

Supplemental Notes:

*The Book
of
Job*

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Acknowledgments

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant endnotes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

Audio Listing

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The Book of Job Session 1

Introduction

Job is the oldest book of the Bible. Victor Hugo called it the "greatest masterpiece of the human mind."

Style: Epic poem (Cf. *Iliad* and *Odyssey*); it may have been presented at times as a drama. It contains mostly poetry; yet opens and closes with prose (like program notes).

Yet, Job was a real person: mentioned by Ezekiel, along with Noah and Daniel (Ezek 14: 14,20) and by James (James 5:11).

Vocabulary

- 110 *hapax legomena*, words not found elsewhere in OT (more than any other OT book);
 - 5 different words for lions (4:10-11);
 - 6 for traps (18:8-10);
 - 6 for darkness (3:4-6; 10:21,22).
- names of constellations, metals, precious stones.
- familiarity with detailed anatomy of great beasts.
- technical language of law and courts, occupations of mining and hunting.
- references to insects, reptiles, birds, beasts; weapons and military strategies; musical instruments; means of travel; geography; whirlwinds, dew, dawn, darkness, clouds, rain.
- richness of similes and metaphors unexcelled. For example, the brevity of life is depicted by:
 - a weaver's shuttle (7:6);
 - one's breath (7:7);
 - a cloud (7:9);
 - a shadow (8:9; 14:2);
 - a runner (9:25);
 - a falcon (eagle) (9:26);
 - and a flower (14:2).

Along with poetic parallelism (two lines with the second completing or contrasting the first) and strophes (a group of verses in a rhythmic pattern) make the book of Job:

The greatest poem of ancient or modern times...

—Tennyson

The Names of God

Elohim	God the Creator, carrying out His <i>will</i> ;
El	God the Omnipotent, carrying out His <i>work</i> .
Eloah	God who is <i>worshipped</i> and <i>reverenced</i> ; the Living God, in contrast to idols, etc.
Adonai	God as the <i>Ruler</i> of the Earth (the whole Earth rather than as limited to His own people).
Jehovah	God the Eternal: <i>Who is, and was, and is to come</i> . The self-existent God, who stands in <i>covenant</i> relation to His own people.
Shaddai	God as all-bountiful; not merely Almighty as regards to His power, but all-bountiful as regards to His resources (“breast”).

Languages: Hebrew + Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Sumerian, Ugaritic...

[Hebrew idioms are also instructive: “Accept” is from אָשַׁן *dashen*, “turn to ashes,” because that was the way in which the Lord accepted a sacrifice. He *turned it to ashes*, by causing Divine fire to fall from the heavens and consume it. This is how He “had respect” for Abel’s offering: this is how He testified of Abel’s “gifts”; this is how Abel “obtained witness that he was righteous” (Heb 11:4).]

Single author: interdependence of design.

When Was Job Written?

Time of patriarchs... no mention of Law, Israel, etc. (yet, sacrifices!). [No mention of other “gods.”] Traditions? (Talmud): Job = King of Edom? Job = Pyramids? Re: Joseph?

- 1) Length of Job’s life: 60? (Children grown) + 140 after calamities (42:16); compares with Terah, Abraham’s father, 205; Abraham, 175; Isaac, 180; Jacob, 147; Joseph, 110; ...shorter since. May have overlapped Noah (350 yrs after flood); Shem (502 years; cf. Gen 9:28; 11:10,11); Abraham may have been born only 292 years after the flood...
- 2) Wealth reckoned in livestock (1:3; 42:12), Cf. Abraham (Gen 12:16; 13:2) and Jacob (Gen 30:43; 32:5).
- 3) Depicts Sabeans and Chaldeans (1:15,17) as nomads; they weren’t in later years.
- 4) Job was priest of his family (1:5); national priesthood not yet in existence.
- 5) Hebrew word “piece of money” (42:11) is used elsewhere only twice (Gen 33:19, Josh 24:32), both in reference to Jacob.
- 6) Musical instruments referenced (21:12; 30:31) timbrel, harp (or lyre), flute (or pipe) are also mentioned in Gen (4:21; 31:27).
- 7) Job’s daughters were heirs of the estate along with brothers (42:15); not likely after Mosaic law given (Num 27:8).
- 8) Similar literary works in Mesopotamia about the same time.
- 9) No references to Mosaic institutions (priesthood, laws, tabernacle, special religious days, events, etc.)
- 10) The name *Shaddai* is used of God 31 times in Job (17X elsewhere in OT) and is a name familiar to the patriarchs (Gen 17:1; Ex 6:3).
- 11) Personal and place names associated with patriarchal period:

Sheba (an oath, seven):

- 1) A son of Raamah (Gen 10:7) whose descendants settled with those of Dedan on the Persian Gulf.
- 2) A son of Joktan (Gen 10:28), probably the founder of the Sabeans.
- 3) A grandson of Abraham: A son of Jokshan, who was a son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen 25:3).
- 4) A kingdom in Arabia. Sabeans from Sheba (Gen 25:3; Job 1:15;

6:19); Sheba, in fact, was Saba in Southern Arabia, the Sabaeans of classical geography, who carried on the trade in spices with the other peoples of the ancient world. They were Semites, speaking one of the two main dialects of Himyaritic or South Arabic. Sheba had become a monarchy before the days of Solomon. Its queen brought him gold, spices, and precious stones (1Kgs 10:1-13) She is called by our Lord the “queen of the south” (Mt 12:42).

Tema (south; desert): Another grandson of Abraham: one of the sons of Ishmael, and father of a tribe so called (Gen 25:15 1Chr 1:30 Job 6:19 Isa 21:14 Jer 25:23) which settled at a place to which he gave his name, some 250 miles SE of Edom, on the route between Damascus and Mecca, in the northern part of the Arabian peninsula, toward the Syrian desert; (the modern Teyma).

