

## Job's Final Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 29–31

### Job Reflects on the Past

29:1 Moreover Job continued his parable, and said,  
 2 Oh that I were as *in* months past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me;  
 3 When his candle shined upon my head, *and when* by his light I walked *through* darkness;  
 4 As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God *was* upon my tabernacle;  
 5 When the Almighty *was* yet with me, *when* my children *were* about me;  
 6 When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil;  
 7 When I went out to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street!  
 8 The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, *and* stood up.  
 9 The princes refrained talking, and laid *their* hand on their mouth.  
 10 The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.  
 11 When the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me:  
 12 Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and *him that had* none to help him.  
 13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.  
 14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem.  
 15 I was eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.  
 16 I *was* a father to the poor: and the cause *which* I knew not I searched out.  
 17 And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.  
 18 Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply *my* days as the sand.  
 19 My root *was* spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.  
 20 My glory *was* fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.  
 21 Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.  
 22 After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them.  
 23 And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain.  
 24 *If* I laughed on them, they believed *it* not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.  
 25 I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one *that* comforteth the mourners.

### Job Mourns His Present Disgrace

30:1 But now *they that are* younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.  
 2 Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished?  
 3 For want and famine *they were* solitary; fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate and waste.  
 4 Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots *for* their meat.  
 5 They were driven forth from among *men*, (they cried after them as *after* a thief;)  
 6 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, *in* caves of the earth, and *in* the rocks.  
 7 Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.  
 8 *They were* children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.  
 9 And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword.  
 10 They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.  
 11 Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.  
 12 Upon *my* right *hand* rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.  
 13 They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.  
 14 They came *upon me* as a wide breaking in *of waters*: in the desolation they rolled themselves *upon me*.  
 15 Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.  
 16 And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.  
 17 My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest.  
 18 By the great force *of my disease* is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.  
 19 He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.  
 20 I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me *not*.  
 21 Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.  
 22 Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride *upon it*, and dissolvest my substance.  
 23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and *to* the house appointed for all living.  
 24 Howbeit he will not stretch out *his* hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction.  
 25 Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? *was not* my soul grieved for the poor?  
 26 When I looked for good, then evil came *unto me*: and when I waited for light, there came darkness.  
 27 My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

- 28 I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation.  
29 I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.  
30 My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat.  
31 My harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

**Job's Final Defense—"If..."**

- 31:1 I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?  
2 For what portion of God *is there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?  
3 *Is* not destruction to the wicked? and a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity?  
4 Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?  
5 If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit;  
6 Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.  
7 If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands;  
8 *Then* let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.  
9 If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;  
10 *Then* let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.  
11 For this *is* an heinous crime; yea, it *is* an iniquity *to be punished* by the judges.  
12 For it *is* a fire *that* consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.  
13 If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me;  
14 What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?  
15 Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?  
16 If I have withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;  
17 Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;  
18 (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as *with* a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;)  
19 If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;  
20 If his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;  
21 If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate:  
22 *Then* let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.  
23 For destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.  
24 If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence;  
25 If I rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and because mine hand had gotten much;  
26 If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking *in* brightness;  
27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand:  
28 This also *were* an iniquity *to be punished* by the judge: for I should have denied the God *that is* above.  
29 If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him:  
30 Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.  
31 If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.  
32 The stranger did not lodge in the street: *but* I opened my doors to the traveller.  
33 If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom:  
34 Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, *and* went not out of the door?  
35 Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire *is*, *that* the Almighty would answer me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book.  
36 Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me.  
37 I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.  
38 If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain;  
39 If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life:  
40 Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.

*Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.*