

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 and said,

- 2 *"If* someone would test a word with you, would you be offended?
 But who can refrain from speaking?
- 3 Look, you have instructed many,
 and you have strengthened weak hands.
- 4 Your words have raised up *the one who* stumbles,
 and you have strengthened knees giving way.
- 5 But now it has come to you, and you are worn out;
 it touches you, and you are horrified.
- 6 *Is not* your fear *in God* your confidence?
 Is not your hope even the integrity of your ways?

Eliphaz Voices His Worldview

- 7 "Think now, who has perished *who is* innocent?
 Or where *are* the upright destroyed?
- 8 *Just* as I have seen, plowers of mischief
 and sowers of trouble will reap it.
- 9 By the breath of God they perish,
 and by the blast of his anger they come to an end.
- 10 *The* roar of *the* lion and *the* voice of a lion in its prime,
 and *the* teeth of *the* young lions are broken.
- 11 *The* lion is perishing without prey,
 and *the* lion's whelps are scattered.

Eliphaz's Vision

- 12 "And a word came stealing to me,
 and my ear received *the* whisper from it.
- 13 Amid troubling thoughts from night visions,
 at *the* falling of deep sleep on men,
 dread met me, and trembling,
 and it made many of my bones shake.
- 14 And a spirit glided before my face;
 the hair of my flesh bristled.
- 15 It stood still, but I could not recognize its appearance;
 a form *was* before my eyes;
 there was a hush, and I heard a voice:
- 16 'Can a human being be more righteous than God,
 or can a man be more pure than his Maker?
- 17 Look, he does not trust in his servants
 and he charges his angels with error.
- 18 How much more dwellers in clay houses,
 whose foundation *is* in the dust?
 They are crushed like a moth.
- 19 Between morning and evening they are destroyed;
 without *anyone* regarding *it* they perish forever.
- 20 *Is not* their tent cord pulled up within them?
 They die, but not in wisdom.'

"Man is born to trouble"

- 5:1 "Call now, is there *anyone* answering you?
 And to which of *the* holy ones will you turn?
- 2 For vexation will slay the fool,
 and jealousy will kill *the* simple.
- 3 I have seen a fool taking root,

- but suddenly I cursed his dwelling.
4 His children are far from deliverance,
and they are crushed in the gate,
and there is no deliverer—
5 whose harvest *the* hungry eats,
and he takes it from behind *the* thorns;
and *the* thirsty pants after their wealth.
6 Indeed, mischief does not come from the dust,
and trouble does not sprout from the earth.
7 But a human being is born to trouble,
and they soar aloft *like* sparks.

Eliphaz's Advice—Appeal to the God of Justice

- 8 “But I myself will seek God,
and to God I would commit my cause.
9 *He* is doing great and unsearchable things,
marvelous things without number—
10 the one who is giving rain on *the* surface of *the* earth
and is sending water on *the* surface of *the* fields,
11 to set *the* lowly on high,
and *those* mourning are lifted to safety.
12 *He* is frustrating *the* devices of *the* crafty,
and their hands do not achieve success.
13 *He* is capturing *the* wise in their craftiness, [cf. [1 Cor 3:19](#)]
and the schemes of the wily are rushed.
14 In the daytime they meet *with* darkness,
and they grope at noon as *in* the night.
15 And he saves from the sword of their mouth,
even *the* poor from the hand of the strong.
16 So there is hope for the powerless,
and wickedness shuts its mouth.

Eliphaz's Advice—The God Who Disciplines Also Restores

- 17 “Look, happy *is the* human being whom God reproves;
and you must not despise the discipline of Shaddai, [cf. [Prov 3:11–12](#); [Heb 12:5–6](#)]
18 for he himself wounds, but he binds up;
he strikes, but his hands heal.
19 From six troubles he will deliver you,
and in seven evil shall not touch you.
20 In famine he will redeem you from death,
and in war from *the* power of *the* sword.
21 From *the* scourge of *the* tongue you shall be hidden,
and you shall not be afraid of destruction when it comes.
22 At destruction and famine you shall laugh,
and you shall not fear the wild animals of the earth.
23 For your covenant *will be* with the stones of the field,
and the wild animals of the field will be at peace with you.
24 And you shall know that your tent *is* safe,
and you will inspect your fold, and you shall not be missing *anything*.
25 And you shall know that your offspring *are* many,
and your descendants like the vegetation of the earth.
26 You shall come in maturity to *the* grave,
as the raising up of a stack of sheaves in its season.
27 “Look, we have searched this out—it *is* true;
hear it and know *it* yourself.”

