

## **JOB - THE TRIAL OF A LIFETIME**

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<sup>1:1</sup> Hello. My name is Job, and I lived several thousand years ago just west of Babylon<sup>1</sup> in a land called Uz. I am in heaven now, but I want to tell you about a severe trial I experienced while I was still alive. I was a good and godly man. By that I mean that I had a genuine fear of the LORD, and I showed it by avoiding every form of sin and evil. I was upright, and I showed it by doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. I was also blameless, and I showed it by living such a good life that no one could rightfully accuse me of wrongdoing. This was my daily manner of living.

<sup>1</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, a component of Online Bible Millennium Edition, Version 1.1, January 18, 2002, Copyright © 1987, 2002, Timnathserah, Inc., Winterbourne, Ontario, Canada. N0B2V0.

<sup>2-3</sup> I was the richest and most influential man in all of the East. I had seven sons and three daughters, and I owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 oxen, 500 female donkeys, and an abundance of servants. <sup>4</sup> My family was so wealthy that each of my sons would take his turn hosting a feast. My oldest son would invite all of his brothers and sisters to his house to eat and drink. Then the next month my next oldest son would host a feast, and so on. <sup>5</sup> The morning after all of my sons had taken their turn hosting a feast, I would gather them together and offer burnt offerings to God on their behalf. I did this because I feared that one or more of my children might have entertained bad thoughts about God while they were under the influence of the alcohol in the wine. My fear of the LORD was so strong that I didn't want any unconfessed sin in my family. Each time my sons completed a cycle of hosting feasts, I would once again gather them together and offer sacrifices to God on their behalf.

<sup>6</sup> One day, unbeknown to me, God summoned the angels of heaven to come before Him to give account of what they had done for Him. Of all things, Satan showed up too. The LORD looked at Satan and said,

"Where did you come from? You don't belong here."

Satan answered,

"I have come from patrolling every inch of my kingdom, the earth, and doing my best to see that the people of the earth do my bidding."

<sup>8</sup> Then the LORD said,

"Have you seen my servant Job? He loves Me and has such a genuine, biblical fear of the LORD that he consistently avoids or abandons every form of sin and evil. There is not another man on earth like him. He does what is right in My sight<sup><upright></sup>, and he lives such a good life that no one can rightfully accuse him of wrongdoing<sup><blameless></sup>. I am so proud of him. Isn't he something special?"

<sup>9</sup> Satan answered,

"Yeah, but do you think he serves You simply because he loves You? I don't think so. I submit to You that he only serves You for what he can get out of it. <sup>10</sup> After all, You've placed a wall of protection around him, his home, and all of his possessions so that I cannot get to him. In addition, You have blessed all that he does and have caused his possessions to increase dramatically. It's no wonder he serves You. <sup>11</sup> Ah, but take away everything he owns, and he will surely turn his back on You. In fact, I feel certain that he will actually curse You to Your face."

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to Satan in response,

"You think so, huh? Well, just to show you that He loves Me for Me alone, I give you permission to take away all that Job owns, but don't hurt him personally. Then you'll see that he actually loves Me regardless of the possessions."

So, a contest between God and Satan had begun. Once God had given Satan permission to hurt me, he immediately left heaven and returned to the earth to do his dirty work.

## 1) How I lost my wealth

<sup>13</sup> Now Satan was a sly one. He waited until my oldest son was hosting a feast for his brothers and sisters, and that's when he struck. <sup>14</sup> I was sitting at the city gate administering the affairs of the city when a messenger came running up to me and said, "Your oxen were plowing in the fields and your donkeys were feeding near them <sup>15</sup> when the Sabeans attacked and took all of the animals as spoil. They killed all of your servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you about it." <sup>16</sup> If that wasn't bad enough, while that messenger was still speaking, another messenger came and told me, "Fire came down from heaven and burned to ashes all of your sheep and all of the servants tending them. I alone have escaped to tell you about it." <sup>17</sup> While the second messenger was still speaking a third messenger came to me and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and attacked. They took all of your camels and killed all of your servants. I alone have escaped to tell you about it." <sup>18</sup> While he was still speaking, a fourth messenger came to me and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking in your oldest son's house <sup>19</sup> when a tornado came out of the wilderness and destroyed the house. I managed to escape, but everyone else was killed. I immediately came to tell you about it." I had become completely bankrupt in one day. <sup>20</sup> After hearing about my losses, I got up from where I was sitting at the city gate, tore my clothes, and shaved my head. Then I fell down prostrate and worshipped God. <sup>21</sup> I said,

"That's OK. I came into this world naked and empty-handed, and I will go to the grave naked and empty-handed. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.

<sup>22</sup> Through all of this I was faithful to God, and I did not sin by what I said in response.

So, back in heaven, God had won this phase of the contest. Understand, I didn't know anything about what was going on between God and Satan. All I knew was that my life had been turned upside down. I suspect that when Satan saw my good and godly response he said something like,

"Rats! I was sure he would curse God."

<sup>2:1</sup> Sometime later (it could have been as much as a couple of years) the angels of God were once again summoned to stand before Him to give account of what they had done for Him. Not being one to give up easily, Satan showed up again. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Satan a second time,

"Where did you come from? You don't belong here."

Satan answered,

"I have come from patrolling every inch of my kingdom, the earth, and doing my best to see that the people of the earth do my bidding."

<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said,

"What do you think about my servant Job now? He has such a genuine, Biblical fear of the LORD that he consistently avoids or abandons every form of sin and evil. There is not another man like him on the earth. He does what is right in My sight <sup><upright></sup>, and he lives such a good life that no one can rightfully accuse him of wrongdoing <sup><blameless></sup>. I am so proud of him. Isn't he something special? Notice how he still maintains his commitment to doing what is right <sup><integrity></sup> and loving Me even though he has lost everything he owns. You provoked Me, and I caused Job's severe loss when I allowed you to hurt him for no

other reason than to show you that he truly loves and reverences Me regardless of what he does or doesn't own."

<sup>4</sup> It was then that Satan took the contest to another level by saying,

"Okay, you won this one, but take away his health, and you'll see how he will do anything to avoid dying. <sup>5</sup> I challenge You, reach down now and touch his body. Make him experience severe pain. Then You will see how he will curse You to your face."

<sup>6</sup> So the LORD said,

"OK, but Job will be faithful to me. You'll see. Nonetheless, I give you permission to hurt him, but do not kill him."

<sup>7</sup> So, Satan immediately left the presence of the LORD and returned to the earth with more sinister plans in mind.

## 2) How I lost my health

I was sitting at the city gate administering the affairs of government when all of a sudden, for no apparent reason, large boils started showing up all over my body. I had no idea how or why they appeared, but before long I was covered with boils from the base of my feet to the top of my head. <sup>8</sup> They were extremely painful and leaked putrid puss. So I took a piece of broken pottery and scraped them while sitting among a pile of ashes. <sup>9</sup> I had no knowledge of how the contest between God and Satan had generated my pain, and to add insult to injury, when my wife saw my wretched condition she said to me,

"Do you still believe that God is good and that you have done nothing to deserve this trouble? Your condition proves that you must be a wretched sinner. Why don't you simply curse God and die? That's the right thing to do!"

<sup>10</sup> I didn't appreciate what she had to say, so I responded by saying,

"It is obvious that I have lost my health, but I have done nothing wrong. You are talking the way foolish and senseless women talk. Should a man accept good things from the LORD, and then reject the hurtful, costly, or painful things <sup><adversity></sup>. No, all that the LORD allows to come my way is for His glory, so it isn't bad."

To God's glory, I did not sin by what I said, and I'm grateful for that.

<sup>11</sup> It wasn't long before three of my friends heard about physical suffering I was experiencing. They got together and agreed among themselves to come to me in order to show their sympathy and be of some comfort. As you will see, they did a lousy job of both. Their names were Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. <sup>12</sup> When they got close enough to see me, they cried out in unison because I was so disfigured that they didn't even recognize me. They tore their clothes, threw dust into the air, <sup>13</sup> and sat down on the ground with me for seven days without saying a word because they saw how much pain I was experiencing.

(This pain is so excruciating that I wish I had never been born.)

<sup>3:1-2</sup> After seven days I broke the silence by saying,

<sup>3</sup> "I wish I had never been born. <sup>4-7</sup> I wish my mother had not been able to get pregnant. <sup>8</sup> My birth brought about a curse, because it generated a monster <sup><Leviathan></sup>. <sup>9-10</sup> Had that night of sexual union been a failure I would never have been born, and I would never have had to experience all of the troubles that have come upon me.

<sup>11-12</sup> If I had to be born, why didn't I die right after birth or be still-born for that matter? Why was my mother allowed to hold me in her bosom? <sup>13</sup> Had I died at birth I would now be lying silently in the grave somewhere and be at rest. <sup>14</sup> In the grave I would be in the company of powerful men, with those who had built magnificent structures for themselves, <sup>15</sup> with those who were filthy rich, <sup>16</sup> and with miscarried babies who were never allowed to see the light of day. <sup>17</sup> In the grave everything stops. There the weary find rest, wicked men cease from causing hurts, heartaches, and losses for innocent people, <sup>18</sup> prisoners are at ease with no guard standing over them, <sup>19</sup> great men join insignificant men as equals, and the slave is free with no master telling him what to do. <sup>20-22</sup> I ask you, "Why am I allowed to live since my life is so bitter, and I am suffering so severely?" I would be thrilled to find the grave, but even though I search diligently for death God will not let me find it. <sup>23</sup> Why am I allowed to live when God has fenced me in on every side and is forcing me to endure these troubles? <sup>24</sup> I ask this because my pain and losses are so overpowering that I cry bucketsful of tears, and I groan at the sight of food. <sup>25</sup> The thing that I had feared has actually happened to me, <sup>26</sup> and I definitely do not feel safe and secure. I cannot rest because the pain is overwhelming, and I must speak out because I am so agitated about my troubles. The immensity of them has completely consumed me."

### 3) How I lost my godly reputation

(Quit your complaining. You've advised others, now practice what you preach.)

<sup>4:1-2</sup> Then Eliphaz responded to my complaining. <sup>2</sup> He said,

"I feel compelled to speak up and refute your concerns. Will it make you angry if I do so? <sup>3</sup> Over the years you have advised lots of people, and you have strengthened those who were weak. <sup>4</sup> What you had to say gave help and hope to those who were about to fall and strengthened to those who were weak. <sup>5</sup> That was admirable, but now that you are experiencing trouble you are impatient and can't figure out what to do. Listen brother, you need to practice what you preach. <sup>6</sup> After all, isn't your fear of the LORD and your determination to always do what is right in the sight of the LORD the basis for your hope that things will get better in the future?"

The following is a key paragraph for the book. (All of the arguments presented to Job by his wife, his three friends, and Elihu were based upon a distorted belief that because he was suffering so severely and had lost so much Job must be a wicked sinner.)

<sup>7</sup> Job, you claim to be innocent of wrongdoing, but you must be a wicked sinner. It is obvious by the way you are suffering. Everyone knows that no one ever suffered like you as a result of his good and godly lifestyle or because he consistently did what is right in the sight of the LORD. <sup>8</sup> Throughout my life I have seen how those who sow wickedness reap a harvest of the same kind of hurts, heartaches, and losses you are experiencing. <sup>9</sup> God blows on them like we blow out a candle, and they perish. As a result of God's anger they come to a quick and disastrous end. Let me illustrate: <sup>10-11</sup> if a lion has his teeth broken out, he will die of starvation because he cannot kill his prey. Then all of the female lions and cubs will run off to find another male lion to follow. The same is true for the wicked man. When God takes away his ability to inflict injury and/or losses upon innocent people like He has done to you, that man will wither and be destroyed. Then all of his accomplices will abandon him in order to find another wicked man to follow."

(Eliphaz's terrifying dream. Job, you can't be better than your Maker.)

<sup>12-13</sup> Job, let me tell you about a dream I had last night. God whispered disturbing things to me while I was in a deep sleep. <sup>14</sup> It scared me so badly that I started to shake all over. <sup>15</sup> In my dream, some spirit passed before me, and it frightened me so much that the hair on the back of my neck stood up. <sup>16</sup> It stopped right in front of me, and just stood there. I have no doubt that something was there, but I couldn't make out who or what it was. Then I heard a voice, and it said,

<sup>17</sup> "Can a man be made pure, or can he be justified in the sight of God on his own merit or by his own deeds? Obviously not! <sup>18</sup> God knows that men are sinners, and He cannot trust them to do right. In fact, He even holds His angels accountable for

everything they do. <sup>19</sup> How much more will He require of mortal men who do wrong? Men were formed from the dust of the earth, live in houses of clay, and sooner or later they die and are laid in a grave while the moth watches all of this transpire. <sup>20</sup> Sometime during the day wicked men are broken in pieces and perish forever while no one is watching. <sup>21</sup> The very essence of life is taken from them, and they die without understanding that they are guilty sinners and that their own sin is what has brought about their demise. Their fall will happen as surely as a tent will fall when you cut the rope holding it up.”

(Job, face it. You're getting what you deserve, and no one will help you.)

<sup>5:1</sup> “Job, call for help, and see if a godly man or an angel will come to your rescue. See if anyone will agree with you when you say that you are innocent of all charges brought against you. <sup>2</sup> You could turn to a fool for support, but his anger would bring about his own premature death. You could turn to a naïve man, but envy and jealousy would end up getting him killed as well. <sup>3</sup> In fact, let me tell you about the foolish man. I have seen him become established in the community, and I immediately wished he were dead and gone. <sup>4</sup> His sons are humiliated, and they have no security. When disaster comes upon them like it did your sons, there is no one to help them. <sup>5</sup> Some schemer will take away the fool’s wealth just like the Sabeans and the Chaldeans took away your wealth. <sup>6</sup> Let’s face it: physical affliction like yours doesn’t simply appear out of nowhere, nor do hurts, heartaches, and losses spring out of the ground. <sup>7</sup> Man is born to experience trouble as surely as sparks fly upward. Job, you must be a sinner. Admit it!”

(Don’t despise God’s discipline. Seek Him, and He’ll save you.)

<sup>8</sup> “Now Job, if I were in your sandals, I would get serious about seeking the LORD, and when I found Him I would present my case before Him. <sup>9</sup> He is a God who does things that are beyond our comprehension, and He has performed so many of them that they cannot be counted. <sup>10</sup> He makes the clouds drop rain on the earth to water the fields producing a bumper crop at harvest. <sup>11</sup> In a similar fashion, He elevates those who are humble enough to recognize their need for help, and He provides security for those who are experiencing grief and anguish. <sup>12</sup> He frustrates the plans of those who think they are smart enough to find their own way out of their troubles, and He sees that they do not succeed. <sup>13</sup> He captures the wise in the trap they set by their own deceitful cunning, and He brings the schemes of crafty men a quick end. <sup>14</sup> During the day these people are totally in the dark when it comes to finding the truth, and at noon-day they blindly search for answers. <sup>15</sup> Job, listen to me. It doesn’t have to happen that way to you. The LORD rescues people from the cutting words of the foolish man’s mouth, and He saves the poor man from the dominance of both the mighty man and the oppressor. <sup>16</sup> Because of this, the helpless man who is repentant has hope, and the unrighteous man must shut his mouth in response.”

(God made you sick—He can heal you.)

