

Zophar's Second and Last Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 20

Zophar is Offended by Job's Rebuke

- 1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered,
2 "Therefore my disquieting thoughts make me respond,
Even because of my inward agitation.
3 "I listened to the reproof which insults me,
And the spirit of my understanding makes me answer.

Zophar Expands on Bildad's Perspective—The Joy of the Wicked is Short and They are Quickly Punished by God

- 4 "Do you know this from of old,
From the establishment of man on earth,
5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short,
And the joy of the godless momentary?
6 "Though his loftiness reaches the heavens,
And his head touches the clouds,
7 He perishes forever like his refuse;
Those who have seen him will say, 'Where is he?'
8 "He flies away like a dream, and they cannot find him;
Even like a vision of the night he is chased away.
9 "The eye which saw him sees him no longer,
And his place no longer beholds him.
10 "His sons favor the poor,
And his hands give back his wealth.
11 "His bones are full of his youthful vigor,
But it lies down with him in the dust.
12 "Though evil is sweet in his mouth
And he hides it under his tongue,
13 *Though* he desires it and will not let it go,
But holds it in his mouth,
14 *Yet* his food in his stomach is changed
To the venom of cobras within him.
15 "He swallows riches,
But will vomit them up;
God will expel them from his belly.
16 "He sucks the poison of cobras;
The viper's tongue slays him.
17 "He does not look at the streams,
The rivers flowing with honey and curds.
18 "He returns what he has attained
And cannot swallow *it*;
As to the riches of his trading,
He cannot even enjoy *them*.
19 "For he has oppressed *and* forsaken the poor;
He has seized a house which he has not built.
20 "Because he knew no quiet within him,

He does not retain anything he desires.

- 21 “Nothing remains for him to devour,
Therefore his prosperity does not endure.
- 22 “In the fullness of his plenty he will be cramped;
The hand of everyone who suffers will come *against* him.
- 23 “When he fills his belly, *God* will send His fierce anger on him
And will rain *it* on him while he is eating.
- 24 “He may flee from the iron weapon,
But the bronze bow will pierce him.
- 25 “It is drawn forth and comes out of his back,
Even the glittering point from his gall.
Terrors come upon him,
- 26 Complete darkness is held in reserve for his treasures,
And unfanned fire will devour him;
It will consume the survivor in his tent.
- 27 “The heavens will reveal his iniquity,
And the earth will rise up against him.
- 28 “The increase of his house will depart;
His possessions will flow away in the day of His anger.
- 29 “This is the wicked man’s portion from God,
Even the heritage decreed to him by God.”

Job’s Response to Zophar (c. 2200 BC)

Job 21

Job Tells His Friends to Listen

- 1 Then Job answered,
- 2 “Listen carefully to my speech,
And let this be your *way of* consolation.
- 3 “Bear with me that I may speak;
Then after I have spoken, you may mock.
- 4 “As for me, is my complaint to man?
And why should I not be impatient?
- 5 “Look at me, and be astonished,
And put *your* hand over *your* mouth.
- 6 “Even when I remember, I am disturbed,
And horror takes hold of my flesh.

Job Points Out Exceptions to Their Worldview—The Wicked Are Prosperous

- 7 “Why do the wicked *still* live,
Continue on, also become very powerful?
- 8 “Their descendants are established with them in their sight,
And their offspring before their eyes,
- 9 Their houses are safe from fear,
And the rod of God is not on them.
- 10 “His ox mates without fail;
His cow calves and does not abort.
- 11 “They send forth their little ones like the flock,

And their children skip about.

- 12 “They sing to the timbrel and harp
And rejoice at the sound of the flute.
- 13 “They spend their days in prosperity,
And suddenly they go down to Sheol.
- 14 “They say to God, ‘Depart from us!
We do not even desire the knowledge of Your ways.
- 15 ‘Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him,
And what would we gain if we entreat Him?’
- 16 “Behold, their prosperity is not in their hand;
The counsel of the wicked is far from me.

