. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! To what were its foundations fastened, or who laid its cornerstone—when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (38:1-7).
2. When the sea came forth from the womb, who placed boundaries on it—who bolted it shut with a door? Who said to the sea, "You may come this far, but no farther; your proud waves must stop here." Have you ever in your life commanded the morning to come? Have you appointed the time for dawn to appear, the time when light is withheld from the wicked, the time when their upraised arm is broken? (38:8-15).
3. Have you ever entered, or walked in the deepest recesses (springs) of the ocean? The gates of death, the doors to the shadow of death—have you seen them? Do you comprehend the breadth or expanse of the earth? Tell me, if you know all this. Can you trace the path of either light or darkness to its home, and could you take them there? **You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is great** (ESV, NASV) (38:16-21).
4. Have you entered the treasuries of snow and hail, which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war? By what way is light diffused (distributed over the earth?), or the east wind scattered over the earth? Who made a channel for the flood, or a path for the thunderbolt, a path which brings rain even to desolate regions? Does the dew and rain have a father, and who gives birth to the ice? (38:22-30).

5. Can you control, lead, or direct the various constellations (several are named)? Do you know the rules (“ordinances of the heavens”) by which they operate? Can you call to the clouds and have them rain on you? Can you make lightnings your servant (have them say, “here we are”)? Who put wisdom and understanding into the mind? Can you pour out the bottles of heaven and make it rain in drought stricken places? (38:31-38).
6. Can you hunt prey for the **lioness**, to satisfy the appetite of her young cubs? When a raven’s young one’s cry to God for help, who feeds them? The **wild mountain goats**—do you know their months of gestation and when they give birth? They deliver healthy offspring, who grow strong, and then leave home never to return. Who set the **wild donkey** free, whose home is the wilderness, who searches through the mountains for every green thing? (38:39-39:8).
7. Will the **wild ox** be willing to serve you, bed by your manger, and plow your fields? Could you tame him to the point you could trust him to bring home your grain? The **ostrich** flaps her wings **joyously** (NASV), but lacks wisdom, especially with her young. She lays her eggs on the ground, and leaves them to warm in the dust. She forgets that a foot could easily crush them, making vain all her labors. But when she gets ready to run, she can outrun the horse and its rider (39:9-18).
8. Did you give the **horse** its power? Did you make him fearless, unafraid to charge into battle, despite the danger and the noise of war? Does the **hawk** soar by your wisdom? Did you command the **eagle** to make its nest on high, a point from which it can both be protected and spy out its prey? (39:19-30).
9. **Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let him who reproves God answer it** (NASV) (40:1-2).

#### D. Job Answers—Very Briefly

1. Behold, I am so insignificant (vile, of small account), how can I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, even twice, but I will say no more (40:3-5).
  - a. Recall his earlier statements: “Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come to His seat! I would present my case before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments” (23:4-5).

#### E. God Resumes His Speech

1. Gird up your loins like a man; I will ask more questions, and you shall answer Me. Would you really annul my judgment? Would you condemn Me to justify yourself? Do you have an arm like God? Can you thunder with a voice like His? Then array yourself with great majesty and splendor (dignity), glory and beauty. Pour out your wrath on the wicked and proud, and bring them low. I will then confess that your own right hand can save you (40:6-14).

2. Look at the **Behemoth**, which I made as I made you; he eats grass like an ox. See the strength in his loins, the power in his stomach muscles. He moves his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are tightly knit. His bones are like tubes of bronze, his ribs like bars of iron. The mountains yield food for him; in the cover of the reeds and the marsh, lotus trees provide him shade. Can anyone capture this animal **when he is on watch (NAS)?** (40:15-24).
3. Can you draw out **Leviathan** with a hook? Can you subdue him and have him plead for mercy? Can you make him your servant, or make him a pet for your maidens? Do battle with him and you won't try again. If no one is fierce enough to arouse him, who then can stand against Me? Who has preceded Me (given to Me) that I should repay him? Everything under heaven is Mine (41:1-11).
4. This **Leviathan**—everything about his makeup shows power and strength and fierceness—his outer coat, his face, his teeth, his strong scales, his nostrils, his neck, his heart, and his undersides. Weapons of every kind are powerless against him. On earth there is nothing like him, one made without fear (41:12-34).

F. Job Answers, Repents

1. I know You can do all things, that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. You asked, "Who hides counsel without knowledge?" I said things too wonderful for me; I didn't know what I was talking about. You said, "Listen and let me speak; I will question, and you will answer." I heard You with my ears, but now I see You. Therefore I repent; I take back the things I said. I repent in dust and ashes (42:1-6).

## Review of the Book of Job

The many important lessons we can learn from this book...

### 1. A Sobering Reality

- a. Life doesn't always turn out the way we planned. Job thought he would die in his own home after a long life—that his root would spread out to the waters, that dew would be on his branches all night, that he would remain strong (29:12-20).
- b. He went from having these hopes and dreams to wishing he had never been born.

