

Eliphaz's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 4–5

Eliphaz's Surprise at Job's Bitter Words

4:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered,

- 2 "If one ventures a word with you, will you become impatient?
But who can refrain from speaking?
- 3 "Behold you have admonished many,
And you have strengthened weak hands.
- 4 "Your words have helped the tottering to stand,
And you have strengthened feeble knees.
- 5 "But now it has come to you, and you are impatient;
It touches you, and you are dismayed.
- 6 "Is not your fear *of God* your confidence,
And the integrity of your ways your hope?

Eliphaz Voices His Worldview

- 7 "Remember now, who *ever* perished being innocent?
Or where were the upright destroyed?
- 8 "According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity
And those who sow trouble harvest it.
- 9 "By the breath of God they perish,
And by the blast of His anger they come to an end.
- 10 "The roaring of the lion and the voice of the *fierce* lion,
And the teeth of the young lions are broken.
- 11 "The lion perishes for lack of prey,
And the whelps of the lioness are scattered.

Eliphaz's Vision

- 12 "Now a word was brought to me stealthily,
And my ear received a whisper of it.
- 13 "Amid disquieting thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falls on men,
14 Dread came upon me, and trembling,
And made all my bones shake.
- 15 "Then a spirit passed by my face;
The hair of my flesh bristled up.
- 16 "It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance;
A form *was* before my eyes;
There was silence, then I heard a voice:
- 17 'Can mankind be just before God?
Can a man be pure before his Maker?
- 18 'He puts no trust even in His servants;
And against His angels He charges error.
- 19 'How much more those who dwell in houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
Who are crushed before the moth!
- 20 'Between morning and evening they are broken in pieces;

Unobserved, they perish forever.

- 21 'Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them?
They die, yet without wisdom.'

“Man is born to trouble”

- 5:1 “Call now, is there anyone who will answer you?
And to which of the holy ones will you turn?
2 “For anger slays the foolish man,
And jealousy kills the simple.
3 “I have seen the foolish taking root,
And I cursed his abode immediately.
4 “His sons are far from safety,
They are even oppressed in the gate,
And there is no deliverer.
5 “His harvest the hungry devour
And take it to a *place of thorns*,
And the schemer is eager for their wealth.
6 “For affliction does not come from the dust,
Nor does trouble sprout from the ground,
7 For man is born for trouble,
As sparks fly upward.

Eliphaz’s Advice—Appeal to the God of Justice

- 8 “But as for me, I would seek God,
And I would place my cause before God;
9 Who does great and unsearchable things,
Wonders without number.
10 “He gives rain on the earth
And sends water on the fields,
11 So that He sets on high those who are lowly,
And those who mourn are lifted to safety.
12 “He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd,
So that their hands cannot attain success.
13 “He captures the wise by their own shrewdness, [cf. [1 Cor 3:19](#)]
And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.
14 “By day they meet with darkness,
And grope at noon as in the night.
15 “But He saves from the sword of their mouth,
And the poor from the hand of the mighty.
16 “So the helpless has hope,
And unrighteousness must shut its mouth.

Eliphaz’s Advice—The God Who Disciplines Also Restores

- 17 “Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproves,
So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. [cf. [Prov 3:11–12](#); [Heb 12:5–6](#)]
18 “For He inflicts pain, and gives relief;
He wounds, and His hands *also* heal.
19 “From six troubles He will deliver you,
Even in seven evil will not touch you.

- 20 “In famine He will redeem you from death,
And in war from the power of the sword.
- 21 “You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue,
And you will not be afraid of violence when it comes.
- 22 “You will laugh at violence and famine,
And you will not be afraid of wild beasts.
- 23 “For you will be in league with the stones of the field,
And the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.
- 24 “You will know that your tent is secure,
For you will visit your abode and fear no loss.
- 25 “You will know also that your descendants will be many,
And your offspring as the grass of the earth.
- 26 “You will come to the grave in full vigor,
Like the stacking of grain in its season.
- 27 “Behold this; we have investigated it, *and* so it is.
Hear it, and know for yourself.”