Job Points Out Exceptions to Their Worldview—The Wicked Are Long-lived

- 17 “How often is the lamp of the wicked put out,
Or does their calamity fall on them?
Does God apportion destruction in His anger?
- 18 “Are they as straw before the wind,
And like chaff which the storm carries away?
- 19 “*You say*, ‘God stores away a man’s iniquity for his sons.’
Let God repay him so that he may know *it*.
- 20 “Let his own eyes see his decay,
And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
- 21 “For what does he care for his household after him,
When the number of his months is cut off?

Prelude to Ecclesiastes—The Prosperous and the Impoverished Suffer the Same Fate

- 22 “Can anyone teach God knowledge,
In that He judges those on high?
- 23 “One dies in his full strength,
Being wholly at ease and satisfied;
- 24 His sides are filled out with fat,
And the marrow of his bones is moist,
- 25 While another dies with a bitter soul,
Never even tasting *anything* good.
- 26 “Together they lie down in the dust,
And worms cover them. [cf. [Ecc 2:15–17](#)]

Ask Those Who Travel the World—They Will Confirm the Peace and Prosperity of the Wicked

- 27 “Behold, I know your thoughts,
And the plans by which you would wrong me.
- 28 “For you say, ‘Where is the house of the nobleman,
And where is the tent, the dwelling places of the wicked?’
- 29 “Have you not asked wayfaring men,
And do you not recognize their witness?
- 30 “For the wicked is reserved for the day of calamity;
They will be led forth at the day of fury.
- 31 “Who will confront him with his actions,
And who will repay him for what he has done?
- 32 “While he is carried to the grave,

Men will keep watch over his tomb.

- 33 “The clods of the valley will gently cover him;
Moreover, all men will follow after him,
While countless ones *go* before him.
- 34 “How then will you vainly comfort me,
For your answers remain *full of falsehood?*”

Eliphaz’s Third and Last Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 22

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Specific Sins

- 1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite responded,
- 2 “Can a vigorous man be of use to God,
Or a wise man be useful to himself?
- 3 “Is there any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous,
Or profit if you make your ways perfect?
- 4 “Is it because of your reverence that He reproves you,
That He enters into judgment against you?
- 5 “Is not your wickedness great,
And your iniquities without end?
- 6 “For you have taken pledges of your brothers without cause,
And stripped men naked.
- 7 “To the weary you have given no water to drink,
And from the hungry you have withheld bread.
- 8 “But the earth belongs to the mighty man,
And the honorable man dwells in it.
- 9 “You have sent widows away empty,
And the strength of the orphans has been crushed.
- 10 “Therefore snares surround you,
And sudden dread terrifies you,
- 11 Or darkness, so that you cannot see,
And an abundance of water covers you.

You Cannot Escape Punishment for Sin

- 12 “Is not God *in* the height of heaven?
Look also at the distant stars, how high they are!
- 13 “You say, ‘What does God know?
Can He judge through the thick darkness?’
- 14 ‘Clouds are a hiding place for Him, so that He cannot see;
And He walks on the vault of heaven.’
- 15 “Will you keep to the ancient path
Which wicked men have trod,
Who were snatched away before their time,
Whose foundations were washed away by a river?
- 17 “They said to God, ‘Depart from us!’
And ‘What can the Almighty do to them?’
- 18 “Yet He filled their houses with good *things*;
But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

- 19 “The righteous see and are glad,
And the innocent mock them,
20 *Saying*, ‘Truly our adversaries are cut off,
And their abundance the fire has consumed.’

Eliphaz Urges Job to Repent

- 21 “Yield now and be at peace with Him;
Thereby good will come to you.
22 “Please receive instruction from His mouth
And establish His words in your heart.
23 “If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored;
If you remove unrighteousness far from your tent,
24 And place *your* gold in the dust,
And *the gold of Ophir* among the stones of the brooks,
25 Then the Almighty will be your gold
And choice silver to you.
26 “For then you will delight in the Almighty
And lift up your face to God.
27 “You will pray to Him, and He will hear you;
And you will pay your vows.
28 “You will also decree a thing, and it will be established for you;
And light will shine on your ways.
29 “When you are cast down, you will speak with confidence,
And the humble person He will save.
30 “He will deliver one who is not innocent,
And he will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands.”