Eliphaz (“God his strength”)

- 1) One of Job’s “three friends” who visited him in his affliction (Job 4:1). He was a “Temanite”; i.e., a native of Teman, in Idumea (Edom). He first enters into debate with Job. His language is uniformly more delicate and gentle than that of the other two, although he imputes to Job special sins as the cause of his present sufferings. He states with remarkable force of language the infinite purity and majesty of God (Job 4:12-21 15:12-16).
- 2) The son of Esau by his wife Adah, and father of several Edomitish tribes (Gen 36:4,10,11,16)

Job=common West Semitic name 2000 B.C.; earliest known usage is in a list of kings in Mari on the upper Euphrates River, 2000 - 1800 B.C.; also name of a 1900 B.C. prince in the Egyptian Execration texts. Other occurrences found in the Amarna letters (ca 1400 B.C.) and in Ugaritic texts.

Chiastic Structure

- 1:1-2:5 Introduction.
- 2:6 - 2:10 Satan’s assault. Job stripped of all.
- 2:11- 13 The Three Friends. Their arrival.
- 3:1 - 31:40 Job and his friends.
- 32 - 37 Elihu.
- 38:1 - 42:6 Jehovah and Job.
- 42:7 - 9 The Three Friends. Their departure.
- 42:9 - 10 Satan’s Defeat. Job blessed of all.
- 42:11 -17 Conclusion.

Scientific: More on creation than in Genesis. At least 15 discoveries *anticipated*...

Primary Lesson

The primary lesson in the Book of Job is the oldest lesson in the world and the most important lesson that it is possible for us to learn. If we know not this lesson, it matters not what else we may know. Our knowledge may be vast, extensive, and deep on all other subjects; but it will not carry us beyond the grave.

This is a lesson I cannot teach you: How shall mortal man be justified with God?

It may be that Deity can forgive sins, but I do not see how.

— Socrates, 500 B.C.

The Lord Himself must be the teacher of this Divine lesson:

“...the end of the Lord”:

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

James 5:11

“Where art thou?” (Lost! Gen 3) What did the “mighty famine” do for the lost son (Luke 15)? He confessed: “I have sinned.”

What did another famine do for Joseph’s brethren (Gen 44:16)? They acknowledged: “We are verily guilty!”

What did Nathan’s parable do for David (2 Sam 12:1-13)? “I have sinned against the Lord.”

What did the vision do for Isaiah (6:1-5)? “I am undone...unclean.”

...and Daniel (10:1-8)? “My comeliness was turned into corruption.”

What did a miracle do for Peter (Luke 5:1-8)? “Depart from me; I am a sinful man, O Lord.” [If all we gather from this is “the patience of Job,” it will only provide additional grounds for self-confidence and our own ultimate disappointment and depression, for we will fail to produce such patience as his...]

Major Issues

“Why do the innocent, or righteous, suffer?” [This is never really answered!?!]

Deeper level: The relationship of Satan to God: Not the equal (re: dualism, “The Force” of *Star Wars*, et al.) All forces are at God’s command; no surprises. More than any other book of the Bible, Job gives us a glimpse of the true greatness and majesty of God.

Job 1

- 1] There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Uz: son of Aram (founder Aramaeans), son of Shem, son of Noah.

Uz was:

- 1) a land of kings in Jeremiah’s day (Jer 25;20); possession or
- 2) neighbor of Edom (Lam 4:21);

Some scholars believe Uz was in the fertile Bashan, S. of Damascus; others, that Uz was in Edom, SE of Dead Sea; others, E. of Edom, in Northern Arabia.

This last view is supported by the fact that:

- 1) Job lived near the desert (1:19);
- 2) his land was fertile for agriculture and livestock (1:3,14; 42:12);
- 3) customs, vocabulary, ref. to geography, etc. relate to N. Arabia.

Job was probably one of the most prominent citizens.

“Perfect”: תָּם *tam*, upright, sincere, without guile. Blameless (not sinless: but he knew how to handle his sin). Complete, well-balanced man: he feared God.

- 2] And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.
3] His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

Job was very prosperous. Riches are not necessarily evil. [This inventory will be important to revisit when we get to the end of the book...]

“Men of the east”: identified with Kedar, northern portions of Arabia (Jer 49:28); Kuwait?

- 4] And his sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

Fatherly concern: a family man.

- 5] And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings *according* to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

A man of prayer and sacrifice.

“...cursed God in their hearts” - a key theme of the book. Job knew that the greatest *spiritual* stress can come when things are going well.

“Burnt offering” = total dedication to God, a recognition of God’s rightful ownership of men.

Job = a godly man, a great landowner, and a good father.

The Adversary’s Assault

- 6] Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

Scene shift: invisible realities; cf. Ephesians: “the heavnlies” and Elisha’s servant: (2 Kgs 6:17); cf. Dan 10; Rev 4.

“Sons of God” בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים *Ben HaElohim* = angels, created beings. Cf. Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Gen 6; Jn 1:12.

Satan (“Adversary”) has access and a mission of accusation...

- 7] And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

[Is the Earth only one of the locations?]

Satan’s searches: *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

1 Peter 5:8

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:26, 27

Anger gives opportunity for attack; Cf. Ephesians 6:10-18. (The Lord prayed for Peter, not that Peter might not fall, but that Peter's faith might not fail!)

- 8] And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*

God endorses Job: "None like him in all the earth." Job's report card is the key to rest of book. The book loses its point if the righteousness of Job is not taken as genuine. Don't you reap what you sow (Gal 6:7; Ps 34:11-22; 1 Pet 3:10)?

Where justice ends, love begins...

Job's friends were in error on this point... What makes this collision of minds so dramatic is the soundness of their views and the cogency of their arguments. These are not "men of straw."

It is God who challenges Satan (not the other way around)!