<sup>17</sup> “Open your eyes, and see how happy a man can be when he is reprovved by God. Therefore, Job, don’t hate Almighty God for disciplining you. <sup>18</sup> Yes, He inflicts physical pain at times, but if you repent He will heal you and give you relief from the pain. <sup>19</sup> Think about it, Job, He can and will deliver you from any number of troubles so that evil will not touch you. <sup>20</sup> When famine comes He will not let you starve, and during times of war He will protect you from the enemy’s weapons. <sup>21</sup> He will protect you from the rumors and accusations of people determined to hurt you with their words, and you will not be afraid of violence aimed against you when and if it comes. <sup>22</sup> In fact, you will laugh at the prospect of experiencing violence or famine, and you will have no fear of being hurt by wild beasts. <sup>23</sup> The stones of the field will not hurt you nor hinder your crops, and the beasts of the field will be at peace with you. <sup>24</sup> Your home will be secure, and you will be able to come and go without any fear that thieves will steal from you. <sup>25</sup> You can be certain that your children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and those to follow them will prosper. There will be so many of them that they cannot be counted. <sup>26</sup> Then you will die at a ripe old age, full of vim and vigor like a bountiful harvest when the grain is fully ripe. <sup>27</sup> We have seen these things happen, and we have found them to be true by thorough investigation. Hear what I have to say, and experience these things for yourself. Job, you can have these blessings if you will simply confess your sin and turn to the LORD for forgiveness.”

(You guys have no concept of the overwhelming grief I am experiencing.)

<sup>6:1</sup> Then I answered Eliphaz saying,

<sup>2</sup> “I wish I had an accurate scale so that I could weigh the magnitude of the grief that has overwhelmed me as a result of this constant pain. <sup>3</sup> It would outweigh all of the sand on all of the beaches of the world. This overwhelming grief is what has driven me to rashly say that I wish I had never been born. <sup>4</sup> God has pierced me through with poisoned arrows, and I am trapped as He afflicts me with one hurt, heartache, or loss after another. <sup>5</sup> Donkeys and cows complain when they cannot find grass to eat, and I am complaining because I have no hope that my situation will ever get better. <sup>6-7</sup> No one would want to eat the white of an egg or something bland without adding salt. My grief is so heavy that I don’t have an appetite for any food, let alone these two repulsive things.”

(I wish God would kill me. I don’t have the strength to bear this pain.)

<sup>8-9</sup> “Oh, how I wish that God would grant my wish and simply kill me. Then all of the punishment He has laid upon me would be removed. <sup>10</sup> I will take this punishment like a man, but the only comfort I have is that in spite of all of these troubles I have not denied God nor His Word. <sup>11</sup> I wonder, though, where will I find the strength to see this trial through to the end? <sup>12</sup> After all, am I as strong as stones, or is my flesh as strong as a bronze column? <sup>13</sup> I’m only a man. I don’t have the strength to endure this trial, and I have no hope of being delivered from it.”

(You guys should comfort me, but instead you add insult to injury)

<sup>14</sup> “You, my friend, should be kind and encourage me since I have completely lost any hope that this trial will go away. Such encouragement could be the very thing that would keep me from abandoning the fear of the LORD. <sup>15-16</sup> Oh, but you have acted deceitfully and accused me of being both a fool and a terrible sinner. You have hidden your blame and accusations of wrongdoing under the guise of helping me. All the while you think people won’t see what you are really doing. In reality, your blame and accusations are just like a raging river hidden beneath a blanket of snow and ice where the it can’t be seen. <sup>17</sup> When it gets warm the ice melts, and the ravines dry out. When it gets hot the standing water evaporates and disappears. <sup>18</sup> Torrential flash-floods flow down one ravine after another, and then they dry up and vanish into nothing. <sup>19</sup> Travelers look for water and hope to see some, <sup>20</sup> but they are disappointed to find only hot, dry desert sand.

<sup>21</sup> You, my “friend,” are just like those travelers. You see me in pain and anguish, and it frightens you. <sup>22</sup> Have I asked you for advice, or have I offered a bribe desiring to gain some of your wealth? <sup>23</sup> Have I asked for your help, or have I begged you to buy me back from the hand of cruel and oppressive rulers? Certainly not!”

(Either show me where I am wrong, or shut your mouth.)

<sup>24</sup> “Show me where I have gone wrong. Prove it to me, and I will say no more. <sup>25</sup> It hurts to be rebuked by the truth, but you haven’t shown me any arguments with substance. <sup>26</sup> Do you intend to show me where I have spoken in error since you feel my refusal to admit that I am a wicked sinner makes anything I have to say empty and useless? <sup>27</sup> Would you guys go so far as to throw dice to see which of you would be first to take advantage of an orphan or offer money to decide who gets the privilege of belittling your friend? <sup>28</sup> Please look closely at me, and see if I lie to your face. <sup>29</sup> Stop accusing me so that there will be no more injustice in your words. Take a close look, and listen as I assert one more time,

‘I am a righteous man, and I have done nothing wrong.’ <sup>30</sup> I agree that I am not able to figure out all of the calamities that have overtaken me, but that doesn’t mean that I have committed any sin that would warrant this pain and agony.”

(My life is futile, and I am tormented day and night.)

<sup>7:1</sup> “Isn’t life a warfare, and aren’t a man’s days numbered? <sup>2-3</sup> Right now I am allotted months of no value and nights filled with trouble. It is similar to the way a slave craves to find some shade to take a

break, and it is like the hired man who can't wait to get his next paycheck. <sup>4</sup> When I lie down to rest I ask myself,

'Will morning ever come so that I can arise?'

Unfortunately, the nights drag on and on for what seems like an eternity, and I toss back and forth on my bed unable to sleep. <sup>5</sup> My skin is covered with scabs, and my boils ooze with puss. <sup>6</sup> My life is passing away as quickly as the steam that vapors off the pot, and I expect to come to my wretched end without any hope that life will be any better in the future."

(I have no hope of recovering. Besides, it won't be long before I'm dead.)

<sup>7</sup> "My life is but a vapor, and I don't anticipate that I will ever experience a good and prosperous life again. <sup>8</sup> Before long people will not see me because I will be in the grave somewhere. <sup>9</sup> In the same way a cloud dissipates and is gone forever, so a man who goes to the grave will not come up from there again. <sup>10</sup> He will not return to his house, and after a while those who live in his home will not even remember that he ever existed."

(Yes I'm complaining. Either comfort me, or leave me alone !!!!!!!!)

<sup>11</sup> "Therefore, I will not restrain my words. I will tell you about the anguish of my soul, and I will complain about how I am bitter about life. <sup>12</sup> Am I a raging sea or some sort of sea monster that you feel you must stand guard over me? <sup>13</sup> If I were to say that my bed is a comfort to me or that my couch will ease my pain and suffering, <sup>14</sup> then you frighten me by sharing a terrifying dream you had. <sup>15</sup> As a result of my suffering and your dream, I would rather choose to die by suffocation than live with this pain. <sup>16</sup> I am wasting away, and I will not live forever. Leave me alone because my days are as brief as the steam that vapors off the pot.

<sup>17</sup> What am I that you would choose to make me something great in your sight. In fact, why are you concerned enough to <sup>18</sup> examine me every morning and test me throughout the day? <sup>19</sup> Won't you ever turn your convicting gaze away from me, and leave me alone while I swallow my own spit? <sup>20</sup> Have I sinned? You have made yourself an unsolicited guardian over me. So tell me, what I have done to you? Why have you made me the target of your supposed correction so that I end up becoming a burden to myself? <sup>21</sup> Why can't you simply overlook the wrongs I may have done, and withdraw your demand for punishment? I wish you would because I am ready to lie down in the dust and die, and hopefully you will see me no more because I will be gone forever."

(Job, ask God to forgive you, and God will bless you. Look at how your sons got what they deserved.)

<sup>8:1</sup> After I finished responding to Eliphaz , **Bildad took his turn rebuking me**. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "How long will you assert your innocence and refuse to admit that you are a wicked man? Stop it, because your words are foolish and without substance. <sup>3</sup> Do you really think God will distort justice? Will He twist things that are good and right? <sup>4</sup> It seems obvious that if your own sons had sinned against God, then He gave them the punishment they deserved when He killed them. <sup>5-6</sup> If really feel that you are pure and have done what is right in the sight of God like you say, then humble yourself, admit you are a wicked sinner, and seek the LORD. Confess your sin, and beg for mercy. If you will, the LORD will restore you to your previous state. <sup>7</sup> Even though you have experienced this setback, in the end you will be even greater than you were before this trouble came upon you."

(We are only reaffirming what men of past generations have known to be true.)

<sup>8</sup> "Job, men of years gone by have said that "only wicked men experience severe affliction" like what you are experiencing. They have found it to be true through diligent searching. <sup>9</sup> We only have our past experiences to go by, but we know nothing compared to our forefathers. <sup>10</sup> Wake up, and recognize that what they said is the truth."



(Sin has consequences, but God will bless a man of integrity.)

<sup>11</sup> “Can plants grow without water? Obviously not! <sup>12</sup> Even though the bulrush is still green and growing, yet this plant will be the first one to wither and die when it has no water. <sup>13</sup> Be assured that the path of the man who forgets God is just like the bulrush. His hope will vanish into thin air. <sup>14</sup> His confidence has no substance, and he will be broken as easily as running your hand through a spider’s web. <sup>15</sup> He feels like his house and possessions are his security, but they will not last. <sup>16</sup> He thrives during the day, and he appears to have broad influence in the community. <sup>17</sup> He feels his roots go down deep, but they are bound up in soil mixed with a bunch of rocks. <sup>18</sup> If he is removed from his place of wealth and prominence (like happened to you), then his previous position and possessions will say, “I never knew you!” <sup>19</sup> Job, open your eyes, and see how these things are the only joy he will ever experience. In the end, others will come along to take his place of prominence and possessions (like happened to you). <sup>20</sup> Without a doubt, God will not reject or punish a man who does what is morally and legally right, and GOD will not support a sinner’s evil plans and deeds. <sup>21</sup> If a guilty man like you will turn to Him in repentance, God will restore him and fill his soul with laughter and shouts of joy. <sup>22</sup> Then those who hate him will be filled with shame, and the home of the wicked will be demolished by the consequences of his sin. Job, you can experience this good end if you will repent.”

(I know God is great and powerful.)

**9:1 When Bildad was finished, I answered him by saying,**

<sup>2</sup> “I know that as a general rule what you are saying is true, but how can a man be made right before God? <sup>3</sup> If he had a desire to argue with God, he could not give a good answer once in a thousand times he would call upon Him. <sup>4</sup> Since God is so extremely mighty and wise in heart, who has ever successfully hardened his heart in opposition to God without experiencing hurts, heartaches, and/or losses? <sup>5</sup> After all, God removes mountains in His anger, and people don’t understand how He topples them. <sup>6</sup> He causes earthquakes that shake the earth to its very core; <sup>7</sup> He is able to command the sun not to shine and causes the stars not to be seen by the human eye; <sup>8</sup> He alone stretched out the heavens to the end of the universe and walks on the sea as easily as He walks on dry ground; <sup>9</sup> He fixed Bear, Orion, Pleiades, and the other constellations in their places; and <sup>10</sup> He does so many great, unsearchable, and awesome deeds that they cannot be counted for number. He is that mighty and that wise in heart.”

(Realize that God afflicts the innocent along with the guilty.)

<sup>11</sup> “If God were to pass by right in front of me I would not see Him. In fact, I wouldn’t even know that He had even been there. <sup>12</sup> If He were to reach down and take something away from me, who could keep Him from doing what He wants? Who could successfully say to Him, “What do you think you are doing? You have no right to take that.” <sup>13</sup> When God is angry He will not change His mind. After all, in His anger He has put numbers of proud men in the grave. <sup>14</sup> How then can I choose acceptable words in order to give Him an appropriate answer to my situation? <sup>15</sup> Even though I am in the right and have done no wrong, I will not answer Him. My only recourse is to appeal to Him, my Accuser and my Judge, begging Him to bestow mercy and kindness upon me. <sup>16</sup> If I called upon Him and He were to actually answer me, I could not believe that the God of the universe was actually listening to my feeble cry for help. <sup>17</sup> I say this because He has bruised me with one hurt after another, and as I see it, He has multiplied my troubles without just cause. <sup>18</sup> The pain of these sores is so severe that I cannot get my breath, and He has filled me with bitterness about the calamity He has brought upon me. <sup>19</sup> If I thought I was strong, I am nothing compared to His strength. Who can stir God to action if I choose to plead for justice? <sup>20</sup> Even though I am a good and godly man, if I were to try to justify myself my mouth would condemn me. God will pronounce me guilty even though I have done nothing to deserve the pain and sorrow I am experiencing.

<sup>21</sup> I am not guilty of any of your accusations, but I will not try to justify myself. In fact, I despise my life and wish I were dead and in the grave. <sup>22</sup> God does not distinguish between the innocent and the guilty when He chooses to punish a man. He considers all men the same. Therefore, I say that God destroys both the guilty and the guiltless whenever and wherever He chooses. <sup>23</sup> When disaster overtakes an innocent man and he is about to die, it appears as though the LORD simply stands back and makes fun of the despair the poor man is experiencing. <sup>24</sup> It appears to me that the world is given over to the control

of wicked men, and God blinds the eyes of its judges so that they do not or cannot see the things wicked men do. If God is not the one who does this, then who is?"

(I can't argue with God, and there is no one who will stand up for me.)

<sup>25-26</sup> I can see my life slipping away as swiftly as an Olympic runner, and each passing day is a bad one. In fact, they go by as quickly as a jet airplane or an eagle in a steep dive. <sup>27-28</sup> If I were to be foolish enough to say, "I will put on a cheerful face and simply forget my pain and agony," then I would be fooling myself, because I am afraid of my pain and agony. It is so severe that I am scared to death. After all, I am convinced that God will not pronounce me innocent of all wrongdoing. <sup>29</sup> You guys have accused me of being a wicked sinner, so why should I try to justify myself since no one will believe me? <sup>30</sup> If I were to wash my body with soap, <sup>31</sup> yet the LORD would still plunge me into the grave, and even my filthy clothes would look at me in disgust. <sup>32</sup> After all, God is not a man that I can take Him to court and state my case in order, <sup>33</sup> and there is no one who will act as mediator on my behalf before God. <sup>34</sup> Oh that God would remove His rod of affliction, and take away the dread of Him that terrifies me. <sup>35</sup> If He would, then I would speak what is in my heart and not fear Him, but I don't have it in me to speak that way to God."

(God, I am innocent, but I can't prove it.)

<sup>10:1</sup> Yes, I am bitter and hurt so much that I'm tired of living. Therefore, I will openly complain about how unfairly God has treated me. The simple truth is that I am tired of living. <sup>2</sup> I would like to ask God, "Please don't condemn me along with the wicked, and tell me why are You fighting against me. <sup>3</sup> Do You actually enjoy oppressing me like this, and do You favor the plans and desires of wicked man while You despise good men like me? <sup>4</sup> Do You look at me with mortal eyes like man sees me? <sup>5-7</sup> Are You limited to the life span of mortal man so that like man You would seek out any occasion where I have done wrong or violated Your commandments? Would You do something like that even though You know that I am not guilty? Regardless of what You choose, there is no one who is able to deliver me out of the grip of Your hand."

(God, You made me. Why are You making my life miserable?)

<sup>8</sup> "LORD, You made me, so why are You destroying me? It seems odd that You would fashion me with Your own hands and then crush me like a bug. <sup>9</sup> Please remember that You did a masterful job of forming me from the dust of the earth, and now it appears that You are ready to return me to the dust. <sup>10</sup> You formed me as an embryo in the darkness of my mother's womb, <sup>11</sup> covered me with muscle and skin, and joined my bones and ligaments together. <sup>12</sup> You gave me life and a steadfast love for You, and until all of these troubles came upon me You preserved my spirit. <sup>13</sup> It is obvious to me that You had planned all along to hurt me like this. <sup>14</sup> If I were to sin, You would certainly see it and be unwilling to pronounce me innocent. <sup>15</sup> If I really had been guilty, then woe to me. I would certainly deserve the grief and distress that has been heaped upon me. Oh, but even though I am innocent, I must still hang my head in shame, because I am filled to the brim with disgrace and overwhelmed by my affliction. <sup>16</sup> If I were to regain my previous place of prominence and prosperity You would hunt me down like a lion hunts its prey. Then You would bring similar losses and afflictions upon me once again. <sup>17</sup> Your anger has become greater and greater, and You have renewed Your attacks against me. You have sent in fresh troops to vex me further, and those troops are my so-called friends."