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

Job 23–24

Job Ignores Eliphaz and Yearns for an Audience With God

23:1 Then Job replied,

- 2 “Even today my complaint is rebellion;
His hand is heavy despite my groaning.
3 “Oh that I knew where I might find Him,
That I might come to His seat!
4 “I would present *my* case before Him
And fill my mouth with arguments.
5 “I would learn the words *which* He would answer,
And perceive what He would say to me.
6 “Would He contend with me by the greatness of *His* power?
No, surely He would pay attention to me.
7 “There the upright would reason with Him;
And I would be delivered forever from my Judge.

I May Not Know Where God Is, But He Knows Where I Am—“I Shall Come Forth as Gold”

- 8 “Behold, I go forward but He is not *there*,
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;

- 9 When He acts on the left, I cannot behold *Him*;
He turns on the right, I cannot see Him.
- 10 “But He knows the way I take;
When He has tried me,
I shall come forth as gold.
- 11 “My foot has held fast to His path;
I have kept His way and not turned aside.
- 12 “I have not departed from the command of His lips;
I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.

Job Believes That God Decreed His Suffering

- 13 “But He is unique and who can turn Him?
And *what* His soul desires, that He does.
- 14 “For He performs what is appointed for me,
And many such *decrees* are with Him.
- 15 “Therefore, I would be dismayed at His presence;
When I consider, I am terrified of Him.
- 16 “*It is* God *who* has made my heart faint,
And the Almighty *who* has dismayed me,
- 17 But I am not silenced by the darkness,
Nor deep gloom *which* covers me.

Job Describes the Suffering Caused by Greed, Exploitation and Injustice

- 24:1 “Why are times not stored up by the Almighty,
And why do those who know Him not see His days?
- 2 “Some remove the landmarks;
They seize and devour flocks.
- 3 “They drive away the donkeys of the orphans;
They take the widow’s ox for a pledge.
- 4 “They push the needy aside from the road;
The poor of the land are made to hide themselves altogether.
- 5 “Behold, as wild donkeys in the wilderness
They go forth seeking food in their activity,
As bread for *their* children in the desert.
- 6 “They harvest their fodder in the field
And glean the vineyard of the wicked.
- 7 “They spend the night naked, without clothing,
And have no covering against the cold.
- 8 “They are wet with the mountain rains
And hug the rock for want of a shelter.
- 9 “Others snatch the orphan from the breast,
And against the poor they take a pledge.
- 10 “They cause *the poor* to go about naked without clothing,
And they take away the sheaves from the hungry.
- 11 “Within the walls they produce oil;
They tread wine presses but thirst.
- 12 “From the city men groan,
And the souls of the wounded cry out;
Yet God does not pay attention to folly.

- 13 “Others have been with those who rebel against the light;
They do not want to know its ways
Nor abide in its paths.
- 14 “The murderer arises at dawn;
He kills the poor and the needy,
And at night he is as a thief.
- 15 “The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight,
Saying, ‘No eye will see me.’
And he disguises his face.
- 16 “In the dark they dig into houses,
They shut themselves up by day;
They do not know the light.
- 17 “For the morning is the same to him as thick darkness,
For he is familiar with the terrors of thick darkness.

Let the Wicked Be Accursed

- 18 “They are insignificant on the surface of the water;
Their portion is cursed on the earth.
They do not turn toward the vineyards.
- 19 “Drought and heat consume the snow waters,
So does Sheol those who have sinned.
- 20 “A mother will forget him;
The worm feeds sweetly till he is no longer remembered.
And wickedness will be broken like a tree.
- 21 “He wrongs the barren woman
And does no good for the widow.
- 22 “But He drags off the valiant by His power;
He rises, but no one has assurance of life.
- 23 “He provides them with security, and they are supported;
And His eyes are on their ways.
- 24 “They are exalted a little while, then they are gone;
Moreover, they are brought low and like everything gathered up;
Even like the heads of grain they are cut off.
- 25 “Now if it is not so, who can prove me a liar,
And make my speech worthless?”