- 9] Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

Satan's premise: only for self-interest. Ultimate question for us all: reflecting Satan's cynical philosophy opens his entry...

Is worship a coin that buys us a heavenly reward? Is piety a contract...? Will Job serve God even if he gets nothing in return? Real worship vs. thanksgiving...

The attack also attacks the integrity of God. Rigging the rules...

God uses Job to silence Satan; also to deepen Job's spiritual insight (and yours and mine!)

Metal has no strength which has not been tempered in the fire.

- 10] Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

Nothing can happen to any of His without His permission. All our troubles are "Father filtered."

- 11] But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.
12] And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Note specific limits set by God. Satanic limitations. A rebel who is constrained by rules. No suggestion that he even attempts to break forth from this limitation. God is totally in control.

- 13] And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:
14] And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:
15] And the Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Satan doesn't waste any time.

Sabeans: from region of Sheba, SW Arabia? or a town called Sheba, near Dedan in upper Arabia (Gen 10:7; 25:3).

- 16] While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Some kind of storm: 7000 sheep killed!

- 17] While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Camels most prized of the animals in that part of the world.

Chaldeans were fierce, marauding inhabitants of Mesopotamia. Possibly from the north, in contrast with the Sabeans, who had come from the south.

- 18] While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:
19] And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four

corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Satan's control over natural forces (Cf. Jesus rebuked the wind and waves).

20] Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Shaving the head part of the mourning rituals in Mesopotamia and Canaan. Because of heathen associations, it was forbidden by the Law. (Thus, later?)

Next time you get bad news, read this chapter! The malignancy of Satan goes to the limit. There is far deeper significance to the Book of Job, far deeper reasons for God's permission of tragedy, than the ones we usually think of.

Revelation of the mercy and compassion of God. Job: no complaints. [C.S. Lewis: "Why should the righteous suffer? Why not? They're the only ones who can handle it!"]

21] And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

"I recognize God's sovereign right to do with me as He will." He didn't charge God with wrong; didn't curse the desert brigands, the frontier guards, etc. Job's amazing response shows Satan was wrong: man can be godly apart from material gain.

"mother's womb" = poetic way of referring to the earth (Ps 139:15; Ecc 5:15; 12:7). Dust from the ground: Gen 2:7; 3:19; Job 10:9; 24:15).

22] In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Job passed the test. God was vindicated. [How would *you* have done?]

If Satan had his way, every one of us would be in this kind of difficulty (1 Cor 10:13). God will not test you above what you are able to bear.

Dr. Francis Schaeffer: First argument of the Gospel is not that Jesus died for our sins; nor that God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives; rather: *God is there!*

There is a God, and He is in control of life.

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent student)

- 1) What are the evidences that Job was a real person and not just a figment of literature?
- 2) Where is the likely location of Uz?
- 3) Give an example of poetic parallelism that pervades Hebrew literature.
- 4) Give an example of a strophe.
- 5) Study the origin of Satan and his role in God's plan (Cf. Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28; et al.).
- 6) Study the role of the *Nephilim* and their origins in Genesis 6 (and later!).

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant")

- 1) What is the primary lesson of the book?
- 2) When is the most *spiritually* hazardous time: when things are going well or when they are going badly?
- 3) What is Satan's agenda and motives? Why?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated)

- 1) Explore the use of chiasmic structures in the Bible (Cf. E.W. Bullinger, et al.).
- 2) What mysteries lie behind the use of "dust" in the Bible?

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 1 - 5.

Session 2: Job 2 - 5

Review

- Job in his Prosperity (Chapter 1)
- Satan's Malignity (and limitations)
- Job in his Adversity (Chapter 2)
- Satan's further malignity
- Job in his Piety in Extremity
- Job's 3 "Comforters" (Chapters 3 and following)

Insights

- Satan is accountable to God
- Satan's dark mind is an open book to God
- Satan is behind the evils that curse the earth
- Satan is neither omnipresent nor omniscient
- Satan can do nothing without Divine permission
- God's eyes are ever on His own.

Job 2

1] Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

Round Two. [God was already vindicated in His evaluation of Job in Chapter 1.]

We are given a viewpoint of Job and his suffering which Job himself was not permitted to have.

2] And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

Rhetorically parallel to the previous chapter.

3] And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

A rebuttal to the self-interest premise of Satan. We should be alert to those who go about "accusing the brethren!" We know whose agenda that is advancing...

4] And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

"Skin for skin": proverbial saying as in bartering for animal skins.

5] But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Satan is asking for a change in the rules. ["Never waste your time on a good loser!"]

"Flesh and bone": our total humanity: emotional as well as physical. Cf. Same expression Jesus used after His resurrection... (Luke 24:39).

Job could not see what was going on behind the scenes; *neither can we in our own lives!*

6] And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.
7] So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

Leprosy? Elephantiasis? ...chronic eczema, psoriasis, pityriasis, keratosis or pemphigus foliaceus? Cf. "sore boils": plagues in Egypt (Ex 9:8-11; Deut 28:27); Hezekiah's illness (2Kgs 20:7).

Job's included: inflamed, ulcerous sores (2:7); itching (2:8); degenerative changes in facial skin (2:7,12); loss of appetite (3:24); depression (3:24-25); nightmares (7:14); worms in boils (7:5); hardened skin and running sores (7:5); difficulty in breathing (9:18); dark eyelids, failing vision (16:16); foul breath (19:17); rotting teeth (19:20); loss of weight, anorexia (19:20; 33:21); continual pain (30:17); restlessness (30:27); peeling, blackened skin (30:30); fever (30:30); lasted at least for several months (7:3; 29:2). [And *you* thought you had problems!]

[Satan does not appear again in Job after this verse.]