Job’s Response to Eliphaz (c. 2200 BC)

Job 6–7

Job Defends His Bitter Words

6:1 Then Job answered,

- 2 “Oh that my grief were actually weighed
And laid in the balances together with my calamity!
- 3 “For then it would be heavier than the sand of the seas;
Therefore my words have been rash.
- 4 “For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,
Their poison my spirit drinks;
The terrors of God are arrayed against me.
- 5 “Does the wild donkey bray over *his* grass,
Or does the ox low over his fodder?
- 6 “Can something tasteless be eaten without salt,
Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?
- 7 “My soul refuses to touch *them*;
They are like loathsome food to me.

Job’s Desire for Death

- 8 “Oh that my request might come to pass,
And that God would grant my longing!
- 9 “Would that God were willing to crush me,
That He would loose His hand and cut me off!
- 10 “But it is still my consolation,
And I rejoice in unsparing pain,
That I have not denied the words of the Holy One.
- 11 “What is my strength, that I should wait?
And what is my end, that I should endure?
- 12 “Is my strength the strength of stones,
Or is my flesh bronze?

- 13 “Is it that my help is not within me,
And that deliverance is driven from me?”

Job’s Disappointment With His Former Friends and Acquaintances

- 14 “For the despairing man *there should be* kindness from his friend;
So that he does not forsake the fear of the Almighty.
- 15 “My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi,
Like the torrents of wadis which vanish,
16 Which are turbid because of ice
And into which the snow melts.
- 17 “When they become waterless, they are silent,
When it is hot, they vanish from their place.
- 18 “The paths of their course wind along,
They go up into nothing and perish.
- 19 “The caravans of Tema looked,
The travelers of Sheba hoped for them.
- 20 “They were disappointed for they had trusted,
They came there and were confounded.

Job’s Disappointment With Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar

- 21 “Indeed, you have now become such,
You see a terror and are afraid.
- 22 “Have I said, ‘Give me *something*,’
Or, ‘Offer a bribe for me from your wealth,’
23 Or, ‘Deliver me from the hand of the adversary,’
Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of the tyrants’?”

Job Pleads for Genuine Help

- 24 “Teach me, and I will be silent;
And show me how I have erred.
- 25 “How painful are honest words!
But what does your argument prove?
- 26 “Do you intend to reprove *my* words,
When the words of one in despair belong to the wind?
- 27 “You would even cast *lots* for the orphans
And barter over your friend.

Job Insists that He is Innocent

- 28 “Now please look at me,
And *see* if I lie to your face.
- 29 “Desist now, let there be no injustice;
Even desist, my righteousness is yet in it.
- 30 “Is there injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my palate discern calamities?”

Job Describes His Suffering

- 7:1 “Is not man forced to labor on earth,
And *are not* his days like the days of a hired man?
2 “As a slave who pants for the shade,

- And as a hired man who eagerly waits for his wages,
3 So am I allotted months of vanity,
And nights of trouble are appointed me.
4 “When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’
But the night continues,
And I am continually tossing until dawn.
5 “My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt,
My skin hardens and runs.
6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle,
And come to an end without hope.

Job Speaks to God—Remember How Brief My Life Is!

- 7 “Remember that my life is *but* breath;
My eye will not again see good.
8 “The eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer;
Your eyes *will be* on me, but I will not be.
9 “When a cloud vanishes, it is gone,
So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up.
10 “He will not return again to his house,
Nor will his place know him anymore.

Job Speaks to God—Why Do You Torture Me? Leave Me Alone!

- 11 “Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit,
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12 “Am I the sea, or the sea monster,
That You set a guard over me?
13 “If I say, ‘My bed will comfort me,
My couch will ease my complaint,’
14 Then You frighten me with dreams
And terrify me by visions;
15 So that my soul would choose suffocation,
Death rather than my pains.
16 “I waste away; I will not live forever.
Leave me alone, for my days are *but* a breath.

Job Speaks to God—Why Do You Put Men Under Such Intense Scrutiny?

- 17 “What is man that You magnify him,
And that You are concerned about him,
18 That You examine him every morning
And try him every moment?
19 “Will You never turn Your gaze away from me,
Nor let me alone until I swallow my spittle?
20 “Have I sinned? What have I done to You,
O watcher of men?
Why have You set me as Your target,
So that I am a burden to myself?
21 “Why then do You not pardon my transgression
And take away my iniquity?

For now I will lie down in the dust;
And You will seek me, but I will not be.”

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