(My mother should have [miscarried](#). Lord, why have You brought me into this world only to experience this darkness?)

<sup>18</sup> "So, why did You bring me into this world? I wish I had been miscarried. <sup>19</sup> Then they would have carried me directly from the womb to the grave. <sup>20</sup> Look, guys, I don't have long to live. Please stop afflicting me, and leave me alone so that I can find a little bit of cheer <sup>21</sup> before I go to the grave, never to return again. Yes, I long to go to the grave where the lights go out, <sup>22</sup> a place where darkness is so thick that it could be cut with a knife, and any light that would try to enter would be swallowed up in the darkness."

(You say you're innocent, but God would say differently.)

**11:1 Then Zophar answered Job saying,**

<sup>2</sup> “Job, I must refute what you have said, because even though you’ve said so much, all of your speaking won’t clear you of your guilt. <sup>3</sup> Do you think that your confident boasting will silence your accusers? Do you think that you can scoff at God and your friends, and no one will rebuke you for it? <sup>4</sup> I feel compelled to speak out, because you continue to assert,

‘I have spoken what is true and pure. Guys, I am innocent. Can’t you see it?’

<sup>5</sup> I wish God would speak up, and tell you what He has against you. <sup>6</sup> He would show what really comprises wisdom, for sound wisdom has two sides—what man can understand and what God has reserved for Himself. Be assured, then, that God has inflicted you with exactly the right punishment your sin and disobedience deserve.”

(God is great, but you're too dumb to understand such things.)

<sup>7</sup> “Can you know the deep things of God, or can you figure out the limit of His control? <sup>8</sup> His ability is higher than the heavens, so what can you do to Him? His knowledge is deeper than the deepest sea, so what can you know about Him? <sup>9</sup> The measure of God’s power and majesty surpasses the circumference of the earth and is broader than the largest sea. <sup>10</sup> If He chooses to pass by you, remains silent, or calls for an assembly of people, who can restrain Him? Obviously, no one can. <sup>11</sup> God knows when a man is not telling the truth, and He sees the iniquity of a man’s heart without anyone having to explain it to Him. <sup>12</sup> Even though an idiot like you professes to be intelligent, your words are merely the expression of a man who is born the son of a jackass.”

(Job—Life would be good if you would repent, but even worse disaster awaits you if you don’t.)

<sup>13</sup> Job, if you will determine in your heart that you will always do what is right, lift up your hands in submission to Him, <sup>14</sup> repent of your unjust, unrighteous, and/or vain deeds, put those things far from you, and determine that you will no longer do any of those things in or out of your home, <sup>15</sup> then you will be morally pure and clean, and you will be able to look up at God without fear. As a result, your steadfast love and devotion to God will be your confidence. <sup>16</sup> Then your troubles will be a distant memory like water that has evaporated in the desert sun. <sup>17</sup> Your life will be as bright and cheerful as the noon day sun, and you will not remember the darkness you are presently experiencing, because it will be forgotten like what you had for breakfast yesterday morning. <sup>18</sup> As a result, you will trust the LORD, and because of a renewed hope you will rest securely as you experience the genuine security He provides. <sup>19</sup> You will lie down in peace, and no one will disturb you. Once this happens, many will come to you and ask for your advice and help like they did before these troubles. <sup>20</sup> But, Job, be assured that if you don’t repent and turn to the LORD in submission, you will be like the wicked. You will experience all sorts of hurts, heartaches, and losses, and you will be unable to see any deliverance from the disastrous consequences of your sin. Your only hope is to take your last breathe and be placed in the grave somewhere. Job, if you don’t repent you will be just like them.

(You guys are a sorry lot. You're the wicked ones you are talking about.)

**12:1 Then I responded to Zophar’s accusation by saying,**

<sup>2</sup> Zophar, you just described yourself and your two friends, and your supposed “wisdom” will die with you. <sup>3</sup> Realize though, that I am intelligent as well as you guys. I am not inferior to you even though you guys think you have all of the answers. Who doesn’t know the things you have been trying to explain? <sup>4</sup> You guys think I am some sort of joke, don’t you? Well, I am a just and blameless man. I have called upon God in the past, and He answered me. I will admit, though, that I don’t understand why He chooses not answer me now. <sup>5</sup> You guys have it so easy and are not experiencing any troubles, yet you have contempt for the disasters that have come upon me because you think I have slipped and fallen. <sup>6</sup> The houses of those who destroy others seem to prosper, and those who provoke God to anger appear to be

secure, but such men are still in the power of God to do with as He sees fit. Listen to me. I'm talking about you three guys.

(The animals already know what you guys need to learn. Let nature teach you the truth.)

<sup>7-8</sup> Stop now, and consider what nature has to say about God's power. Go to the animals, the birds, the fish of the sea, and the earth itself. Study them carefully, and let them teach you. See what they teach you about the power and majesty of God. <sup>9</sup> After all, who among all of these creations does not know that the LORD has created all things <sup>10</sup> and has power over every living thing including the air that men breathe? <sup>11</sup> After all, doesn't the ear hear and understand, and doesn't the tongue taste the flavors in food? Use your eyes and ears to gain wisdom. <sup>12</sup> Oh, but you guys think that wisdom comes with age, and old men are the ones who have understanding.

(Look at all of the injustices that God allows.)

<sup>13</sup> We know that wisdom and might belong to the LORD. Counsel and understanding are His helpers. <sup>14</sup> Follow along as I tell you about Him. Without doubt, He tears things down, and no one can rebuild them. If He chooses to put a man in prison, then there will be no possibility of his release until the LORD chooses to do so. <sup>15</sup> He holds the waters back, and they dry up. Then he sends torrential downpours, and the earth is overwhelmed with floods. <sup>16</sup> He has ultimate strength and sound wisdom, and He has complete control over those who are misled and those who mislead them (like you guys). <sup>17</sup> He strips counselors of authority and ability, and He makes fools of judges. <sup>18</sup> He takes away the authority and power of kings, and leads rulers away as captives. <sup>19</sup> He plunders political leaders so that they walk around in disgrace, and He topples mighty men. <sup>20</sup> He takes away the ability of orators to speak trusted words, and He robs the elders of the ability to make wise decisions based upon good insight. <sup>21</sup> He causes people to look upon rulers with contempt, and He takes away the power of strong men to conquer others. <sup>22</sup> He enables men to see mysteries previously considered impossible to understand. <sup>23</sup> He makes nations great, and when they abandon Him He destroys them. He makes nations prosper, and then he leads them away empty-handed. <sup>24</sup> He deprives smart people of their intelligence, and makes them wander through life not knowing where they are going. <sup>25</sup> They search blindly without being able to see the light of the truth, and they stagger through life like a drunken man. Guys, I am talking about you three.

(Your arguments are empty and useless.)

<sup>13:1</sup> Be assured that I have seen, heard, and understood all of this. <sup>2</sup> I know what you know, and I am in no way inferior to you. <sup>3</sup> You guys don't believe I am innocent, so I would love to speak to Almighty God face to face and argue my case before Him. <sup>4</sup> Look at you guys, you falsely ruin my reputation by the lies you spread about me. Without a doubt you guys are absolutely worthless comforters and physicians. <sup>5</sup> Oh how I wish you would shut your mouth and quit accusing me of wrongdoing. If you did, you would certainly prove to be wise by your silence! <sup>6</sup> Please stop long enough to listen to my side of the argument and actually hear the reasoning behind what I have to say. <sup>7</sup> Will you continue distorting the truth as though God had said it? <sup>8</sup> Will you keep on showing unfair bias by asserting that only wicked men experience severe trials, and will you continue to argue with me insisting that you are doing it in God's defense? <sup>9</sup> Will you fare well when God calls you into question for the things you have said, or do you think you can deceive Him like you deceive men? <sup>10</sup> Be assured that He will reprimand you for the way you have shown unjust partiality. <sup>11</sup> You will be terrified when you see His majesty, and you will become afraid of what He will do to you. <sup>12</sup> Face the fact that your memorable sayings are as worthless as ashes, and your defenses are as weak and easily broken as a clay pot.

(I know that I would be vindicated if I could present my case before God.)

<sup>13</sup> Stop talking long enough to listen to me, and let whatever God has in mind come upon me. <sup>14</sup> After all, why should I take matters into my own hands and try to talk my way out of my troubles? <sup>15</sup> Even if God were to kill me, I would still hope in Him. Even though I trust Him, I would still like a chance to personally argue my case before Him. <sup>16</sup> If this actually happened it would prove my innocence, because no wicked or godless man could ever stand in His presence. <sup>17</sup> Listen carefully to what I am about to say, and let the truth of my claims get ahold of you. <sup>18</sup> I say this because I have prepared my case, and I am confident

that I will be pronounced innocent of all wrongdoing. <sup>19</sup> Who is there who can argue against me and win? If they could prove my guilt, then I would be silent and die.

(God, show me what I have done wrong.)

<sup>20</sup> “LORD,

“Please rescue me from two things, and if You do I will not hide from Your stern facial expression. <sup>21</sup> First, take away this severe affliction You have placed upon me and the accompanying dread of You that terrifies me. <sup>22</sup> Second, after You have rescued me, then either call to me, and I will answer, or let me speak, and You answer. <sup>23</sup> Tell me, how many sins am I guilty of committing, and how have I rebelled against You? <sup>24</sup> Why do You hide from me and consider me Your enemy? <sup>25</sup> Why do You cause me to tremble like a leaf floating in the air, and why do You chase me away as easily as the chaff that is blown away in the wind? <sup>26</sup> I would like to know, because afflicting me has made me look like a terrible sinner, guilty of all sorts of evil things. <sup>27</sup> I know I am not worth much and that You observe everything I do, but You are the One who has placed me in this prison of affliction. I am so confined that it is as though my feet were held in chains. You have limited where I can go <sup>28</sup> while my body decays like a rotting carcass or a moth-eaten garment.”

(My days are numbered. It won't be long before I die.)

<sup>14:1</sup> Man has a short lifespan, and he is filled with trouble, fear, and anger during those few years. <sup>2</sup> He sprouts like a flower and then fades like dry grass. He is here for a little while, and then he is gone forever. <sup>3</sup> LORD, You see everything a man does, and then You bring him into judgment for those things. <sup>4</sup> Can a guilty sinner make himself clean by his own energies or abilities? Of course he can't! <sup>5</sup> Since You have determined from eternity past when a man will die, You alone know the number of years, months, and days he will live. <sup>6</sup> LORD, please turn Your hot gaze away from me so that I can find rest until death arrives.

(Once I'm dead I will never return.)

<sup>7</sup> When you cut down a tree it will likely sprout again. <sup>8</sup> Even though the stump dies, <sup>9</sup> it will sprout again when it is watered. <sup>10</sup> Ah, but man is not like the tree. When he dies he does not get up again. He goes to the grave, and no one knows where he goes from there. <sup>11</sup> The same way standing water evaporates and rivers dry up, <sup>12</sup> so a man lies down and does not get up again. He will not be awakened or aroused out of his sleep until the heavens no longer exist.

(God, I wish I could die.)

<sup>13</sup> LORD, I wish I could die and lie in the grave until Your intense anger toward me comes to an end. Please put a limit on how much pain and suffering You will make me endure. <sup>14</sup> I have a question. I will wait patiently for my change from life to death, but is there really life after death? <sup>15</sup> You made me with Your own hands, and I know that someday You will want me to come to you. When You do I will go to the grave willingly. <sup>16</sup> You watch over everything I do in life, and You will not dwell upon my sin. <sup>17</sup> In fact, You have sealed up my sins until judgment day. <sup>18</sup> You are extremely powerful. By Your power mountains crumble, rocks are moved out of their place, <sup>19</sup> flowing waters shape rocks, and rivers of water carve valleys into the earth. Yet by that same power You destroy a man's hope. <sup>20</sup> You completely overpower him, and he dies. You change his appearance (like my boils and scabs) and then send him to the grave. <sup>21</sup> Once he is in the grave he is not aware of his sons' achievements or failures, <sup>22</sup> but while he is still alive he is in so much pain that all he can do is mourn over his wretched condition. Lord, I am that man”

(You can't heal yourself or make yourself righteous.)

**15:1** Now Eliphaz reprimanded me again saying,

<sup>2</sup> You profess to be a wise man, yet because you are not willing to admit that you are a wicked sinner your answers are not only void of knowledge but full of hot air. <sup>3</sup> Do you think it is beneficial to argue your case with useless talk and words of no profit? <sup>4</sup> Wake up and recognize the fact that you have discarded reverence toward God and abandoned the opportunity for us to be mediators between you and God. <sup>5</sup> Your guilt has driven you to say these things, and you have chosen sly words and phrases to try to get us to believe that you are actually innocent like you say. <sup>6</sup> I don't need to condemn you because your own words have already done so. <sup>7</sup> Are you the only man alive with wisdom and understanding? <sup>8</sup> Have you been given secret counsel and understanding from God and keep it to yourself? <sup>9</sup> Tell me, Job, what knowledge or understand do you have that we don't? <sup>10</sup> After all, there are men living among us who are gray-headed and have lived longer than you. In fact, they are older than your father. They agree with us, not you. They say that only wicked men experience suffering like you are enduring. <sup>11</sup> Do you find God's comforting and gentle words insufficient for you? <sup>12-13</sup> Why do you follow your heart? Why do you get carried away to the point where your eyes flash with so much anger that you turn against God and say such words? <sup>14</sup> Do you think you can make yourself righteous or that you can make yourself physically well instead of trusting God to do these things for you? <sup>15-16</sup> Job, listen to me. God doesn't trust His holy men, and even the heavens are not pure in His sight. He puts even less trust in a detestable and corrupt man like you—a man who drinks rebellion and disobedience like a thirsty man drinks water.

(Your confident attack against God is futile. He can't trust you, so you'll still get what your sin deserves.)

<sup>17</sup> Listen to me, and I will tell you what I have seen and what I think. <sup>18</sup> Wise men have told me the same thing and have not hidden it from their fathers <sup>19</sup> in the days when they didn't have to share their land with foreigners. <sup>20-21</sup> It is simply this: a wicked, ruthless man twists and squirms like you under the intense pain he suffers, and his days are numbered. He is terrified by what he hears, and while he is at peace the death angel comes to claim him. <sup>22</sup> Like you said, he believes he is destined to be killed by a bullet and put in the grave. Once there, he feels he will never return again. <sup>23</sup> He wanders around searching for food but can't find any. He knows that the day of reckoning is imminent. <sup>24-25</sup> Like you, both mental distress and physical pain cause him to be overcome with extreme fear. He feels completely overpowered like a soldier who is being attacked from every side simultaneously. Now all of this happens because he dares to lift his fist against God and speak arrogantly against the Almighty. <sup>26-28</sup> He is stiff-necked and hardens himself against God. Then he rushes against God with what he thinks are reliable defenses. This man has become fat by taking from others in order to live a life of luxury, but because of his pride and arrogance toward God, he will end up living in cities that have been demolished, in houses no decent man would want to inhabit, and both the cities and the houses are destined to be destroyed. <sup>29</sup> He will not recover and become rich, and his wealth will not endure because God will see that his crops fail. <sup>30</sup> He will not escape the darkness of gloom and agony, and his punishment will cause him to wither like a plant withers in the hot sun. By the fierce breath of God he will pass away. <sup>31</sup> Don't let the godless man deceive himself by trusting in what he does not have, because emptiness is all he will receive in the end. <sup>32</sup> All of this will take place, and he will wither away before he dies. <sup>33</sup> He will lose his health and his healthy appearance. <sup>34</sup> This will happen because those who are godless will end up losing everything, and the fire of God's wrath will consume the houses of those who are corrupt. <sup>35</sup> These people dream up all sorts of mischief and do all sorts of sinful deeds because their minds are always dreaming about another sinful thing to do or say. This is your destiny, Job, unless you repent and forsake your sin.