- 8] And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.
- 9] Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

(Curse: “bless,” but with sarcasm.) It must be admitted that we cannot really tell what she is proposing, even less what her motive was. [LXX expansion represents her not unfavorably, as sharing Job’s misery, so that her motive in wishing him dead was to end his unendurable sufferings speedily.]

Husbands often draw emotional strength from their wives far more than they or their wives realize.

- 10] But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

He did not call her a foolish woman: he said, “you speak as one of the foolish women.” We are not here simply to have a good time. There are meaningful objectives to be attained in life, even when it all turns sour. When pressure comes, when life is no longer fun, life is still worth living. A philosophy that wants to abandon everything as soon as things become unpleasant is a shallow, distorted view of life.

Job did not sin: the score is now 2-0, in favor of Job (and God). If Satan had his way, *we would all perish*. God assures that we will never experience more than we can handle; Job proved that. He is teaching us our limits.

The Three Counsellors

Satan now unleashes his final stronghold: the spirit of Job, the ultimate reality of his life. *His heavy artillery are his religious counsellors!* His means: sincere (?), but misguided friends. With friends like these, one doesn’t need enemies...

- 11] Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

They came from three different countries; Job was internationally prominent.

Job’s Three Friends

“Eliphaz the Eloquent”

Eliphaz (Edomite name, Gen 36:4, 11, 15); the Temanite was from Tema in Arabia, or Teman in Edom (Jer 49:7, 20; Ezek 25:13; Amos 1:12; Obad 8, 9). Based on his own observation and human experience: “Job suffers because he has sinned.”

“Bildad the Brutal”

Bildad the Shuhite was from Shuah, a location named after Abraham’s youngest son (Gen 25:2). There is a plausible identification with a place in the Middle Euphrates mentioned in cuneiform texts. He rests his arguments on human tradition: “Job is a hypocrite.”

“Zophar the Zealous”

Zophar = ? Same as Balak’s father (Num 22-24)? Naamah possibly a Judean town (Josh 15:41). Rests on assumptions of human merit versus orthodox dogma: “Job is a wicked man.”

All these reasonings were wrong in their conclusions and false in their logic. God Himself will declare that they had “darkened counsel by words without knowledge” (38:2).

[A fourth, Elihu, will join in later...] An intercessor more than a judge? Ch 32: Elihu, the son Brachel the Buzite, may have been from Buz, the name of Abraham’s nephew. Buz in mentioned along with Dedan and Tema, Arabian locations (Jer 25:23).]

- 12] And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

They treated the situation like a funeral! Express grief and despair four ways:

- wailed (emotional shock),
- wept (in sorrow),

- tore their robes (in brokenheartedness, and
- threw dust over their heads to the sky (in deep grief and in recognition of their helplessness).

13] So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

A funeral service, for seven days. Statutory time for mourning the dead was seven days (Gen 50:10; 1 Sam 31:13; Ezek 3:15).

Job 3

1] After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.

Weeks have gone by. Baffled, buffeted, and tormented, Job longs for death. In this chapter he asks three poignant questions: the first: “Why was I ever born?”

2] And Job spake, and said [Hebrew: “answered”],

3] Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a man child conceived.

[Cf. Other psalms of grief: Jer 20:14-18; Lam 3:1-18; especially Matthew 27:46; Psalm 22:1!]

4] Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

[Darkness is mentioned five times, using four different words. The verbal tapestry is clearer in the Hebrew; all six lines, vv. 4-5, are unified by verbal signals.]

5] Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify (stain or challenge) it.

“terrify”: stain or challenge.

6] As *for* that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.

(or, let it not rejoice among the days...)

7] Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

8] Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning (or “leviathan”). “Leviathan” is mentioned in five passages: here, 41:1; Psalm 74:14; 104:26; Isaiah 27:1. We will explore the possible references to dinosaurs in Chapter 41.

Job is probably simply referring to a custom of sorcerers or enchanters, who claimed to have the power to make a day unfortunate by rousing the dragon asleep in the sea; poetic license on a common idiom.

9] Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but *have* none; neither let it see the dawning of the day.

Hebrew: “eyelids of the morning.”

10] Because it shut not up the doors of my *mother’s* womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.

Marvelous poetry. Job’s pressure is increasing and he is beginning to crumble under it. There isn’t anything harder for us to bear than unexplained trouble.

11] Why died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?

Job’s second question: “Why didn’t I die at birth?”

12] Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?

“My life has been totally meaningless.” He then gives us a very primitive view of death...

13] For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,

14] With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

15] Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

16] Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants *which* never saw light.

17] There the wicked cease *from* troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

18] *There* the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

19] The small and great are there; and the servant *is* free from his master.

Many people see death that way: a time of rest, after solitude after the tumult of life. [Cf. the play, *Our Town*...]

Job's understanding of life after death needs enlightenment; that is one of the reasons this suffering comes into his life. His view of death will be quite different by the end of this book...

Job's third question is, "Why can't I die now?"

- 20] Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul;
- 21] Which long for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

Suicide is never contemplated: death must be God's gift, and for Job now, this has become the only possible evidence of His goodness.

- 22] Which rejoice exceedingly, *and* are glad, when they can find the grave?
- 23] *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?
- 24] For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.
- 25] For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.
- 26] I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

So now we come to Job's three counselors: "Eliphaz the Eloquent," "Bildad the Brutal," and "Zophar the Zealous."

Eliphaz is evidently the oldest: there is a smoothness about him, and a courtesy (at least at the beginning) that indicates that he has learned how to say unpleasant things in gracious ways.

Bildad is brutal and plainspoken. He lays it on Job and seems not to care what the effect is.

Zophar is compassionate and emotional, but he speaks with a great deal of force, trying to motivate Job.

They are too human to be stereotypes or caricatures. Our own philosophies will be reflected in their arguments.

There at least 18 speeches on this "wisdom school on a dunghill": 10 by Job; three by Eliphaz; three by Bildad; and, two by Zophar. It is hard to find any proposition in the book which is not to some extent correct, taken in isolation.