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

Job 6–7

Job Defends His Bitter Words

6:1 Then Job answered and said,

- 2 “If only my vexation could be well weighed,
and my calamity could be lifted up together *with it* in *the* balances,
3 for then it would be heavier than the sand of the seas;
therefore my words have been rash,
4 for the arrows of Shaddai *are* in me;
my spirit drinks their poison;
the terrors of God are arrayed against me.
5 Does *the* wild ass bray over grass,
or *the* ox bellow over its fodder?
6 Can tasteless *food* be eaten without salt,
or is there taste in the white of a marshmallow plant?
7 I refused to touch *them*;
they *are* like food that will make me ill.

Job's Desire for Death

- 8 “O that my request may come,
and *that* God may grant my hope,
9 that God would decide that he would crush me,
that he would let loose his hand and kill me.
10 But it will still be my consolation,
and I would recoil in unrelenting pain,
for 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 hold out?
12 Or *is* my strength *like* the strength of stones?
Or *is* my flesh bronze?
13 Indeed, my help is not in me,
and *any* success is driven from me.

Job's Disappointment With His Former Friends and Acquaintances

- 14 “Loyal love *should come* for the afflicted *from* his friend,
even if he forsakes the fear of Shaddai.
15 My companions are treacherous like a torrent-bed;
like a streambed of wadis they flow away,
16 which are growing dark because of ice upon them,
it will pile up snow.
17 In time they dry up, they disappear;
when it *is* hot, they vanish from their place.
18 The paths of their way wind *around*;
they go up into the wasteland, and they perish.
19 The caravans of Tema looked;
the traveling merchants of Sheba hope for them.
20 They are disappointed, because they trusted;
they came here and they are confounded.

Job's Disappointment With Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar

- 21 “For now you have become such;
you see terrors, and you fear.
22 Is it because I have said, ‘Give to me,’
or, ‘Offer a bribe for me from your wealth’?
23 or, ‘Save me from the foe’s hand,’
or, ‘Ransom me from the tyrants’ hand’?

Job Pleads for Genuine Help

- 24 Teach me, and I myself will be silent;
and make me understand how I have gone astray.
- 25 How painful are upright words!
But what does your reproof reprove?
- 26 Do you intend to reprove *my* words
and *consider the* words of a desperate *man* as wind?
- 27 Even over *the* orphan you would cast the lot,
and you would bargain over your friend.

Job Insists that He is Innocent

- 28 “Therefore be prepared, turn to me,
and I surely will not lie to your face.
- 29 Please turn, let no injustice happen;
indeed, turn, my righteousness is still intact.
- 30 Is there injustice on my tongue?
Or can my palate not discern calamity?

Job Describes His Suffering

- 7:1 “Does not a human being have hard service on earth?
And *are not* his days like the days of a laborer?
- 2 Like a slave he longs for *the* shadow,
and like a laborer he waits for his wages.
- 3 So I had to inherit months of worthlessness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.
- 4 When I lie down, I say, ‘When shall I rise?’
But *the* night is long,
and I have my fill of tossing until dawn.
- 5 My body is clothed *with* maggots and clods of dust;
my skin hardens, then it gives way *again*.
- 6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle,
and they come to an end without hope.

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

- 7 Remember that my life *is* a breath;
my eye will not return to see good.
- 8 The eye of *the one* seeing me will not see me;
your eyes *are* upon me, but I will be gone.
- 9 A cloud vanishes, and it goes away,
so *he who* goes down to Sheol will not come up.
- 10 He does not return again to his house,
and his place does not recognize him again.

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

- 11 “Even I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in my spirit’s anguish;
I will complain in my inner self’s bitterness.
- 12 Am I *the* sea, or a sea monster,
that you set a guard over me?
- 13 When I say, ‘My bed will comfort me,
and my couch will ease my complaint,’
- 14 then you terrify me with dreams,
and with visions you terrify me.
- 15 So my inner self will choose strangling—
death more than my existence.
- 16 I loathe *my life*; I would not live forever;
depart from me, for my days *are* a breath.

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

- 17 “What *is* a human being that you make him great
and that you fix your mind on him,
18 so that you visit him every morning,
you test him every moment?
19 How long will you not turn away from me?
Or not leave me alone until I swallow my spit?
20 *If* I have sinned, what have I done to you, watcher of humanity?
Why have you made me as a target for yourself,
so that I have become a burden to myself?
21 And why do you not pardon my transgression
and take away my guilt?
For now I shall lie in the dust,
and you will seek me, but I will be no more.”

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