(My "friends" are partners with God against me. What a sorry lot.)

**16:1** Then I answered Eliphaz saying,

<sup>2</sup> I have heard all of these arguments before, but you guys are a sorry group of comforters. <sup>3</sup> Is there no limit to the words of hot air you will aim at me? What ails you that you attack me like you do? <sup>4</sup> If I were in your place I could be like you. I could come up with all sorts of accusations while I shake my head in disgust, <sup>5</sup> or I could strengthen you and lessen your pain by speaking comforting words. <sup>6</sup> As for me, my

pain is not diminished whether I try to defend myself or keep my mouth shut. <sup>7</sup> But now the LORD has completely worn me out and has caused my companions to be void of any effective means of helping me. <sup>8</sup> God has caused me to become nothing more than skin and bones, and that in itself has become a witness that the LORD has abandoned me. <sup>9</sup> It is obvious that God's anger has chased me down and torn me to pieces. He has gnawed on me, and now my adversaries, "my friends", looks at me with an angry stare. <sup>10</sup> These "friends" have joined God by opening their mouths to accuse me of all sorts of evil deeds, they have slapped me on the face with their contempt and disgust, and they have agreed together to attack me as a unified group. <sup>11</sup> God has literally handed me over to a group of ruffians—wicked men who do with me as they wish.

<sup>12</sup> Before all of this happened to me I was living a life of ease, but now God has shattered my life. He has literally grabbed me by the neck and shaken me to pieces. It is obvious that He has set me up to be the target for His anger. <sup>13-14</sup> I am surrounded by His weapons of war. He has hammered on me time after time with His ramrod as He runs at me like a bloodthirsty soldier. He shows no mercy as he inflicts me with deadly wounds. <sup>15</sup> As for me, I have covered my emaciated body with sackcloth, and my strength and stamina are completely gone. <sup>16-17</sup> None of this has happened to me because I have done wrong. Yet even though I pray to God out of a heart that is pure, my eyes are bloodshot from crying, and my vision is blurry because of my tears. <sup>18</sup> LORD, don't let me die bearing the reputation of a guilty sinner, and let my cry for help continue even after I am dead and gone. <sup>19-20</sup> Even now my record of innocence is recorded in heaven, and God himself is my advocate on high. Ah, but here on earth my "friends" are merely scoffers causing me to weep in prayer to God. <sup>21-22</sup> Oh how I wish I could take my request straight into the presence of God the same way I would speak to my neighbor! <sup>22</sup> Oh how I wish I could, because in a few years I will die never to return.

(My "friends" need to be punished for afflicting me.)

<sup>17:1</sup> I am ready to die. My spirit is completely broken, and I don't have the strength to go on. <sup>2</sup> On top of that, all I have for friends are these three guys who mock me and my circumstances. I look at them in disgust because all they have done is to provoke me with their insinuations and insults. <sup>3</sup> LORD, please promise me that You will be my security. No one else will do it. <sup>4</sup> I really need someone with the wisdom to recognize that I am innocent of wrongdoing even though I am being punished. It is obvious that You have kept my friends from having understanding hearts. Consequently, You will not exalt them to honor. <sup>5</sup> It seems as though these men (my friends) have ulterior motives. They will tell the populace that I am wicked sinner hoping to get some of my property for themselves. As a result, their children will grow weak and feeble. <sup>6</sup> These same men have made the populace believe that I am a great sinner. As a result, people passing by spit on me in disgust. <sup>7</sup> My grief is so heavy that my eyes are blurry from my tears, and my body has wasted away leaving me looking like a shadow of a man. <sup>8</sup> A man who does what is right in the sight of the LORD will find the accusations of these men utterly appalling, and an innocent man will rise up against these godless men. <sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the righteous man will stand his ground, and the man with clean hands will grow stronger and stronger with time. <sup>10</sup> But what about you guys? I tell you the truth—not one of you is a wise man.

<sup>11</sup> As for me, I am at the end of my life, all of my plans have been torn to shreds, and all of my hopes and dreams are gone. <sup>12</sup> All the while my friends promise me that it won't be long before my life gets better. <sup>13-15</sup> If I look to the darkness of the grave for comfort or call the grave my family, then what hope do I have? After all, not a single person cares about my hopes or desires. <sup>16</sup> It looks like my hope will go to the grave with me.

(Certain disaster awaits the wicked man—Job, you are that man!)

<sup>18:1</sup> Then Bildad answered me a second time saying,

<sup>2</sup> Job, how long will you grope for wise words? Show some understanding by admitting that you are a wicked sinner, and then repent. Only then can we talk intelligently. <sup>3</sup> Why do you view us, your friends, as being as ignorant as some stupid cow? <sup>4</sup> It is obvious that you are letting your anger destroy you. Do you really expect the laws of nature to be changed for your sake? Well, don't kid yourself. It won't happen.

<sup>5</sup> Job, this is what you can expect: A wicked man will die a premature death. It is a fact, and the flame of his vengeful heart will be extinguished. <sup>6</sup> His house and home will be destroyed, and he will no longer

see the light of day. <sup>7</sup> His energetic stride will be diminished, and his own scheming plans to do evil will be his undoing. <sup>8</sup> This is because he will be caught by the very type of trap he sets for others, and his feet will be caught like a bug that has stepped into a spider's web. <sup>9</sup> Yes, he will step into a trap, and it will spring closed on him. <sup>10</sup> It will be waiting for him wherever he goes. <sup>11</sup> He will constantly be afraid that someone he has hurt or defrauded will get back at him, and these fears will haunt him with every step he takes. <sup>12</sup> His strength will be drained from him, and the threat of calamity and disaster will pester him continually. <sup>13</sup> His skin will be devoured by disease, and the call of death will devour his arms and legs. <sup>14</sup> He will be ripped away from the security of his home, and he will be terrified about the way his problems keep escalating with no end in sight. <sup>15</sup> Nothing he owns will be left of his house because disaster after disaster will overtake him. <sup>16</sup> His spirit will die within him, and he will not prosper. <sup>17</sup> In time, no one will even remember that he ever lived. <sup>18</sup> The consequences of his evil deeds will chase him all the way to the grave. <sup>19</sup> His offspring will be killed (like your children were killed), and he will have no hope of birthing more. <sup>20</sup> People all over the world will be astounded at his fate, and his demise will make them realize that if they do evil they should expect to experience the same fate. <sup>21</sup> Surely this is the fate reserved for the wicked man who does not know God. Job, can't you see that I am talking about you?

(Everyone is against me, and I am all alone. Even so, God will accept me in the next life.)

<sup>19:1</sup> Then I responded to Bildad by saying,

<sup>2</sup> How long will you continue tormenting me and crushing my spirit by your accusing words? <sup>3</sup> You have thrown one insult after another at me, and you wrongly and unashamedly accuse me of being some wicked sinner. <sup>4</sup> My conscience surely would be convicting me if I really was really guilty of being the wicked man you say. <sup>5</sup> If you lift yourself up against me and actually prove to me that I have been wrong, <sup>6</sup> be assured that God is the one, not you, who has wronged me and closed me in like a fish in the net.

<sup>7</sup> Look at me, I cry out that violence has been done against me, but no one listens. I shout for help, but there is no justice for me. <sup>8</sup> The LORD has fenced me in so that no matter where I turn I cannot find a way to escape these troubles. <sup>9</sup> He has stripped me of my former honor and removed me from my prestigious position in our city. <sup>10</sup> He continually beats me down on every side, and I am done in. On top of that, He has ripped my hope from me the same way He would uproot a tree. <sup>11</sup> He adds more and more fire to His anger, and He looks at me as an enemy. <sup>12</sup> The soldiers of His army have formed an impenetrable wall around me so that I am completely penned in with no way out. <sup>13</sup> I am all alone, because He has caused my brothers to turn their backs on me, and my former acquaintances treat me as though they never knew me. <sup>14</sup> My own family will not come to my aid, and even my closest friends have abandoned me. <sup>15</sup> Those who live in my house, including my servants, treat me like a stranger. <sup>16</sup> I call to my servants and plead with them for mercy, but they don't even bother to answer me. <sup>17</sup> The smell of my breath is offensive to my wife, and my own brothers treat me with disgust. <sup>18</sup> Even children despise me. I try to defend myself, but they shout all kinds of cutting words against me. <sup>19</sup> All of my intimate friends hate me, and those I love have turned against me. <sup>20</sup> I have lost so much weight that I am mere skin and bones, and I have escaped death by the skin of my teeth.

<sup>21</sup> Guys, you are supposedly my friends. Please have pity on me because the hand of the LORD has struck me down. <sup>22</sup> Why do you persecute me so savagely the same way God does, and why are you not satisfied with destroying my flesh? Are you ever going to stop abusing me?

<sup>23</sup> Oh how I wish my words were written down and arranged in a book! <sup>24</sup> Better yet, I wish my words were written in stone so that people of generations to come could read about my plight! <sup>25</sup> I want my words recorded because I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the last day He will stand upon the earth as LORD and King. <sup>26</sup> I know that in the next life I will stand before Him in a new, healthy body. <sup>27</sup> I will see Him with my own eyes, and it won't be someone else seeing Him in my place. Right now, though, I am so weary that my heart faints within me. <sup>28</sup> If you guys keep coming up with new accusations against me under the pretext that you can get me to see the need to repent," <sup>29</sup> then be afraid for yourselves. You'd better be, because punishment awaits you if you don't desist. The principle of sow and reap will see that the anger you have shown toward me will be repaid with a bullet in your heart. This will happen so that you will know that there is indeed justice on the earth.



(This is the wicked man's fate. He will lose everything.)

**20:1** Then Zophar answered me saying,

<sup>2</sup> I heard what you said to Bildad, and I have to speak up because I am all torn up inside. My anxious thoughts simply won't let me remain silent. <sup>3</sup> I listened as you rebuked us, and I am insulted. Therefore, my superior understanding forces me to answer your accusations. <sup>4-5</sup> Don't you know that from the beginning of time the successes a wicked man experiences are short-lived, and the joys he receives are but for a moment? <sup>6-9</sup> He may become a notorious and powerful man, but he will perish forever and his body will decay just like his own refuse. Those who knew him will say, "Where did he go? He seems to have vanished into thin air." No one will find him because he will fade away like a forgotten dream or a vague vision in the night. Those who saw him while he was still living will never see him again, and he will no longer have a place on earth. <sup>10</sup> On account of his sins, his sons will become poor, and he will have to return the wealth he had taken from those he had oppressed or defrauded. <sup>11</sup> His youthful strength enabled him to commit all sorts of sins and iniquities, but his vigor will lie down with him in the grave.

<sup>12-14</sup> An evil man considers doing wickedness a sweet experience. In fact, he enjoys it so much that he brags about it over and over again. He is so driven to do evil that he will never give it up. This desire is such an integral part of him that he feels he must talk about it. Ah, but when he tries to enjoy his ill-gotten wealth his pleasure will end up being a big disappointment. <sup>15</sup> Yes, he acquires riches, but he will vomit them back up. God will see to it as surely as Jonah was vomited from the fish's belly. <sup>16</sup> He chooses willingly to suck this poison into his mouth, and then that poison will kill him. <sup>17-19</sup> He will not experience rivers of blessings, and he will never again enjoy the luxuries of fine foods. He will end up returning all that he had taken through oppression or defrauding because he will be unable to keep it from being taken from him. As to the riches he acquired through his business partners, he won't be able to enjoy them. This is because he has oppressed and/or abandoned the poor in their need, and he has illegally, illicitly, or unethically taken possession of houses which he did not build. <sup>20-21</sup> Because he is so agitated inside, he will not be able to retain anything he dearly desires to keep for himself. He will get to the point where there is nothing more he can take from others, and then his wealth and possessions will fall apart in ashes. <sup>22</sup> When he reaches the pinnacle of his prosperity he will find himself in a really bad situation, because everyone who has suffered because of him will come against him at once. <sup>23</sup> While he is eating his fill of others' possessions, an angry God will come against him to make him sick. <sup>24-25</sup> He may try to run from it, but God's anger will completely overpower him nonetheless. It will pierce him through and strike his heart. As a result, he will be filled to overflowing with fears and apprehensions. <sup>26</sup> His treasures will be taken from him never to be seen again, and the unrestrained anger of God will devour him. It will even destroy those who lived in his own house (like your sons and daughters). <sup>27</sup> In time his sins and wickedness will become obvious to all (like it has with you), and the whole earth will rise in opposition to him. <sup>28</sup> All of the things he had gained will fly away like an eagle, and his possessions will diminish into nothing under God's wrath. <sup>29</sup> This is the wicked man's payday directly from the hand of God. He will not see the valued heritage God had in store for him if he had been a good and godly man. Job, can't you see that I have been talking about you and your situation?

(Not all wicked men are punished in this life. Can't you see that?)

**21:1** Then I answered Zophar saying,

<sup>2</sup> Listen carefully to what I'm going to say, and allow it to reconcile my apparent wrongdoing. <sup>3</sup> Bear with me while I speak, and then after I am finished, you can continue mocking me. <sup>4</sup> Since I am not complaining to you guys about my troubles, why then shouldn't I be impatient when you guys who mock me and make me out to be some sort of wicked sinner? <sup>5</sup> Zophar, take an unbiased look at me, and be shocked at the difficulties that have overtaken me. When you realize that you have been completely wrong about me and my purity, then put your hand over your mouth as a gesture of your surprise. <sup>6</sup> Every time I remember your scoffing and mean accusations I become apprehensive all over again, and fear overwhelms me.

<sup>7</sup> Guys, tell me, why is it that sometimes God blesses a wicked man? He enjoys life, lives to a ripe old age, and becomes a very powerful man. <sup>8</sup> His children become well established in the community, and he

lives to see his children's children.<sup>9</sup> His houses are safe from harm or loss, and God withholds the wrath He would normally bring to bear against him.<sup>10</sup> His cattle get pregnant every time they mate, and none of them miscarries.<sup>11</sup> He lets his kids roam the streets in safety, and those kids have a grand time.<sup>12-13</sup> He enjoys luxurious parties with lively music, he spends his days in prosperity, and then suddenly he dies and goes to the grave.<sup>14</sup> While this evil man is still alive he says to God, "Leave me alone. I don't want anything to do with You."<sup>15</sup> During his lifetime he says to himself, "I don't know anything about a supposed Almighty God, so why should I submit to Him? Besides, I have all I need, so what's in it for me if I choose to gain His favor?"<sup>16</sup> Let's face it, the ability of a wicked man to prosper is not in his own power, and I don't understand how he thinks it is.<sup>17</sup> Notice how often the wicked die prematurely and how others often appear to escape the disastrous consequences of their sin. Tell me, does God arbitrarily punish some and let others escape His wrath, or<sup>18</sup> are they selected by the luck of the draw?<sup>19-20</sup> You assert that God stores up punishment for the wicked man, and He makes his sons pay the penalty instead. I say, let God punish the wicked man directly so that he will be convinced of his wrong. Let the man see his own body fall apart, and let him experience the wrath of the Almighty personally.<sup>21</sup> After all, what does the wicked man care what happens to his family once he is dead and gone?

<sup>22</sup> What makes us think we can tell God how to judge both great and small men?<sup>23-24</sup> One man dies having been satisfied with life, had a strong, healthy body, and was full of vim and vigor.<sup>25</sup> Another man dies having lived a hard and bitter life, never having experienced anything good.<sup>26</sup> Yet both of them go to the grave, and the worms eat their dead carcasses.