There is not much meeting of the minds in this clash of words. Job is not arguing a point; he is trying to understand his experience. He is dreadfully in earnest, and transparently honest.

His friends talk *about* God. Job talks *to* God. This makes him the only authentic theologian in the book. He tells God exactly how he feels and just what he thinks. There can hardly be better prayers than that.

Nowhere does Job bewail the losses of Chapter 1 or the illness of Chapter 2. In this he is utterly consistent. His concern from beginning to end is God: not his wealth or health, but his life with God. It is because he seems to have lost God that he is in such torment.

Job 4

(Eliphaz will give his addresses in Chapter 4 & 5, 15, and 22.)

Eliphaz's first argument breaks down into six main points, and when you hear them you will get the gist of what these three will be saying through the rest of the book. He begins by saying, "Follow your own advice."

- 1] Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
- 2] *If* we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking?

Hebrew: "refrain from words?" Notice the courtesy with which he begins.

- 3] Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.
- 4] Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.
- 5] But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.
- 6] *Is not this* thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?

Eliphaz is saying, "Job, you have been a counsellor to many people; you can identify the problem and assist in their dealing with it. Now it's your turn: follow your own advice." He then goes on to define the problem and we learn his basic principle of life:

- 7] Remember, I pray thee, who *ever* perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?
- 8] Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

"You reap what you sow." Like the Psalmist:

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Psalm 37:25

But Eliphaz goes too far; it is one thing as an abstract principle, quite another to apply it to Job's case. He deserves the retort: "You haven't seen much."

9] By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

"by the breath": that is, by his anger.

10] The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

11] The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

What Eliphaz's argument lacks in substance he makes up for with rhetoric, There are no fewer than five different words for "lion" used here!

Eliphaz uses a pride (family) of lions to describe the natural strength of human beings: it appears to be strong, but in God's judging hand, it is broken. His argument is that the righteous are never punished; only the unrighteous suffer.

"Where did you ever see an innocent man perish? Where did you ever see an unrighteous man succeed?" he asks. Job's problem is caused by his own sin, something he is hiding. "There is something wrong, Job. If you will only admit it you will be all right."

"Who sinned, this man or his parents?" (John 9:2f).

- Moses in Midian;
- David in his hide-out;
- Jeremiah and Joseph in the pit;
- Daniel in the lion's den;
- Paul in (more than one) prison;
- Job in the city dump;
- Heroes of Heb 11: all sufferers.
- And, of course, Jesus: Isa 53:3! Christ was *the* innocent to suffer...

Eliphaz goes on to tell Job that if he will fear God and confess his sin, things will be all right. Relying on his own experience, he suspects that his position is vulnerable, he falls back on a claim of divine revelation (Cf. Balaam, Numbers 24:15ff). He breaks down his message into two parts. First, he refers to a night vision that came to him. (Spooky!)

12] Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

"secretly": Hebrew, "by stealth."

13] In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,

14] Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

"came...": Hebrew, "met." "all": Hebrew, "the multitude of."

15] Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

The word רוּחַ *ruach*, commonly feminine, has a masculine verb: *he* stood, *his* appearance, etc. Thus, Spirit of God seems intended, not "wind."

16] It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,

"there...": or, "I heard a still voice."

17] Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?

The banality makes Eliphaz sound pretentious, and quite unfair. Job has not questioned the ways of God, let alone claimed to be better than God. All he has done is proclaim his misery.

18] Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:

"and his...": or, "nor in his angels, in whom he put light."

19] How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

20] They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it.

"destroyed": Hebrew, "beaten in pieces."

21] Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom.

This is an argument based on the fact that infinite justice rules the universe. God is holy and pure; what chance would a man have to stand before him and claim to be sinless? That is good theology. Even Socrates understood that when he declared, “Perhaps Deity can forgive sin, but I do not see how.”

As we will see before the end of this book, it was a problem that Job was, indeed, facing: he did not understand his own heart, and he so confesses at the end.

But the problem with Eliphaz’s argument is that he sees God *only* as a God of justice. He sees nothing of love, compassion, and forgiveness, or of discipline and training from the Father’s hand. So because of *unbalanced theology*, his truth becomes false in its application.

In this way, many people use partial truths and end up in error. Charles Spurgeon spoke about “preachers who went about with a theological revolver in their ecclesiastical trousers.”

Eliphaz continues to argue that trouble comes only from sin. But the gulf between Job and his friends is opening up. Job’s position is more audacious, more believing than Eliphaz’s insipid insinuations. He will not be silenced by reminders that it is not for puny man to question the ways of the Almighty. His questions may be unanswerable, but he will ask them, and insist on his right to ask them.

Job 5

1] Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?

“turn”: or, look?

2] For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.

“envy”: or, indignation. “That is what is wrong: you are vexed and jealous, that’s why you have trouble.”

3] I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

]4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither *is there* any to deliver *them*.

What a low blow! This is a hidden reference to the calamity that befell all Job’s children in a single day (Job 1:19). Eliphaz is suggesting that such things happen only because there is something wrong in Job’s life.

5] Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.

6] Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

“affliction”: or, iniquity.

7] Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

“trouble”: or, labour. “sparks...”: Hebrew, “the sons of the burning coal lift up to fly.”

“Trouble comes from sin; therefore, if you’ve got trouble, sin has to be the reason.” [Do you see the logical fallacy here?]

In this next section, Eliphaz suggests that there is no playing games with God because He knows too much.

8] I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

9] Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

“unsearchable”: Hebrew, “there is no search.”

“without...”: Hebrew, “till there be no number.”

10] Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:

“fields”: Hebrew: “outplaces.”

11] To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

12] He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform *their* enterprise.

“their enterprise”: or, any thing.

13] He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

14] They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

“meet...”: or, “run into.”

