

## Zophar's First Speech (c. 2200 BC)

Job 11

### Zophar Rebukes Job Sharply—God Has Punished You Less Than Your Guilt Deserves

1 Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,  
 2 Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?  
 3 Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?  
 4 For thou hast said, My doctrine *is* pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.  
 5 But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;  
 6 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that *they are* double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee *less* than thine iniquity *deserveth*.

### God's Ways Are Beyond Understanding, and He Can See Your Iniquity

7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?  
 8 *It is* as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?  
 9 The measure thereof *is* longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.  
 10 If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?  
 11 For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider *it*?  
 12 For vain man would be wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass's colt.

### If You Will Repent, God Will Again Bless You

13 If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;  
 14 If iniquity *be* in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.  
 15 For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:  
 16 Because thou shalt forget *thy* misery, *and* remember *it* as waters *that* pass away:  
 17 And *thine* age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.  
 18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig *about thee*, *and* thou shalt take thy rest in safety.  
 19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make *thee* afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.  
 20 But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope *shall be as* the giving up of the ghost.

## Job's Response to Zophar (c. 2200 BC)

Job 12–14

### Job Responds With Sarcasm

12:1 And Job answered and said,  
 2 No doubt but ye *are* the people, and wisdom shall die with you.  
 3 But I have understanding as well as you; I *am* not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?

### Job Points Out the Irony—He is Derided by his Friends, While the Tents of Robbers are Peaceful

4 I am *as* one mocked of his neighbor, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright *man is* laughed to scorn.  
 5 He that is ready to slip with *his* feet *is as* a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.  
 6 The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth *abundantly*.

### Even the Animals Know Your "Wisdom"

7 But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:  
 8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.  
 9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?  
 10 In whose hand *is* the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.  
 11 Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?  
 12 With the ancient *is* wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

### God is Sovereign—But He Does Not Always Act in Ways You Might Expect

13 With him *is* wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.  
 14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.  
 15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.  
 16 With him *is* strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver *are* his.  
 17 He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.  
 18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.  
 19 He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

- 20 He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.  
 21 He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.  
 22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.  
 23 He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them *again*.  
 24 He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness *where there is no way*.  
 25 They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like *a drunken man*.

#### **Job Tells His Friends to Be Silent and Let Him Address His Case Directly to God**

- 13:1 Lo, mine eye hath seen all *this*, mine ear hath heard and understood it.  
 2 What ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you.  
 3 Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.  
 4 But ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all physicians of no value.  
 5 O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.  
 6 Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.  
 7 Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?  
 8 Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?  
 9 Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye *so* mock him?  
 10 He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.  
 11 Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?  
 12 Your remembrances *are* like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.

#### **Job Is Certain of His Vindication**

- 13 Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what *will*.  
 14 Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?  
 15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.  
 16 He also *shall be* my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.  
 17 Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.  
 18 Behold now, I have ordered *my* cause; I know that I shall be justified.  
 19 Who *is* he *that* will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

#### **Job Addresses God—Two Pre-Trial Conditions**

- 20 Only do not two *things* unto me: then will I not hide myself from thee.  
 21 Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid.  
 22 Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.

#### **Job Addresses God—Explain My Fault, Why Are You Doing This to Me?**

- 23 How many *are* mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.  
 24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?  
 25 Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?  
 26 For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.  
 27 Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.  
 28 And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth eaten.

#### **Job Addresses God—The Brevity of Life**

- 14:1 Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble.  
 2 He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.  
 3 And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?  
 4 Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.  
 5 Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;  
 6 Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.

#### **Job Addresses God—The Terrible Finality of Death**

- 7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.  
 8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;  
 9 *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.  
 10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he?  
 11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

**Job Addresses God—A Hope after Death**

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

16 For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

17 My transgression *is* sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

**Job Addresses God—Hope Fades and Despair Returns**

18 And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

19 The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow *out* of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.

20 Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

21 His sons come to honor, and he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.

22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

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