<sup>27</sup> Listen to me. I know what you are thinking, and I know how you plan to wrong me even more by your continual mocking.<sup>28</sup> You say, "Job must be wicked because his house and home have been ruined. He was a nobleman, but now he is nothing."<sup>29</sup> Have you asked travelers what they have observed in other places? Why don't you accept the fact that they have seen exceptions to your rule that only wicked men experience severe suffering? They know that just because a man experiences severe trials it doesn't mean he is a wicked man.<sup>30</sup> Regardless of what they say, you still affirm that every wicked man is doomed to experience severe disaster and losses. You say that without exception every one of them will be led straight into God's passionate display of anger.<sup>31</sup> Look at the wicked men who got off scott-free. Has anyone ever confronted him about his wicked deeds, and who will exact retribution for his deeds?<sup>32-33</sup> He will die, and then men will watch while he is being transported to the grave where dirt will gently cover him. Many men will follow him to the grave, and countless others have preceded him.<sup>34</sup> Tell me now, in light of these truths, how can you comfort me when you continue to speak words with no depth and your answers are anything but the truth?

(He describes a wicked man and his actions.)

**22:1 Then Eliphaz responded to me by saying,**

<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that a wise man can be profitable to himself, but he is not able in and of himself to be profitable to God.<sup>3</sup> What about you? Does God find any pleasure in you if you are good, lawful, and just? Does He profit if you live such a good life that no one can rightfully accuse you of wrongdoing?<sup>4</sup> Let's face it Job, you claim to be innocent and morally pure, but your self-centered claim is the very reason He has afflicted you so severely.<sup>5</sup> Wake up! Face the fact that you are a wicked sinner and have done so many evil things that they cannot be counted.<sup>6</sup> The way you have been afflicted makes it obvious that you have exacted debts from others that had not come due, you have taken the clothing off the back of poor men,<sup>7</sup> you have withheld water from the man who is weary from work, and you have withheld food from him who was hungry.<sup>8</sup> You did these things because I understood you to say,

"Powerful and honorable men have the right to take what they want from weaker men."

<sup>9</sup> In addition, you have sent needy widows on their way without helping them, and you have taken away the ability of the orphan to fend for himself.<sup>10-11</sup> As a result, you are reaping what you have sown. You are fenced in on all sides and experiencing all sorts of fears and anxiety. It has become so bad that you cannot see any way out of your troubles, and you are drowning in a sea of hurts, heartaches, and pain.

<sup>12</sup> Tell me, Job, can you see the farthest stars? Be assured that God is up there among them somewhere.<sup>13-14</sup> I say this because I understood you to say,

“What does God know about my situation? How can He judge me when I am surrounded by such dark and disastrous days? The clouds obscure God so that He cannot see if I do wrong. It must be so, because He spends all of His time walking the farthest regions of heaven.”

(If you don't change, you don't have a chance.)

<sup>15</sup> Job, will you continue to follow the example of wicked men of generations past? Their lives were cut short before their time, and their security was washed away like objects in the path of a raging flash flood. <sup>17</sup> These ancient men told God, “Go take a hike! Besides, what can this supposed God Almighty do to us?” <sup>18</sup> In spite of their defiance, God allowed them to enjoy a life of prosperity for a while. Those people can do as they wish, but as for me, I don't want any part of their counsel or advice. <sup>19-20</sup> Good people see the demise of these men and are glad that God has given them what they deserve. Then too, those of the populace who are innocent of wrongdoing mock such wicked man. Yes, they mock them by saying, “Our enemies are destroyed and the fire of God's judgment has consumed both them and their abundant wealth.”

(If you repent, God will bless you immensely.)

<sup>21</sup> Job, we know that you are a wicked man, but you don't have to experience such a disastrous end. Yield your mind and your will to the LORD, admit your wrong, and be at peace to Him. When you do, you will experience good in return. <sup>22</sup> Receive instruction from the Word of God, and hide His words in your heart. <sup>23-25</sup> If you will turn in submission to Almighty God you will be restored to your previous state, and if you will repent and abandon your sin then He will cleanse your heart and life. If you consider your fine gold and choice silver as worthless and let the LORD be your gold and silver, then the LORD will be your defense. <sup>26</sup> For then God will become your greatest delight, and you will be pleased to look up to Him in confidence. <sup>27</sup> When you pray He will hear your prayer, and then you will be able to keep the vows you have made to Him. <sup>28</sup> You will make plans, and they will work out for you. Yes, God will make you prosper in everything you do. <sup>29</sup> When people experience trials or difficulties, you will speak out in confidence and help them understand that God loves to deliver the humble man. <sup>30</sup> Be assured that He will deliver the guilty sinner when he repents of his sin and chooses to do right. Job, you can be this man.

(I would like to stand before God, but I would be afraid to do so.)

<sup>23:1</sup> Then I replied to Eliphaz by saying,

<sup>2</sup> Ever since I first said anything about my suffering you guys, “my friends,” have perceived my complaint as rebellion even though I groan under the weight of my pain and suffering. <sup>3</sup> Oh, how I wish I knew where God could be found so that I could <sup>4</sup> bring my case before Him and present all of my arguments personally. <sup>5</sup> Afterward I would learn what He would say to me in response. <sup>6</sup> It is possible that He would rebuke me by His great power, but I doubt that He would even pay attention to what I had to say. <sup>7</sup> Surely I could reason with Him and be delivered from the afflicting hand of my Judge since I have consistently done what is right in the sight of the LORD <sup>8-9</sup> <upright>. No matter where I turn I cannot find Him. In fact, if He were to pass by me I wouldn't even know it. <sup>10</sup> Regardless of the fact that I cannot see Him, He knows everything I do and say. Therefore, I know that when He judges me He will find me innocent of the charges you level against me. Then I will be cleared of all wrongdoing, and my reputation will shine forth as polished gold. <sup>11</sup> I have been faithful to live a good and godly life, and I have not engaged in any sinful practices. <sup>12</sup> I have not failed to keep the commandments stated in His Word. In fact, I have treasured His Word more than the food I eat to keep me alive. <sup>13</sup> Even so, He is the one and only true God. There is no other God like Him. He does whatever He wants, and no one can change His mind once He has decided to do something. <sup>14</sup> He decreed that I should suffer this affliction, and He has done something similar to other men over the years. <sup>15</sup> I want to talk with Him, but if it actually happened I would most likely be shaking in my sandals. He is so great and powerful that when I seriously think about it, I am terrified at the prospect of standing before Him. <sup>16</sup> God is the One who has caused my heart to grow weak, anxious, and doubtful about standing before Him. <sup>17</sup> Even so, I will not let these dark times, your accusations, or the tendency to become depressed keep me from asserting my innocence.

(Eliphaz, this is a list of the wicked things you are accusing me of doing.)

<sup>24:1</sup> Why does God reserve punishment for some men until later? Why doesn't He discipline them for their sins as soon as they commit them? <sup>2</sup> After all, consider the severity of the things **wicked men** do—things you have accused me of committing:

- They** secretly move property boundaries so that they can steal land for themselves,  
**They** take away flocks by force and slaughter them to feed their families,  
<sup>3</sup> **They** chase the orphan's donkey away,  
**They** take the widow's milk cow claiming it is partial payment for a debt she supposedly owes  
**Them**,
- <sup>4</sup> **They** shove needy people around so severely that they fall to the ground, and  
**They** are so oppressive that **they** make poor people hide out of fear.
- <sup>5</sup> **They** go around without restraints plundering unsuspecting victims in order to get what **they** want while leaving those unfortunate people without enough to feed their children.
- <sup>6</sup> **They** gather food from another man's field, and **they** try to acquire what other wicked men have already taken from others.
- <sup>7</sup> These poor people spend the night shivering because **they** don't have the clothes they need to stay warm.
- <sup>8</sup> They don't have a house, so they try to hide under the shelf of a rock in order to stay dry, but they still get wet when it rains.
- <sup>9</sup> **Other wicked men** will kidnap a nursing baby out of the arms of its mother, and make that child their slave.
- <sup>11</sup> **These wicked men** rob the poor causing them to be destitute of food and clothing.  
Within the walls of **their** homes **they** force the poor to produce oil from olives, and **they** make those poor people squeeze grapes into wine. But, God does not allow **them** to drink any of it.
- <sup>12</sup> Those robbed or defrauded by **them** groan under the oppression, and they cry out to God for help. Yet, it seems as though God is not listening or does not care about the evil deeds **wicked men** commit against these poor people.
- <sup>13</sup> **Others** join the wicked in rebelling against the truth of the Word of God, because they, too, don't want to know anything about what it means to submit to God or His Word. **They** simply refuse to do what it teaches.
- <sup>14</sup> The **murderer** gets up at dawn in order to ambush and kill poor or needy people, and at night **he** sneaks around like a thief.
- <sup>15</sup> Like a **murderer**, the **adulterer** waits until twilight to move toward the house of his mistress. He disguises his face thinking no one will recognize him in the dim light.
- <sup>16</sup> **These wicked men** break into houses by night and go into hiding by day. **They** love the darkness because it hides **them** from the eyes of law enforcement.
- <sup>17</sup> **They** love the blackness of midnight because **they** know full well how the darkness terrifies **their** victims.
- <sup>18</sup> **They** are quickly carried away unto destruction like a leaf on the surface of a fast flowing river.  
**Their** lives and property are cursed, and no one wants to go near **their** houses.
- <sup>19</sup> Death and the grave will consume **those who continue in sin** just like heat from the sun consumes snow on the mountains.
- <sup>20</sup> **They** will come to a quick end like a tree that snaps in the howling tornado. When **they** die their own mother will forget that she ever had a son, and worms will feed contentedly on **their** corpses. In the end, no one will remember that **they** ever existed.
- <sup>21</sup> **They** take unfair advantage of women who cannot bear children, and **they** refuse to do anything good for the widow.
- <sup>22</sup> At times God extends the life of **such men** by His power. **They** become powerful and feared men, but in time **they are harvested** for the grave like ripe ears of corn.
- <sup>23-24</sup> So you see, the LORD provides security and support for **some wicked men**, but even then He watches **their** every move. Even though some **wicked men** are allowed to prosper for a while, in the end **they** will be cut off from the land like grains of wheat are harvested from the field.

<sup>25</sup> Eliphaz, you've known me for a long time, do you really believe that I would do such wicked things? Show me where I have lied to you or spoken words of no value. If what I have said to you is not true, prove it to me. Go ahead. Give it your best shot.

(Job, you claim to be a good man, but God won't save a worm of a man like you.)

<sup>25:1</sup> Then Bildad answered me saying,

<sup>2</sup> God is awesome and has complete control over everything on the earth and in the heavens. <sup>3</sup> He has more angels than man can count, and there is not a man on earth upon whom His light does not shine. <sup>4</sup> Since God is this great and mighty, how can a guilty man like you be just and cleared of any wrongdoing before Him? <sup>5</sup> He doesn't value the moon and the stars, <sup>6</sup> much less a worm of a man like you who is less than a lowly maggot!

(God is so great and powerful, who can hear Him when He speaks.)

<sup>26:1</sup> Then I responded to Bildad by saying,

<sup>2</sup> Bildad, you and your friends are a sorry help to me in my weakness. You have done a sorry job of rescuing me now that I have no strength; <sup>3</sup> you've done a sorry job of giving counsel since you are convinced that I have no wisdom because I won't admit that I am a wicked sinner; and you've done a sorry job of providing helpful insight! <sup>4</sup> Who have you been trying to persuade with your supposedly high and mighty words? Whose spirit has inspired you to speak in what you perceive to be a lofty manner? It is certainly not the spirit of God. <sup>5</sup> The spirits of those who have died before us inhabit Sheol, and they tremble knowing that God sees them even there. <sup>6</sup> Be assured that death and hell are completely transparent to God, and He sees everything that transpires there. <sup>7</sup> God placed the earth in its orbit around the sun, and He designated "north" as the top of the earth where it rotates on its axis. <sup>8</sup> He causes water to condense in the clouds yet the clouds do not burst under its weight. <sup>9</sup> He fills the sky with clouds so that the moon becomes obscured. <sup>10</sup> He has made the earth round so that there is a distinct differentiation line between the light of day and darkness. <sup>11</sup> When God speaks, lightning and its accompanying thunder shake the earth to its very core. <sup>12</sup> He stills the seas by His power and shatters the proud sea monster, Leviathan. <sup>13</sup> He blows on the atmosphere, and the clouds dissipate. By the strength of his hand He has slain that same fleeing sea monster. <sup>14</sup> Bildad, understand that these things are but a small sampling of His great power and majesty. As powerful as He is, we only hear a faint word from Him at best! Tell me then, what man can understand His mighty, thundering voice when He does choose to speak?

(Read my lips—I am innocent, but wicked men will get what is coming to them.)

<sup>27:1</sup> Then I continued my response to Bildad by saying,

<sup>2-4</sup> God has taken away my right to seek justice and has treated me so harshly that I have become bitter about my the way I have been treated. In spite of this, as surely as God Almighty lives, I will not say anything that is false, perverse, or misrepresents the truth<sup>2</sup>. As long as I am alive and breathing I will continue to assert my innocence. <sup>5</sup> There is no way that I will admit that you guys are right about me. No sir. I will hold to my integrity until the day I die. <sup>6</sup> I have lived a good and godly life, my conscience is clear, and I am not convicted about anything I have done in the past. <sup>7</sup> I pray the LORD will repay my enemy and those who oppose me (like you guys) the same way he destroys the wicked and the unjust man. <sup>8</sup> After all, what hope does a wicked man have when God decides it is time to destroy him? <sup>9-10</sup> Will God hear his cry for help when things get so bad that he man has nowhere else to turn but to God? Will the wicked man find great pleasure in communing with the Almighty God, or will he call upon God at random times during the day simply because he delights in God? The answer is an obvious "NO."

<sup>11</sup> Listen to me, all three of you, and I will teach you how God uses His awesome power. I will not hide anything about His greatness, His awesome power, or His wisdom. <sup>12</sup> After all, you have seen it even if it was only from a distance. Since you know this, why do you act so foolishly? <sup>13-15</sup> I will repeat what you have already asserted. What can a wicked man expect to receive from Almighty God other than rejection

and great loss? If he has many children, they will end up going hungry. A plague will devour his descendants, and it will become so bad that his widow won't even be able to weep for her children. <sup>16-17</sup> A wicked man may amass large stashes of precious metals and an overabundance of fine clothes, but he will not be allowed to spend the money or wear the clothes. In the end, innocent people will spend his money and wear his clothes. <sup>18</sup> He may build large, magnificent houses and have expensive security systems installed, but he will not be any more secure than if he were to live in a grass hut. <sup>19</sup> He will lie down rich, but when he awakes his money will be gone forever. <sup>20</sup> Trouble and disasters will wash over him like a flash flood, and he will be in so much turmoil that he won't be able to sleep. <sup>21</sup> His sins will rip him away from the security of his home, and <sup>22</sup> the consequences of his sin will buffet him without mercy. He will try to get away from the troubles he has generated by his wickedness, but there will be no escape. <sup>23</sup> When he dies, good men will curse his name and shout for joy that he is finally dead and gone.

<sup>2</sup> Wickapedia for "deceit."

(Where wisdom cannot be found.)