15] But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16] So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

One of the most beautiful creedal hymns in the Bible. “God is in control. He is so clever and wise that you cannot deceive Him. Just give up, get it out into the open, and God will bless you.”

17] Behold, happy *is* the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

Psalms 94:12; Prov 3:11; Heb 12:5. It will be pointed out that Elihu makes (Job 36:10).

18] For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19] He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

20] In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.

“power”: Hebrew, “hands.”

21] Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

22] At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

23] For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

24] And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle *shall be* in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.

“thy tabernacle...”: or, “peace is thy tabernacle.”

“sin”: or, “err.”

In view of Job’s loss of property and family, Eliphaz’s bumbling cant understandably infuriates Job.

25] Thou shalt know also that thy seed *shall be* great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.

“great”: or, “much.” (The promise of numerous descendants can hardly comfort a person who just been rendered childless!)

26] Thou shalt come to *thy* grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

27] Lo this, we have searched it, so it *is*; hear it, and know thou *it* for thy good.

Delitzsch points out that “The skill of the poet is proved by the difficulty which the expositor has in detecting that which is false in the speech of Eliphaz.”

Though that all sounds like good theology, it does not take in all the facts. [The Lord Himself will single Eliphaz out for his error (42:7).]

Anyone who has lived a few years at all know it is possible to find godly people who are not protected, who still go through times of trial and peril and suffering. Job has no quarrel with statements highlighting the power and justice of God. This issue doesn’t fit Job’s case. He had long learned to view his good life as a gift, not a reward, so he has no complaint when it is removed.

Job’s highest wisdom is to love God for Himself alone. Eliphaz’s words, far from being a comfort, are a trap. Job is being tested (as Abraham was in Gen 22). Abraham’s, like Job’s, was neither punitive (for the sinner) nor corrective (for the saint). This story is given to us so that we might learn to correct our theology and to understand that *there are deeper reasons for suffering than sin*.

Job’s speeches will face these realities more courageously than those of his friends. The vindication of goodness, God’s or man’s, lies beyond its ultimate testing in death, when the victory of resurrection proves the indestructibility of the good life. At the cross the darkest mystery of our human agony will be embraced by God Himself, and be transformed from moral outrage to glory. When the Victim is the willing sinbearer, His suffering becomes the conquest of evil and the display and proof that God is love...

Eliphaz’s “comfort” raises Job’s torment an even higher pitch. Job’s loss of certainty about God’s goodness is a poverty and a pain more desolating than all his other troubles! Everything else may go without loss if God remains. It is the threat to his faith, not his running sores, that becomes the upper hurt in his mind. The “friendship of God” (29:4) is all that matters now!

Job’s reply comes to us in Chapters 6 and 7. In Chapter 6, Job rebukes his friends—all three of them. In Chapter 7 Job addresses his complaint to God.

* * *

Then, more to come: More comments on the creation than any other book of the Bible; at least 15 anticipations of scientific discoveries of recent history... more than any other book of the Bible. No fallacies, or errors...

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What advantage to we have in analyzing Job's situation that Job himself did *not* have?
- 2) What important restrictions did Satan have with respect to his dealings with Job?
- 3) What did Job's three "comforters" have in common? How did they each differ?
- 4) What were Job's three questions in his opening comments to his counselors?
- 5) What was Eliphaz's basic message to Job? In what ways was he correct in his view? In what ways was he wrong?
- 6) What was the logical fallacy in 5:7?

Discussion Questions:

"Where two people agree, one is redundant."

- 1) Discuss the appropriateness, and the shortcomings, of Eliphaz's remarks to Job.
- 2) How valid was the apparent message that Eliphaz received from the "spirit being"? Was this just a rhetorical contrivance? Or a messenger from Satan? Or what?
- 3) How were Job's comforters instruments of Satan's agenda?
- 4) What is the key lesson in the Book of Job (as it appears thus far)?

- 5) What are the dangers of an "unbalanced" theology? Give present-day examples.

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the names and other clues as to the likely geography and time of the Book of Job.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read: Job's reply, Chapters 6 & 7; and the rest of the counsel and arguments of Job's three friends Chapters 8 - 31.

Session 3: Job 6 - 14

Review:

Job's Three Friends:

Eliphaz the Eloquent: Based on his own observation and experience. "Job suffers because he has sinned."

Bildad the Brutal: Rests on tradition. "Job is a hypocrite."

Zophar the Zealous: Rests on assumptions of orthodox dogma. "Job is a wicked man."

[A fourth: Elihu, later...] An intercessor more than a judge?

Session 3:

6,7	Job's reply
8	Bildad's 1st discourse
9,10	Job's reply
11	Zophar's 1st Discourse
12-13	Job's sarcastic defense
14	Job's Prayer

Job 6

Job's Reply to Eliphaz

In Chapter 6, Job rebukes his three friends. In Chapter 7, he addresses his complaint to God.

- 1] But Job answered and said,
- 2] Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together!
- 3] For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up.
- 4] For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.
- 5] Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?

You never hear an animal complain when he is well fed and taken care of. That's why I'm complaining

- 6] Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?
- 7] The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat.
- 8] Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!
- 9] Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!
- 10] Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.
- 11] What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?
- 12] Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?
- 13] Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?

"I have no strength to handle all this." [Have you ever been this desperate?] But God knows us better than we know ourselves. So Job's cry goes unanswered so far.

He then rebukes his friends, irritated at their lack of understanding:

- 14] To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.
- 15] My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away;

- 16] Which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid:
- 17] What time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.
- 18] The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.
- 19] The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.
- 20] They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.
- 21] For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid.

Wells without water; as refreshing as a dry river bed. Job's irritated with them.

- 22] Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?
- 23] Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?
- 24] Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.
- 25] How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?
- 26] Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?
- 27] Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your friend.
- 28] Now therefore be content, look upon me; for it is evident unto you if I lie.