### 2. Of Utmost Importance

- a. Job lost his possessions, his family, his health, and the love and respect of seemingly everyone. His speeches reveal the tremendous wear and tear on him—emotionally and physically.
- b. And yet, what seems to have caused him the most suffering was his belief that God was against Him, that God had made him an enemy. It is clear that His relationship to God mattered more to him than ANYTHING else.

### 3. A Good Man Gets Even Better

- a. **Prior** to this intense period of suffering, Job was blameless and upright, a man who feared God and shunned evil (1:1, 8; see ch. 31 for details). There was “none like him on the earth” (1:8).
- b. Job emerged from this suffering an even better man, with a deeper understanding of God, and therefore an even stronger faith in God (“I have heard of You...but now my eyes SEE you” (42:5).

### 4. What Job “Saw” and Learned

- a. Job saw “the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (James 5:11). He couldn't help but learn from God's speeches that His overruling providence over all creation has a beneficial design.
- b. Job also learned that he was in no position to ever question God, much less charge God with wrong (a point also made very strongly by Elihu).
  - a. “Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth...I will proceed no further” (40:4-5, ESV).
  - b. “I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know” (42:3).
- c. When grief is heavy (6:2-3), and bitterness and anguish of spirit take root (7:11; 10:4), it's easy to speak rashly (6:3).

5. The New Testament commends Job for his patience, or endurance (James 5:11).
  - a. NOT because he never expressed pain and grief over His suffering—because He did. NOT because he never questioned God, or complained against Him—because He did.
  - b. He is commended, because through it all, even when things were at their darkest, he remained steadfast in his relationship to God.
  - c. His commitment to God is perhaps best expressed in this statement: “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him...” (13:15).
  - d. For us then, Job is a great example of faithfulness and constancy in a relationship.
    - a. What we must learn is that first and foremost, we serve God because of who He is, and so if stripped of seemingly every earthly blessing, we will continue to be faithful to Him.
6. The Blessings That Really Matter
  - a. Yes, God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, but those rewards/punishments are not always evident in THIS life, at least not in our outward circumstances (despite what the “prosperity preachers” say).
  - b. What we MUST do, then, is develop a deeper appreciation for the spiritual blessings He gives us. These blessings are CONSTANT, if we continue to live by faith.
7. Satan can be “whipped”
  - a. Satan is a formidable adversary (cunning, powerful resources, walks to and fro, persistent), but he does have limitations.
  - b. Suffering presents a great opportunity to shut Satan up, to silence his accusations (which is exactly what Job did).
  - c. God may allow you to go through suffering, not because He’s against you, but because He has confidence in you (as in the case with Job).
8. Are we better comforters than Job’s friends?
  - a. “Miserable comforters are you all!” (16:1). “You are all worthless physicians” (13:4).
  - b. “To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend...” (6:14).
9. Speak God’s Wisdom
  - a. Dreams, visions, the wisdom and tradition of forefathers—none of these are a substitute for divine wisdom.
  - b. “Will you speak falsely for God and speak deceitfully for Him?...Will it be well with you when He searches you out?...” (ESV) (13:7, 9).
  - c. We better be real careful when speaking for God. “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11).

10. Does wisdom come with age?
  - a. Sometimes...“Does not the ear test words and the mouth taste its food? Wisdom is with aged men, and with length of days, understanding” (12:11-12).
  - b. But not always...“Great men are not always wise, nor do the aged always understand justice” (32:9).
  - c. Wisdom doesn’t necessarily come with age; it comes to those who “test” and “taste” (see also 34:3)— “those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14).
11. Wisdom is very precious.
  - a. Job said, speaking of wisdom, “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” (28:15-19).
12. When do we call on God?
  - a. “Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out; they call for help because of the arm of the mighty. But none says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens?’” (35:9-11).
  - b. Yes, let’s call on Him for help, but let’s also call on Him to offer praise and thanksgiving.
13. Avoid a sense of entitlement
  - a. “Who has preceded me (“given to Me”—NAS) that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is mine” (41:11).
  - b. “Who gave Him charge over the earth? Or who appointed Him over the whole world? If He should set His heart on it, if He should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust” (34:13-15).
14. The Need for a Mediator
  - a. “For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him, and that we should go to court together. Nor is there any mediator between us, who may lay His hand on us both” (9:32-34).
  - b. “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).
15. The Wonders of His Creation
  - a. Beautiful descriptions of God’s handiwork are found throughout the book.

- b. Reading these descriptions should produce the same effect they had on Elihu: “At this also my heart trembles, and leaps from its place” (37:1).

16. The Hope Which Sustains Us

- a. “Oh that You would hide me in the grave, that You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that You would appoint me a set time, and remember me! **If a man dies, shall he live again?** All the days of my hard service I will wait, till my change comes. You shall call, and I will answer You; **You shall desire the work of Your hands**” (14:13-15).
- b. “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (19:25-27).
- c. May we all yearn for our home with God!