<sup>28:1</sup> Gold and silver ore are extracted from the earth, and refineries purify them. <sup>2</sup> Iron ore is dug out of the earth, and copper ore is extracted from the rocks. <sup>3</sup> Men dig mine shafts deep into the earth and then venture into pitch blackness. <sup>4</sup> Many of those mine shafts are very deep, and while men are busy working down there people on the surface forget that those mines even exist. <sup>5</sup> The surface of the earth is the source of food, but deep beneath the surface it churns with molten lava. <sup>6</sup> The rocks of the earth contain sapphires, and the dust contains gold. <sup>7-8</sup> Neither birds nor animals have ventured into those tunnels nor do they even know what's there. <sup>9</sup> Man chisels or blasts away at the rocks and remove portions of the mountains at their base. <sup>10</sup> He digs tunnels through rocks, and there he sees precious metals and stones. <sup>11</sup> He dams up streams, and there he washes away the dirt to expose the gold hidden in it. <sup>12</sup> Men know where to find these valuable things, but where can **wisdom** and **understanding** be found? <sup>13</sup> Men don't know the value of either of **these**, and it is certain that **they** cannot be found among the general populace. <sup>14</sup> The depths of the earth say, "Wisdom is not in me," and the seas say, "Wisdom is not in me." <sup>15</sup> You cannot barter for it with the finest gold, nor can you purchase it with a truckload of silver. <sup>16</sup> Wisdom cannot be valued the same way gold and precious stones are valued. <sup>17</sup> Gold and rare glass don't even compare favorably with the value of wisdom. <sup>18</sup> Coral and crystal aren't even worth mentioning, and acquiring wisdom is so much better than pearls. <sup>19</sup> The fine topaz that comes from Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor can pure gold.

(Where wisdom can be found.)

<sup>20</sup> Since wisdom cannot be found in any of the valuable possessions men strive to acquire, where can it be found, and how is it acquired? <sup>21</sup> It is certain that neither men nor birds can see it with their physical eyes. <sup>22</sup> Death and the grave say, "I have heard that wisdom exists, but I don't know where it can be found." <sup>23</sup> Although men have difficulty knowing wisdom, God knows intimately what it is and where it can be found. <sup>24</sup> He knows this because He sees everything that happens anywhere on the earth or in the universe. <sup>25</sup> When He designed the laws of nature He gave power to the winds and paved the way for waters from the seas to replenish rivers on dry land. <sup>26</sup> By those same laws He limits how hard and long it will rain, and designed the atmosphere so that lightning will flash and the resultant thunder will sound. <sup>27</sup> He searched out every detail of creation, and when He saw His finished work He declared it good. He determined that those laws of nature would be fixed for all time. <sup>28</sup> Then He turned His attention to man and said,

"You can only find wisdom by acquiring and maintaining a genuine, Biblical fear of the LORD, and you do not have understanding until you determine that you will avoid or abandon every form of sin and evil."

(I long for the good old days when I had it so good.)

<sup>29:1</sup> I continued responding to Bildad by saying,

<sup>2</sup> Oh how I wish life was like it was when God was watching over me in a loving and caring way:  
<sup>3</sup> back when the light of His blessing shone upon me, and the light of His truth guided me,  
<sup>4</sup> back when I had the strength of my prime, and God's friendship hovered over both me and my dwelling,  
<sup>5</sup> back when Almighty God was being good to me, and my children were all alive for me to love and hold,  
<sup>6</sup> and back when my path through life was smooth and life couldn't get any better!

<sup>7</sup> Back then I was highly respected. When I walked out to the city gate and took my seat, <sup>8</sup> the young men would see me and hide themselves while older men would rise out of respect for me. <sup>9</sup> Princes would stop talking and were so moved by my presence that they would put their hands over their mouth, <sup>10</sup> and noble men would stop talking out of respect. They did these things because when they heard my name spoken they paid respect, and when they saw me with their eyes all men gave witness to my high and respected position in the community. <sup>12</sup> They did this because they knew that I faithfully rescued poor people who cried out for help. I also helped the orphan since they had no one to help them. <sup>13</sup> The one who was about to perish blessed me for rescuing him, and the widow's heart would sing for joy since I had cared for her and her needs. <sup>14</sup> I practiced righteous living so faithfully that I literally wore it like a piece of clothing, and I dealt with everyone in such a fair and just manner that folks could see it as easily as they saw the turban I wore. <sup>15</sup> My help was sight to the blind and feet to the lame. <sup>16</sup> I filled in as a father to those in need, and I thoroughly investigated the needs of a situation with which I was not familiar. <sup>17</sup> I saw to it that wicked men were caught and punished, and I rescued those who were being caught in their devious trap. <sup>18</sup> It was during this time that I had found success. I thought I would live to a ripe old age and die peacefully in my own bed. <sup>19</sup> My property and possessions spread out like an ocean, and God's blessing fell on me and everything I owned. <sup>20</sup> I saw my glory each day, and I was as strong as in my youth. <sup>21</sup> Men listened to me and silently waited for me to offer counsel. <sup>22</sup> After I gave my advice they did not did not ask another question. They seemed to absorb all that I had to say. <sup>23</sup> They waited for my advice like a farmer eagerly awaits the rains, and they thanked me for wise advice. <sup>24</sup> I smiled at them when they didn't believe or follow what I advised, and they did not give me a sour look in return simply because they did not agree with me. <sup>25</sup> I was their guide and king as one who gives comfort to people who are hurting.

(I am trapped in the troubles of today, and I am thoroughly disrespected.)

<sup>30:1</sup> That was then, but things are different now that these troubles have come upon me. Men who are much younger than me respected me back then, but now they mock and taunt me. They are the sons of men who are so worthless that I wouldn't want them to associate with my sheepdogs. <sup>2</sup> The strength of these sons is of no profit to me because their vigor has long since perished. Let me tell you about these sons. <sup>3</sup> Because of famine and lack of food they have fled to the desert where there is nothing but sagebrush and cactus. <sup>4</sup> To satisfy their hunger they had to cut wild plants and eat them. <sup>5</sup> They are so vile and worthless that good people have driven them out of their towns, and the townspeople yelled at them as though they were thieves. <sup>6</sup> As a result, they now live in caves or holes in the rocks. <sup>7-8</sup> They are fools and don't even have a name, yet they gather as a group and cry out for help from among the bushes.

<sup>9</sup> And now these same young men provoke me to anger with their mocking songs, and they call me all sorts of names because in their eyes I am the epitome of a wretch. <sup>10</sup> They detest me and don't want to be near me. To make matters worse, they spit in my face, <sup>11</sup> and because God has so severely afflicted me, they have cast off all restraints in taunting me. <sup>12</sup> They stand all around me, they kick my feet, and they do whatever they can to destroy me. <sup>13</sup> They stop me whenever I try to go somewhere, and they seem to get a thrill out of trying to destroy me. The worst part is that no one even tries to stop them from taunting me. <sup>14</sup> They come at me like an army through a breach in the wall, and no one tries to help me.

<sup>15</sup> Everyone has turned against me to my destruction. They trash my honor, and my prosperity has vanished like clouds in the wind. <sup>16</sup> Everything within me has been poured out, and the extent of my affliction holds me prisoner like prison walls. <sup>17</sup> At night my pain and suffering won't let me sleep because it hurts all the way to the bone, and this nagging, overwhelming pain seems like it will never end. <sup>18</sup> As the

puss from my putrid sores dries it makes my clothes stick to my skin binding me as tightly as the collar of my coat. <sup>19</sup> God has thrown me into a deep pit, and I have become covered with dust and ashes.

(My good and godly living has not profited me at all.)

<sup>20</sup> Lord,

I cry out to You for help, but You do not answer me. I stand up to seek help, but You don't pay any attention to me. <sup>21</sup> God, You have been cruel toward me, and You have used Your mighty power to persecute me. <sup>22</sup> You lifted me up like chaff so that the wind could carry me away, and now You are dissolving me in this storm of affliction. <sup>23</sup> Because of the way You have afflicted me I know that You will bring about my death. Then I will join our fathers in the house of the dead. <sup>24</sup> Even so, won't a man in such dire circumstances as mine cry out to You from the midst of such a severe disaster? <sup>25</sup> I wept for the one whose life was hard, and I was grieved when I saw someone in need. I cared, but what good did it do? <sup>26</sup> When I anticipated good, all I received in return was evil in the form of pain and suffering. When I waited for the light of blessings to come my way, all I received was the darkness of affliction. <sup>27</sup> I am seething with constant pain, and I simply cannot relax. All I have to look forward to is pain and suffering day after day. <sup>28</sup> I mourn all day long, and there is no one to comfort me. It is useless for me to stand up in the assembly of the people and cry out for help because no one will lift a finger to help me. <sup>29</sup> I have become a brother to monsters and a companion of the lone owl. <sup>30</sup> My skin has turned black, and I am burning up with fever. <sup>31</sup> As a result, my song has turned to mourning that sounds like a funeral dirge.

(Let me tell how good and godly I was before these troubles came upon me.)

<sup>31:1</sup> Bildad, you accuse me of being a wicked sinner, but I want you to understand the kind of good and godly man I was before all of these troubles came upon me. I share this with you in order to show you that your belief that the only reason I am experiencing such difficulties is because I am a wicked sinner. That is not a wise deduction. Listen now as I tell you how I lived.

I made a promise to myself that I would not look at a woman with lustful thoughts. After all, how could I justify sinful thoughts knowing that God is watching me? <sup>2</sup> Tell me, what would God do if I actually did gaze with lust? <sup>3</sup> Doesn't God repay the unjust man and the sinner with misfortune and utter ruin in return? <sup>4</sup> God has watched my manner of living, and He has seen that I am innocent of this sin.

<sup>5-6</sup> I have not lied to or deceived my neighbor in either word or deed. If God were to weigh me in an accurate balance He would see that I have always done what is right regardless of the cost or consequences <sup><integrity></sup>.

<sup>7-8</sup> I have not abandoned good and godly living, I have not followed the pleasures my eye desires, and I have not sinned so as to blemish my reputation. If I had actually done any of these things God would see to it that I would sow crops and another man eat them. He would then have the man plow my crops into the ground.

<sup>9-10</sup> I have not let a woman entice men to enjoy illicit sexual relations with her, and I have not waited near her house in order to convince her to join me in bed. If I had done such a thing, then my wife would be required to work for another man, and he would be allowed enjoy the pleasure of sexual relations with her. <sup>11</sup> Such a deed on my part would be a lustful crime punishable in a court of law. <sup>12</sup> This kind of greed consumes a man like fire consumes gasoline, and if I were to actually engage in adultery I could end up having to give her husband everything I own.

<sup>13-15</sup> I have not disregarded a complaint against me by one of my male or female slaves. If I had done so then I wouldn't have a leg to stand on when God calls me into account for my actions. After all, didn't He form all of us in our mother's womb, and doesn't He consider each man as being of equal value in His sight?



<sup>16-23</sup> I have not

hindered the poor from receiving what they need,  
withheld provision from the widow so that she withers away,  
eaten my meal alone without sharing it with the orphan (even though he grew up in my house  
from infancy, and I was a father to him as he grew up),  
seen anyone die or be in severe need for lack of clothing,  
failed to warm him with fleece from my sheep so that he would thank me, nor  
taken advantage of an orphan simply because the law was on my side.

If I have done any of these things then break my arm and pull my shoulder out of joint. I say this because it scares me to death when I think of all the hurts, heartaches, and losses God would bring my way in return if I actually did any of these things. Because of His greatness and majesty I simply cannot do any of them.

<sup>24-28</sup> I have not put confidence in gold as my security, and I have not trusted it to get me through all of life's troubles. I have not been proud and arrogant simply because I am so wealthy and own so many possessions, and I have not been enticed to worship the sun or moon as some sort of god. If I were to actually do any of these things I will have committed sins calling for judgment. You see, by doing any of these things I would have been rejecting the true God of heaven and denying Him His rightful place.

<sup>29-30</sup> I have not been thrilled when my enemy was eradicated, nor felt joy when evil overpowered him. I have not allowed myself to sin by asking God to curse his life.

<sup>31</sup> I have not let anyone in my house go hungry. Everyone living in my home has always said, "We can't find a single man in this house who has not had enough food to satisfy his appetite."

<sup>32</sup> I have not made a stranger sleep outside. Instead, I invited him into my home to spend the night.

<sup>33</sup> I have not hidden my transgressions or been quiet about my sin like Adam. As a result, there was no need for me to be afraid of going out of doors wondering what people would think of me if they knew.

<sup>35</sup> Oh how I wish someone would actually hear me without jumping to conclusions! My greatest desire is for the Almighty God to answer me and address the charges you and your two friends, my adversaries, have leveled against me. <sup>36</sup> Certainly I would present them to Him and wear them as a crown. <sup>37</sup> I would tell Him all of the good things I have done, but I would approach Him as though approaching a king.

<sup>38-40</sup> I have not eaten the fruit of my fields without paying for it, and I have not caused those who lease them to lose their lives. If I were to do such a thing then my land would cry out against me, and briars and weeds would grow there instead of barley and wheat.

Bildad, I am innocent and have not done any of these things. Why won't you believe me?

This is the end of what I had to say.

(Elihu enters the argument.)

### **Elihu speaks**

<sup>32:1</sup> At this point, my three friends had given up trying to convince me that I was a guilty sinner because no matter what they said, I adamantly asserted that I was a righteous man and innocent of all charges.

<sup>2</sup> Oh, my three friends may have been finished, but Elihu the son of Barachel, the Buzite, of the family of Ram was just getting started. He was hopping mad about the fact that I had justified myself rather than God when I said that God was wrong to inflict me with such hurts and losses. <sup>3</sup> He was also angry with my three friends because even though they had accused me of being a wicked sinner, they had failed to give me any kind of answers that would cause me to admit that I was indeed being punished for my sin.

(The arguments of you three guys are an utter failure. I'll tell you what I think.)

### **Elihu addressed my three friends**

<sup>4</sup> Elihu had listened to all that Job and his friends had said, but he waited to say anything to Job because he had great respect for his elders. <sup>5-6</sup> Ah, but once he saw that Job's three friends had stopped

talking because they had failed to convince Job that he was a wicked sinner, he was overcome with anger and spoke out to those three friends and said,

You guys are old, and I am young. I was shy and afraid to tell you what I thought about the whole situation with Job because I respected your age.<sup>7</sup> I waited to speak because I was taught that older men are wiser than younger men and that the older they got the more wisdom they acquired. I was obviously mistaken because I don't see any wisdom in your attempts to convince Job that he is a wicked sinner.<sup>8</sup> Man has a strong desire to gain wisdom, but Almighty God is the One who gives wisdom and understanding.<sup>9</sup> In themselves, years of experience don't necessarily impart wisdom to a man, and living a long life doesn't necessarily teach a man how to understand the true essence of justice.<sup>10</sup> In light of these truths I say, "Listen to me, and I will tell you what I think about the whole matter."<sup>11</sup> I waited while you pondered what you would say to Job, and I listened to the reasons you gave him.<sup>12</sup> Guys, I paid really close attention to what you had to say and the reasons behind your arguments, but not one of you gave Job an effective answer to refute what he asserted.<sup>13</sup> Don't tell me you have found wisdom, because God's Holy Spirit is the One who will convict Job. Man simply cannot do it through cunning arguments.<sup>14</sup> Please be aware that Job has not spoken words against me, so I won't use the same kind of arguments you tried to use on him.<sup>15</sup> After all, your arguments have been utterly ineffective. Simply stated, you guys are worthless and a complete failure. It is obvious that you guys are defeated and have given up trying to persuade Job.<sup>16</sup> Since you guys are merely standing around and don't know what else to say, I saw no reason not to speak my mind.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, I will take my turn and give Job my opinion.<sup>18</sup> After all, I have a lot to say, and I feel compelled to say it.<sup>19</sup> In fact, I feel like I am going to burst at the seams if I don't speak up.<sup>20</sup> I know I'll feel better after I have spoken my mind and given my opinion.<sup>21</sup> Be assured that I will not be partial to anyone or use flattery.<sup>22</sup> Gentlemen, I don't even know how to lavish a man with undeserved and insincere compliments. If I did, the LORD would quickly punish me for it.

(Job, you blame God for not answering you, but He does speak to men in two ways. Listen to Him.)