Tell me what's wrong; I don't know what it is. He knows that there isn't anything he has not already confessed.

- 29] Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in it. 30 Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my taste discern perverse things?

Job now turns to God, and complains about the hardness of his present experience.

Job 7

- 1] Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?
- 2] As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:
- 3] So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.
- 4] When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.
- 5] My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

6] My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

We get concerned with a pimple on our face; Job is covered with boils!

- 7] O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.
8] The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.
9] As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.
10] He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

He has given up. He thinks he will never see any relief; he cries out in honest despair:

- 11] Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12] Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?
13] When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;
14] Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:
15] So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.
16] I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity.
17] What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?
18] And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?
19] How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?
20] I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?
21] And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.

As we review these discussions, remember that in every trial there are two purposes in view:

- 1) **Satan's:** to use the pain of Job's illness to afflict his body; to use the "comfort" of his friends to irritate his soul; and to use the silence of God to assault his spirit and break his faith.
- 2) **God's:** to teach Job some truths he never knew before; to deepen his theology and help him understand God and himself much better. God's purpose was to answer Satan before the principalities and powers of the whole universe and to prove him wrong in his philosophy of life. God's purpose was also to provide a demonstration for all sufferers in the ages to follow that God knows what He is doing!

The comforters prove to be the hardest trial of all.

Job 8

Bildad's 1st Discourse

Bildad the Brutal takes up the attack.

- 1] Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
2] How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?
3] Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?
4] If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression;
5] If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;
6] If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
7] Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

God cannot do wrong, he argues. God will respond to repentance; the experience of the fathers confirm this:

- 8] For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:
9] (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)
10] Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

He continues with various common sayings of the day:

- 11] Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?
12] Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.
13] So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:
14] Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.
15] He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.
16] He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.
17] His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.
18] If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

19] Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

Man, by nature, must have God's blessing in order to prosper. God always cuts off those who seem to prosper because of evil in their midst. He closes with a call to repentance:

- 20] Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:
21] Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.
22] They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

What Bildad says is true and logical, as far as it goes. It is supported by plausible arguments both from the experience of the past and the testimony of Scripture. So what's wrong? It is what is *left out* that makes it wrong:

- 1) They answer Job's words without trying to find out what lies behind them. They zero in on what he says without understanding his agony.
- 2) Their theology is incomplete: there is no understanding that there were aspects of God and dimensions to His Word which they had not yet seen. We, too, are often guilty of judging only on the basis of a rigid theology that focuses on some aspects of truth while ignoring others.
- 3) They never pray with Job. They never ask God to open their minds and illuminate their understanding so that they can help their friend. The book is full of prayers: but only Job's!

You cannot find much wrong with their arguments. What a lesson for each of us: we need to speak cautiously when we deal with deep hurts and problems of life.

Job 9

Job's Reply

In Chapters 9 and 10 Job replies to Bildad.

- 1] Then Job answered and said,
- 2] I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?
- 3] If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

Job also has an inadequate theology; he accepts the principle that trouble comes only from sin. He would have analyzed another's problems along the same line before his own trials had begun. In the long dark hours of searching his own heart he has not been able to identify any sin with which he has not already dealt.

So his dilemma is, "I'm not aware of sin in myself, yet the trouble is there; therefore, the problem must lie with God." But Job has no way to examine God, which he states in very eloquent terms. First he says that God's wisdom is beyond man:

- 4] He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?
- 5] Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.
- 6] Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.
- 7] Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.
- 8] Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.
- 9] Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.

[We will discover some astonishing things about these particular constellations when we get to Job 38:31!]

- 10] Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

He recognizes God's invisibility in the next two verses...

- 11] Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.
- 12] Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

...and God's sovereignty:

- 13] If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.

[Rahab = Egypt?]

- 14] How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him?
- 15] Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge.
- 16] If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.
- 17] For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.
- 18] He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

- 19] If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?
 20] If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.
 21] Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.

First ray of light is coming (vv.32-35): life becomes incomprehensible where there is no understanding God. We need a frame of reference, and He is the only relevant one!

- 22] This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.
 23] If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.
 24] The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?
 25] Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good.
 26] They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.
 27] If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself:
 28] I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
 29] If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?
 30] If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;
 31] Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

The first ray of light in Job's deep gloom:

- 32] For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.
 33] Neither is there any daysman [umpire] betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.
 34] Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me:
 35] Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.

What is needed is a mediator: one who understands us both, and who can bring us together! For the first time in this book we begin to see why God is putting Job through this protracted trial. Now Job begins to realize the terrible gulf between man and God that must be bridged by another. (In the NT God becomes a man: He takes our place, lives as we live, feels and we feel, and solves our problem!)

It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

Psalm 119:71

Job 10

Darkness again closes in around him, and drives him to prayer, searching for answers. (Answers that every sufferer faces when going through a particularly difficult time!)

- 1] My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
 2] I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.
 3] Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?
 4] Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?
 5] Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days,
 6] That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?
 7] Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.

He is asking if God somehow limits Himself to man's circumstances and capabilities. (The intimations of the Incarnation, the great underlying truth of the NT!)

- 8] Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.
 9] Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?
 10] Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?
 11] Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.
 12] Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.
 13] And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee.
 14] If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.
 15] If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction;
 16] For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me.
 17] Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.

What can I do? Where can I turn? Every argument that has ever occurred to a suffering saint is brought out in the Book of Job. All the haunting dilemmas are faced. The questions are not answered at this point. They will be answered before we are through, but is a way we could never anticipate!

He concludes by crying out, "Leave me alone."

- 18] Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!
- 19] I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.
- 20] Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,
- 21] Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;
- 22] A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

Next, a scorching rebuke by Zophar.

Job 11

Zophar's 1st Discourse

Zophar's scorching rebuke to what he sees as Job's sinful folly:

- 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.

You almost see him shaking his fist in Job's face. He is getting less than he deserves!

- 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.