### 33:1-2 Elihu now addressed me.

Job, in spite of what these three guys have said to you, please hear me out. Listen to everything I have to say, and I'll tell you what I know.<sup>3</sup> I'm asking you to listen to me, because I will share knowledge that is without fault. It flows out of a heart that is pure and pleasing in the sight of the LORD.<sup>4</sup> God's Spirit created me and made me what I have become, and God Almighty gives me the breath to stay alive.<sup>5</sup> Refute my logic if you can. Yes, stand your ground, and present your defense before me.<sup>6</sup> You and I were both made out of the same clay, and we both belong to the same God.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, there is no reason for you to be afraid as a result of what I am about to say, because I will not put a lot of pressure on you by my arguments.

<sup>8</sup> Job, I have heard everything you have said,<sup>9</sup> and I noted the claims you made about being innocent of all wrongdoing.<sup>9</sup> This is what you I heard you say,

"I am not guilty of any of the charges brought against me. Even though I am innocent of all the things you accuse me of doing,<sup>10</sup> it seems like God is busy finding more and more ways to punish me. It is obvious that He considers me His enemy.<sup>11</sup> He has put me in this prison of pain as surely as is if He had put my feet in chains, and He watches everything I just do just waiting for another chance to punish me more severely."

<sup>12</sup> Job, I feel compelled to tell you that your perception of God is dead wrong. He is all-powerful and can do whatever He wants.<sup>13</sup> So why then do you complain about the fact that He has not explained to you the reasons He chooses to do what He does? After all, He is not obligated to account for His actions.<sup>14</sup> Be assured that God does make His wishes known to men from time to time, and He does it in one of two ways even though very few men listen to or do what He says in either case.

<sup>15</sup> First, and most often, He speaks to sinful men in a dream or in a vision while they are in a deep sleep. <sup>16</sup> It is there that He gives them ears to hear what He has to say, and then He gives them the ability to recall what they have heard so that they can do His bidding when they awaken. <sup>17</sup> He speaks to them in order to warn them to repent and abandon their sin and pride. <sup>18</sup> In fact, God's goal is to save sinful men from a premature death and an eternity in hell.

<sup>19</sup> Secondly, God sometimes inflicts a guilty man (like you) with bodily pain that hurts all over, and it seems like it will never to end. <sup>20</sup> It becomes so severe that he will lose his appetite, even for his favorite foods. <sup>21</sup> In time he will waste away until he is nothing but skin and bones. <sup>22</sup> After a while he will realize that he is close to death, and he will literally see his life slipping away. <sup>23</sup> If God chooses, He will send an angel or a wise counselor (like me) to act as a mediator between him and God. Only one man in out of a thousand men would have the wisdom to counsel him well. This counselor will tell that sinner the right thing to do in order to repent of his sin, and that's where I come in. <sup>24</sup> When the sinner is genuinely repentant the LORD will be gracious to him and say, "Deliver this man from death and hell because through the blood of Christ I have bought him back from the punishment his sin deserves. <sup>25</sup> Let his body become healthy again, and give him renewed vigor like he had when he was young." <sup>26</sup> Then the guilty man will confess his sin publicly and pray to God for forgiveness. As a result, God will forgive him. Then the man will enjoy sweet fellowship and communion with his God, and the LORD will make him righteous once again. <sup>27</sup> He will shout aloud to those around him saying, "I have sinned. I have done perverted things that were neither good nor right. Those were things I should not have done as a believer in God. <sup>28</sup> Praise God, He has bought back my soul from death and hell, and I now understand the truth."

<sup>29</sup> Listen Job, there have been numerous times when He has done this for men <sup>30</sup> where He rescued them from death and the grave. Yes, He allowed them to see the light of life. <sup>31</sup> Pay attention, Job, because I am talking about you and your situation. Don't say anything, and I will teach you even more wisdom. <sup>32</sup> Afterward, if you have something to say, answer me. Speak up then, because I really want to see you declared righteous. <sup>33</sup> If you have nothing to say, then sit there quietly, and I will teach you genuine wisdom.

(Job claims to be innocent, but his difficulties prove that he is indeed a wicked sinner.)

<sup>34:1</sup> Elihu now addressed my three friends and said,

<sup>2</sup> You three friends claim to be wise and know what life is all about, so listen carefully to what I am about to say. <sup>3</sup> Use your minds to evaluate the wisdom of my words like you would use your tongue to evaluate the taste of food. <sup>4</sup> Let each of us judge whether what I have to say is true and trustworthy. <sup>5</sup> This is important because I heard Job say,

"I am a good man and have consistently done what is right in the sight of the LORD. Even so, God has disregarded my good and godly lifestyle and has treated me as though I am a wicked sinner. <sup>6</sup> Since everyone is accusing me of being such a sinner, should I lie and agree with them even though I am innocent? No, I refuse to do so. Unfortunately my physical wounds are incurable even though I have done absolutely nothing to deserve them."

<sup>7-8</sup> Look at him. Even though Job keeps company with troublemakers and participates in their wickedness, he lets mockery and ridicule roll off his back as easily as water off the back of a duck. I don't know of another man like him. <sup>9</sup> That must be why he said,

"I have now seen that there is no benefit in disciplining myself to live in a manner that is pleasing to the LORD <sup><upright></sup>."

(God rewards good with good and evil with punishment.)

<sup>10</sup> In light of his statement, you guys who supposedly have understanding listen to me. Job is wrong. God simply will not do wicked things, and the Almighty God will not do anything that is wrong. <sup>11</sup> Ah, but God does hold to the principle of sow and reap. He repays every man according to what he does and according to his manner of living. When a man does good He rewards him with good, and when he does evil He repays him with the kinds of hurts, heartaches, and losses Job is presently experiencing.

(God has the power to do anything He wants.)

<sup>12</sup> Certainly God Almighty would never pervert justice or do anything that is wicked. <sup>13</sup> Think for a moment about God's greatness and power. Who do you think gave God the power and authority to rule over the earth and everything on it? <sup>14</sup> If He desired to withdraw His life-giving breath, <sup>15</sup> every man would die and return to the dust from which he was made.

(A wicked man like Job has no right to be a political leader.)

<sup>16-19</sup> You guys who say you have understanding, listen to me. Should someone like Job who hates and distorts justice hold a position of authority other the populace? If Job won't tell a corrupt king that he is worthless or a perverted prince that he is a wicked man, then he has no right to blame Almighty God and accuse Him of wrongdoing. After all, God is not partial to rulers over the average man, and He does not favor the rich man over the poor because He knows that every man is the work of His hands and of equal value in His sight.

(The LORD sees the wicked man's deeds, so He gives him what he deserves.)

<sup>20</sup> Guys, understand that in a moment of time and in the darkness of night wicked men like Job die, and mighty men are removed from power. It happens without another man laying a hand on them. <sup>21</sup> Keep in mind that God sees and evaluates every man's actions and motives. <sup>22</sup> Those who participate in evil enjoy doing their dirty work in the dark, but the LORD can see them in the dark as easily as He can see them at the brightest noon. <sup>23</sup> He knows the nature of man, so He doesn't need to summon a man before Him to examine the man further. <sup>24</sup> Knowing this, He topples mighty men who are wicked, and He causes good men to take their place. <sup>25</sup> Since He knows the wicked things they do, He overpowers them in the night and causes their complete ruin. <sup>26-27</sup> These are people who turned their back on the LORD because they didn't want anything to do with living or obeying what the Bible teaches. These wicked people oppressed the poor and afflicted them to the point where they cried out to the LORD for deliverance. As a result, the LORD will strike down the wicked like a common criminal in a public place for all to see. <sup>29</sup> It is only right to expect the LORD to punish an oppressive person or nation, but who can condemn the LORD if He chooses to be quiet about the matter? When He decides not to be seen by men, who can find Him? <sup>30</sup> These are valid reasons why the godless man should not rule nor be allowed to lead innocent people into trouble unawares as though he had a hook in their nose. Job, I'm talking about you.

(Job ought to be tried and punished to the limit—as though that was not already happening.)

Elihu now addressed me and said,

<sup>31</sup> Now Job, tell me, has any man ever said to God, "I have been chastised by God even though I have done nothing wrong. <sup>32</sup> Show me where I have committed sinful acts, and I will not do them again." <sup>33</sup> Job, this is what you should do. Oh, but it appears that you think God should make restitution and restore you to health and prosperity on your own terms. Job, you must choose whether you are going to do it God's way or your own way. It is your choice, and yours alone. <sup>34</sup> If you continue on the same course you have followed thus far, wise men and men of understanding will say, <sup>35</sup> "Job speaks without either knowledge or wisdom because he will not admit that he is a wicked sinner. <sup>36</sup> He ought to be tried in a court and punished to the full extent

of the law because he answers with the kind of arguments a wicked man would use. <sup>37</sup> Look at him. He adds rebellion toward God to the list of offenses he has committed. He makes light of the whole situation and speaks volumes against the God he claims to follow.”

(You can't hurt God by doing evil, and you cannot help God by being good and godly.)

<sup>35:1</sup> Elihu didn't stop here. He continued by saying,

<sup>2</sup> Job, do you think your claim that God is wrong is within the realm of true justice? Are you really saying that your goodness is greater than God's? <sup>3</sup> That must be what you meant, because I understood you to say,

“What advantage is there in living a good and godly life? I have not gained anything more than what I would have received if I had actually sinned like you accuse me of doing.”

(God is great, but you don't deserve His forgiveness.)

<sup>4</sup> Well, Job, I'll answer you, and your three friends. <sup>5</sup> Look into the sky, and see how the clouds are higher than you. Well, God is higher than them. <sup>6</sup> If you have sinned, what have you accomplished by taking your stand against Him? If your sins are many, how have you hurt Him? <sup>7</sup> If you are good and godly like you claim, of what benefit is it to God? <sup>8</sup> Your wickedness will affect you to your own detriment, but if you were to live a good and godly life others would profit along with you.

(You have to be patient and wait for God's answer. Besides, you don't deserve an answer from Him.)

<sup>9</sup> Mighty men use their power and authority to oppress weaker people, and when the consequences of their sin come back to roost those same men will cry out to Almighty God asking Him to rescue them from the mess they have made of their lives. <sup>10-11</sup> When God is silent and chooses not to answer, no one can legitimately question Him by asking, “He is known to give sweet and comforting songs in the night, and He teaches men more knowledge and wisdom than any dumb animal or bird. Where is He now that I need Him?” <sup>12</sup> Evil men may cry out to God in this manner in a time of need, but He will not answer them because they are proud and arrogant. <sup>13</sup> Surely God will not listen to such an empty, self-gratifying prayer, and if He did, He would disregard the request without giving it a second thought. <sup>14</sup> Job, He thinks even less of you when you say you can't see Him. Listen, your case is before Him in the court of heaven, and all you can do is to wait for Him to consider it and respond. <sup>14-15</sup> Now, since He has not answered you out of His anger or even acknowledged that you have asked something of Him <sup>16</sup> you have opened your mouth and spoken words that are empty of substance and void of knowledge.

(God does not punish men at random. He is giving you what you deserve.)

<sup>36:1</sup> Elihu continued by saying,

<sup>2</sup> Be patient with me a little longer, and I will show you that there is even more to be said on God's behalf. <sup>3</sup> I will gather knowledge from the far corners of the earth, and show you how my Maker is righteous through and through. <sup>4</sup> Listen carefully because what I have to say is true in every sense, and I have knowledge that is complete and accurate.

<sup>5</sup> Job, God is a mighty God. Although He has unlimited understanding about what a man is and what he does, He will not reject or refuse anyone at random. <sup>6</sup> He will not keep a wicked man alive, but He gives justice to people who are afflicted and oppressed. <sup>7-9</sup> He does not turn his gaze away from those who live in a good and godly manner so as to abandon them, but He closely watches those He puts in places of leadership. If these rulers become proud and look out only for themselves they will suffer hurts, losses, or even imprisonment. While they are being held in prison He will tell them how they have sinned and how their pride and arrogance have caused

them to exalt themselves. <sup>10</sup> He causes them to actually hear instruction and learn about how He requires them to repent of their sin and evil. <sup>11</sup> Now, if they will actually hear what He tells them and will abandon their sin in order to serve Him, then they will experience prosperity and a pleasant life for years to come. <sup>12</sup> But if they refuse to listen, they will die without knowing the truth. <sup>13</sup> Instead of crying out to God for help when they experience punishment, wicked men become angry with God, and the longer they endure punishment, the more angry they become. <sup>14</sup> They will die while they are still young, and they will perish along with the street prostitutes who will also experience a premature death.

(God will rescue you from affliction if you repent of your sin, but no one can tell God that He is wrong.)

<sup>15</sup> Job, be assured that God uses affliction like yours to rescue the afflicted, and He gets their attention by putting pressure upon them just like He has done to you. <sup>16</sup> Certainly God has used your distress and painful confinement to entice you to return to Him. If you do, He will relieve you of your physical suffering and provide you with prosperity and a pleasant life. <sup>17</sup> Oh, but He cannot do that for you because you are critical and judgmental of wicked men while you justify your own sin. <sup>18</sup> I know you are angry with God because He is silent, but don't let that cause you to scoff at Him. Don't let the magnitude of what it would take to rescue you from your troubles cause you to turn away from God. <sup>19</sup> Don't make the mistake of thinking that your riches or your physical strength can save you. <sup>20</sup> Listen, Job, don't long to be hidden by the darkness where wicked people vanish in the night. <sup>21</sup> Don't turn away from God in order to choose evil. Don't do it, because up until now you have preferred evil in spite of the affliction you are presently experiencing. <sup>22</sup> Take a serious look, and see how God is elevated above everyone in power and majesty. No man is able to teach truth like or to Him. <sup>23</sup> So, who has ever told God that He can or can't do something, and who has actually said to God, "This time you really messed up. You were wrong!"

(God speaks through thunder, and He can do what He wants without man's permission.)

<sup>24</sup> Job, do you remember hearing men sing about the works of God? Well, you should exalt Him like they do. <sup>25</sup> All men have seen His works even if it is only from a distance. <sup>26</sup> Face it Job, God is so highly exalted that we don't really know Him. No man can tell how many years He will exist because He is eternal. <sup>27-28</sup> He is the One who created the laws of nature that cause moisture to condense in clouds and drop rain in abundance. <sup>29</sup> Can any of you understand how and why clouds form? Can any of you understand what produces thunder? <sup>30</sup> Behold, He causes lightning to flash all around Him, and He hides the depth of the sea from man's view. <sup>31</sup> He judges people by either giving an abundance of rain when they have done what is good and right, or withholding the rains causing them endure a famine when they have acted wickedly. <sup>32</sup> He holds the lightning in His hand, and He makes it strike precisely where and when He desires. <sup>33</sup> The lightning declares His presence, and even the cattle respond differently indicating that something is going to happen. <sup>37:1</sup> I shake in my sandals when the thunder comes out of nowhere and booms loudly. <sup>2</sup> Listen closely when He dispatches lightning and speaks through the noise of thunder <sup>3</sup> all across the earth. <sup>4</sup> He does not hold back the lightning when He speaks through the thunder, and after the majestic lightning strikes, His voice can be heard in the thunder.

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, when God speaks, His voice is as loud as thunder, and He does great things which we cannot understand. <sup>6</sup> Consider how He tells the snow to fall, and it covers the ground. Consider how the rain comes down in torrents when He says to it, "Be strong." <sup>7</sup> He places a limit on what man can do so that they will know that what happens is the LORD's doing. <sup>8</sup> When the storm comes the wild animals go into their dens and stay there. <sup>9</sup> The rain comes up out of the south, and the cold comes down from the north. <sup>10</sup> Ice is formed when God breathes on the waters, and the lakes and rivers freeze. <sup>11</sup> By His word He causes the clouds to load with moisture, and then He sends the moisture to the ground in the form of rain drops amid strikes of lightning and the resulting thunder. <sup>12</sup> He causes the storm to go in one direction and then another at His command, watering the face of the earth. <sup>13</sup> He may do this out of His tender love and kindness, or He may do it as a form of correction for people of the world.

<sup>14</sup> Job, listen to what I have said. Take your stand, and seriously consider the wonders of God.  
<sup>15</sup> Do you know how God established the laws of nature that produce the lightning? <sup>16-17</sup> Job, look at you. You sit there sweating in your clothing because the south wind has brought hot dry air. Do you know all about the dark cloud layers in a storm and have perfect knowledge of the One who made them in such a wondrous fashion? <sup>18</sup> Can you help Him make the beautiful colors of sunset so that they reflect God's glory just like a mirror reflects your face? <sup>19</sup> Teach us what we should say to such an awesome God because we cannot formulate our argument due to a lack of knowledge. <sup>20</sup> Does someone need to tell God that I was going speak to you, and if he does speak, will that man be destroyed forever?  
<sup>21</sup> Men don't see the brightness of the sun when it is overcast, but sooner or later the wind blows the clouds away clearing the sky. <sup>22</sup> In the northern sky can you can see the golden splendor that surrounds the awesome majesty of our God. <sup>23</sup> We cannot find God Almighty because He is highly exalted in power. Be assured that He will not violate justice and will not be unfair to a righteous man. <sup>24</sup> Because of all of these things men fear Him, and He does not respect the wisdom of a wise man. (Job, I'm talking about you.)

## 4) How I lost my case against God

(Note: The Lord answers Job. Elihu had just told Job that he didn't deserve healing, and he didn't deserve an answer from God. Then God spoke to Job. I wonder what Elihu thought then!!!)

<sup>38:1</sup> Then the LORD answered me out of a whirlwind and said,

<sup>2</sup> Job, you have distorted the truth about Me because you don't have accurate knowledge of who I am, what I am, and how I work in the affairs of men. Who do you think you are talking like that? <sup>3</sup> Now, change your clothes, stand up like a man, and I will ask you questions. Then you will instruct Me, the Almighty God.

(Questions about creation.)

<sup>4</sup> Where were you when I created the earth? Tell me if you have the understanding you claim to possess. <sup>5</sup> Who determined the diameter of the earth, and who separated the east from the west? Tell me since you know! <sup>6-7</sup> When I initially formed the earth, the stars of the heavens rejoiced, and the sons of God shouted for joy. Tell me, Job, what keeps the earth from falling? <sup>8-10</sup> Where were you when I birthed the seas causing them to gush forth from below the surface of the earth? Where were you when I made the dry ground rise above sea level in order to keep the oceans in their own place? Where were you when I made clouds to cover them? And where were you when I caused the depths of the seas to be as black as tar? <sup>11</sup> It was then that I told the seas, "The shore is your boundary. You cannot go any farther."

(Questions about light and darkness.)

<sup>12-15</sup> Have you ever commanded to sun to rise at dawn, and have you caused it to do so on a regular schedule? Have you demanded that the sun's light should shine on every part of the earth routing wicked people from the evil deeds they do in the darkness of night? Light from the sun's rays also gives life to every living thing, including the beautiful vegetation that covers the earth. Wicked men don't like the light because it exposes their wicked deeds. When the sun comes up it forces them to retreat to their hiding places out of the light.

<sup>16</sup> Have you ever ventured down into the bottom of the deepest sea and seen the springs of water that gush forth there? <sup>17</sup> Has anyone shown you the gates of death and how they function? Have you seen the utter darkness that totally permeates death? <sup>18</sup> Do you understand how big the earth is and how much area it covers? Tell me, if you know all of this. Go ahead, I'm waiting.

(Questions about natural science.)

<sup>19-20</sup> What makes light work, and where does it originate? Where does darkness abide? Can you take either one of them to their place of residence? <sup>21</sup> Surely you know since you were born at the same time I

made them, and you have had many years to gain understanding!<sup>22-23</sup> Tell Me, have you been in the middle of the clouds where snow and hail are formed? Have you seen how I reserve enough of each to destroy animals and people as effectively as if they were to be slaughtered in battle?<sup>24</sup> How is light separated from darkness, and how does the heat of the sun's rays cause an east wind to propagate on the earth?<sup>25-27</sup> Who dug a channel for flood waters to follow, or who determined where lightning will strike? How does the thunderstorm provide the rain for the desolate desert land and cause grass seeds to sprout there?<sup>28</sup> Does the rain have a father, and who makes the dew form on the ground?<sup>29-30</sup> Who makes the frost, and who makes ice form on the tops of lakes and rivers where it becomes as hard as stone?

(Questions about the laws of nature.)

<sup>31-32</sup> Can you hold the constellations in their place, and can you guide them so that they are always in the right place for each season?<sup>33</sup> Can you explain the theory of relativity or quantum physics, and have you caused those laws to rule over both the earth and the universe?<sup>34</sup> Can you make the clouds rain and rain hard?<sup>35</sup> Can you make those same clouds produce lightning with its accompanying thunder?<sup>36</sup> Who has given any man both the wisdom of heart or the understanding of mind to know these things?<sup>37</sup> Who has enough wisdom to make it rain during the middle of a drought<sup>38</sup> when the ground cracks because it is so dry that it has turned into hard, dry dirt clods?

(Questions about provisions.)

<sup>39-40</sup> Can you hunt prey for the lion, and provide food for the lion cubs in their den?<sup>41</sup> Who gave ravens the ability to find food, and who taught them to give it to their weak and hungry young?<sup>39:1</sup> Do you know when mountain goats give birth, and have you actually seen a deer give birth to a fawn?<sup>2</sup> Do you know how many months they carry their young before they birth them?<sup>3</sup> At the right time they kneel down and deliver the baby. Immediately afterward the labor pains cease.<sup>4</sup> Their offspring quickly stand up and grow strong, and in time they leave their mother never to return to her again.

<sup>5-6</sup> Who set the wild donkey free to roam the wilderness and the salt lands?<sup>7</sup> He hates the noise of the city, and he will not pay any attention to a driver if he were to be hitched to a wagon.<sup>8</sup> His only interest is to roam the mountains in search for anything green to eat.

<sup>9</sup> Do you think the wild ox will obey you like a domesticated ox, and do you think he would stay in your barn overnight without tearing it apart?<sup>10</sup> Can you hitch him to a harness and get him to plow your fields?<sup>11</sup> Will you trust him to do your work since he is so strong?<sup>12</sup> Will you trust him to bring in the grain and then thresh it for you? Obviously not!

<sup>13</sup> The ostrich struts about happily flapping its wings looking for a mate.<sup>14</sup> Once she lays her eggs she abandons them. Yes, she simply walks away, leaving them on the ground for the sun to warm.<sup>15</sup> She doesn't even consider the fact that someone might walk on them or some animal might trample them into the ground.<sup>16</sup> She is cruel toward her young and treats them as though they were not hers. She doesn't care about them even though she endured the pain of bringing them into the world.<sup>17</sup> Why does she do these things? It is because God created her without wisdom or understanding.<sup>18</sup> She proudly struts around like she is important, and she can run so fast that she laughs at the thought of a horse and rider chasing her.

<sup>19</sup> Job, did you give the horse its strength? Did you clothe his neck with a mane?<sup>20</sup> His snorting is frightening, and he can jump over fairly tall obstacles.<sup>21-22</sup> He paws the ground to show his strength, and he laughs at the thought of going into battle. In fact, he keeps on charging and will not turn to run from a soldier's bullet.<sup>23</sup> Weapons rattle against his side, and he sees the muzzle blast of the enemy's weapons.<sup>24</sup> In spite of all this, he charges ahead with all of his being, and he will not halt at the sound of the bugle.<sup>25</sup> As often as he hears the war cry and command to charge he says "Wonderful, let's go."

<sup>26</sup> Is the hawk endowed with wisdom when it flies south flapping his wings?<sup>27</sup> Did you command the eagle to make his nest in the tops of trees<sup>28</sup> or on the rocky tops of the mountains?<sup>29</sup> From those heights he spies his prey because he can see clearly from a long way off.<sup>30</sup> As a result, he feeds his young bloody, dead animals, fish, or birds.



(Job, will you blame God?)

<sup>40:1</sup> After this the LORD said to me,

<sup>2</sup> Will you, the faultfinder, actually question God and blame Him for your troubles and losses? You're the man, so answer Me.

(I have spoken in error.)

<sup>3</sup> Then I answered God and said,

<sup>4</sup> "Lord, I am ashamed because I am no better or more important than a worm. How then can I answer your questions? <sup>5</sup> I have spoken in error, so I will not try to say anything in my own defense."

(You cannot save yourself.)

<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD answered me out of the whirlwind and said,

<sup>7</sup> Okay mister high and mighty, who do you think you are, talking about Me like you have? Now stand up like a man. I will ask you questions, and you will teach Me, the creator of all things. <sup>8</sup> Will you really invalidate all of the things I decide to do or allow? Will you accuse Me so that you can make yourself look good? <sup>9</sup> Are you as strong as God, and can you talk in a thunderous voice like I do? <sup>10</sup> Try clothing yourself with dignity, honor, and majesty. <sup>11-12</sup> Pour out your anger upon every proud man or woman. Search out these people, and make them into humble people. Then grind all of the wicked into dust right where they stand. <sup>13</sup> Hide them in a grave somewhere so that they will never again be seen. <sup>14</sup> If you can do all of these things, then I will confess to you that your own strength and ability can save you.

(The hippopotamus, the crocodile, and the sea monster are too strong for you. They are nothing compared to Me.)

<sup>15</sup> Look at the hippopotamus<sup>3</sup>, and realize that I made him as well as you. He eats grass like a cow. <sup>16</sup> Look at the strength in his hind quarters and the power of his mid-section. <sup>17</sup> His tail is as strong as a cedar tree, and the ligaments and tendons of his hind quarters are exceedingly strong. <sup>18</sup> Then too, his bones are as strong as steel. <sup>19</sup> He was among the first of the animals I created, and as strong as he is, I am still able to kill this animal with the sword of My mouth. <sup>20</sup> The mountains provide his food, and he finds it in the place where the beasts of the field play. <sup>21</sup> He lies down in the shade of the willow trees along the bank of the river. <sup>22</sup> He lies there peacefully, totally unafraid even if the river rages savagely. <sup>23</sup> No one can capture him when he is watching the one who would take him, <sup>24</sup> and no one can put hooks in his nose expecting to lead him around like a cow.

<sup>41:1-2</sup> Can you go fishing and catch a huge crocodile-like monster with a hook or put a ring in his nose? Do you think a hook would even pierce his jaw? <sup>3</sup> Do you think he would be gentle and beg you to let him go? <sup>4</sup> Will he promise to serve you forever if you let him go? <sup>5</sup> Can you play with him like you would play with your favorite dog? <sup>6</sup> Can you make him the main course at a banquet, or can the merchants sell his flesh for a price per pound? <sup>7</sup> Can you get close enough to fill him with spears? <sup>8</sup> Listen, try to grab him with your hands. The battle will be so severe that you will never do that again (if you live to tell about it). <sup>9</sup> If you think you can do these things, you are totally wrong because you will cower at the sight of him. <sup>10</sup> No one is brave enough to arouse him, and this is a picture of how powerless you would be if you were to try to stand before Me and tell Me that I am wrong. <sup>11</sup> Everything under heaven belongs to me, so who has given Me anything that would require Me to repay him? No one!

<sup>12</sup> I'll tell you more about the sea monster's strength and his well-built body. <sup>13</sup> Who can penetrate his outer armor, <sup>14</sup> or open his mouth to expose his teeth? <sup>15</sup> His skin is so tough that it is impregnable. <sup>16-17</sup> His scales are so closely joined that they cannot be separated. In fact, they are so tightly joined to one another that not even air can come between the scales. <sup>18-21</sup> He has eyes that glow like the morning sun, and when he sneezes, fire and smoke come out of his mouth. The fire is

hot enough to kindle coals, and the smoke is as thick as the smoke from burning bushes.<sup>22</sup> His neck is exceedingly strong, and everywhere he goes both men and beasts are afraid of him.<sup>23</sup> His flesh is tightly joined together, firm and immovable.<sup>24</sup> His heart is as hard as stone, and he does not have compassion upon anyone or anything.<sup>25</sup> When he surfaces he makes crashing waves, and mighty men hide themselves out of fear.<sup>26-29</sup> Weapons cannot pierce him or make him run away, because iron and bronze are as useless as straw against him. All weapons, whether slingshots, spears, or arrows are no more effective against him than rotten wood.<sup>30</sup> His belly is as tough and abrasive as sharp pieces of clay, and when he lays down in the mud it squishes out from under him in all directions.<sup>31-32</sup> When he moves in the ocean the water churns like water in a boiling pot. As a result, he creates large wakes with whitecaps.<sup>33</sup> He was created to be without fear, and there is nothing on earth like him.<sup>34</sup> He is proud and looks down on all other creatures including man. Job, if you think this creature is powerful and impenetrable, he is nothing compared to Me.

<sup>3</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, a component of Online Bible Millennium Edition, Version 1.1, January 18, 2002, Copyright © 1987, 2002, Timnathrserah, Inc., Winterbourne, Ontario, Canada. N0B2V0.

(I was wrong, and I repent of my error.)

<sup>42:1</sup> Then I answered the LORD and said,

<sup>2</sup> “I know that You can do all things, and that nothing You choose to do can be successfully opposed or prevented.<sup>3</sup> I said things that were beyond my ability to understand, and I was wrong to assert those things when I didn’t know what I was talking about.<sup>4</sup> I will venture to speak, so please hear me. I will ask you questions, and I will wait for You to instruct me.<sup>5</sup> All of my life I have heard about You and Your greatness, but now I have seen you with my own eyes.<sup>6</sup> As a result, I repent in dust and ashes.”

(The LORD rebukes Job’s three friends.)

<sup>7</sup> After the LORD had spoken to Job He turned His attention to Eliphaz and said, “I am angry with you and your two friends because you guys have not spoken the truth about me like my servant Job.<sup>8</sup> Listen to me, and do exactly as I say. Acquire seven bulls and seven rams, and go to Job. Offer them as burnt offerings for yourselves. When you do, Job will pray to Me on your behalf. Once I hear Job’s prayer I will withhold the punishment you guys deserve because of the foolish things you said when you did not speak what is right about Me like My servant Job.<sup>9</sup> So Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar did as the LORD commanded, and the LORD accepted Job’s prayer.

(God restores Job and gives him twice as much as he had before the trial.)

<sup>10</sup> After Job prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes, and He blessed Job with twice as much as he had before the trial.<sup>11</sup> Then all of his brothers, sisters, and former friends came crawling back to Job in order to apologize and to once again enjoy meals at his house. They did their best to console Job after his trial, and each one gave him money and a gold ring because he had become completely bankrupt.<sup>12</sup> After the trial, the LORD blessed Job with 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys.<sup>13</sup> In time he had seven more sons and three more daughters.<sup>14</sup> Because of their beauty, he named his first daughter Jemimah (which means “one with dove’s eyes”), he named the second Keziah (which means “one like cinnamon”); and he named the third Keren-happuch (which means “a horn of paint” signifying her beauty).<sup>4 15</sup> In all the land there was not another women as beautiful as Job’s three daughters, and he gave them equal inheritance with their brothers.

<sup>16</sup> After all of this Job lived another 140 years. He lived long enough to see his sons, grandsons, great grandsons, and great-great grandsons. In fact, he saw four generations in all.<sup>17</sup> Then Job died an old man having lived a full life.

<sup>4</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, a component of Online Bible Millennium Edition, Version 1.1, January 18, 2002, Copyright © 1987, 2002, Timnathserah, Inc., Winterbourne, Ontario, Canada. NOB2V0.