Any man as stupid as you, Job, will never get any help. Quite a comforter, this one!

- 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.

No identification with Job. Just cold, analytic logic. And no intimation of an offer to help.

Job's Defense

The first round of dialog ends with Job's sarcastic defense in chapters 12 & 14.

Job 12

- 1] And Job answered and said,
- 2] No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

They know it all. [They have a great career ahead as a radio answer man!]

- 3] But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?

You haven't added anything to my knowledge!

- 4] I am as one mocked of his neighbour, 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.

You don't understand because you haven't "been there."

6] The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

Look around you. Idolaters prosper. Life testifies that you are wrong. Nature also confirms that God deals as He pleases:

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.

Job demonstrates that he understands God fully as well as they do:

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 13

Job continues:

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.

Their silence would have helped more than they have:

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.

If God judges him, He will also judge them! Leave me alone that I might come before God Himself!

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.

[This famous passage may not really be what Job said: "Behold, he will slay me; I have no hope; yet I will defend my ways to his face." RSV]

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.

These "comforters" should stop arguing and help him more by their silence! They are so rigid in their theology, and so blind to the dimensions of God, that they are only increasing the torment of the poor man. We need to learn from their example and be extremely careful in our own approach to the suffering of others! We need to "weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15)."

[Cf. *10 reasons Christians have trials*, Hal Lindsey.]

From here on through Chapter 14 Job presents his case that he has prepared before God:

C.S. Lewis has well said that to argue with God is to argue with the very power that makes it possible to argue at all. Job knows this and that he must have mercy from God before he can even stand before Him.

He has two requests:

- 1) That God will stop the pain and anguish so that he does not have to speak out of constant torment.
- 2) That God would veil his presence so that Job will not be terrified by the awesomeness of a mighty God.

One thing Job never loses is his consciousness of the character of God. He always retains his vivid sense of the majesty of God.

- 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's cry for knowledge: he needs more information before he can go on.

- 23] How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.

In any court of law, every prisoner has the right to know the charges placed against him.

- 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.

The only thing that occurs to Job are the sins of the past, despite the fact that he had offered sacrifices for them according to God's program.

Job 14

Next, Job brings out the helplessness and the hopelessness of man before God.

- 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.
- 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's pessimistic view of life

- 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!

The longings of his heart: to be freed from guilt, etc. Cf. Isaiah 26:20, 21!

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

[Job's astonishing insight for his resurrection will be declared in Job 19:25-27!]

- 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.
- 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 wastest 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 honour, 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.

Round One is complete. All three will have at him again; but then God Himself will jump in!

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What the response of Job to Eliphaz? Why is he irritated?
- 2) What was the main thrust of Bildad's argument? And Job's reply?
- 3) What was the main thrust of Zophar's argument? And Job's sarcastic reply?

Discussion Questions:

"Where two people agree, one is redundant."

- 1) Discuss the various *purposes* in view: from Satan's point of view; and from God's point of view.
- 2) Discuss the *changes* in Job's evolving perspective. What specific insights are beginning to emerge that were not evident at the very beginning?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Analyze the specific deficiencies and myopia of the comforter's theological positions.
- 2) List the various reasons Christians have trials.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 15-31, finishing the three rounds of discourses.

Session 4 Job 15 - 31 (Rounds 2 & 3)

In the previous session, we completed Round #1 of the three rounds of discourses. All three "friends" had a chance at Job.

We will survey the next 16 chapters to garner the flavor of the eloquence and the continuing "logic" of their attacks.

2nd Round

15	Eliphaz's 2 nd Discourse
16, 17	Job's reply
18	Bildad's 2 nd Discourse
19	Job's reply
20	Zophar's 2 nd Discourse
21	Job's reply

3rd Round

22	Eliphaz's 3 rd Discourse
23, 24	Job's reply
25	Bildad's 3 rd Discourse
26:1-27:10	Job's reply
[27:11-28:28	Zophar's 3 rd ?]
29-31	Job's reply.

2nd Round: Eliphaz's 2nd Discourse

Job 15

In the first six verses of verses of this chapter, Eliphaz the Temanite charges Job with presumptuous words:

- 1] Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,
- 2] Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?
- 3] Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?
- 4] Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.
- 5] For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty.

- 6] Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee.

Eliphaz started out very courteously, but now he is thrusting deeply. He now accuses Job of pretentious claims:

- 7] *Art* thou the first man *that* was born? or wast thou made before the hills?
8] Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?
9] What knowest thou, that we know not? *what* understandest thou, which *is* not in us?
10] With us *are* both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father.
11] *Are* the consolations of God small with thee? *is* there any secret thing with thee?
12] Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at,
13] That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest *such* words go out of thy mouth?

“We have the same sources of knowledge as you. Why do you put us down and think yourself so smart?” Then he returns, as all the friends do, to their narrow and worn-out theology:

- 14] What *is* man, that he should be clean? and *he which is* born of a woman, that he should be righteous?
15] Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.
16] How much more abominable and filthy *is* man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

Who do you think Eliphaz has in mind? Again, it is not his theology that is wrong; he is pointing out the general nature of the depravity of man, the fall, and its effects upon human life. No one is righteous before God. But he fails to point out to Job, specifically, what he has done.

God never charges him with fault until Job begins to see what is wrong.

These men come charging Job, whose life gives the lie to their charges. Yet they, too, are guilty of these very things because they, too, are part of the human race.

Eliphaz goes on—in a long passage—to argue as he did before: “The wicked are going to be punished; therefore, if you are being punished, you must be wicked.” Cf. Vv.34, 35.

- 17] I will shew thee, hear me; and that *which* I have seen I will declare;
18] Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid *it*:
19] Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.

- 20] The wicked man travaileth with pain all *his* days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.
21] A dreadful sound *is* in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.
22] He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.
23] He wandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where *is it*? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.
24] Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.
25] For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.
26] He runneth upon him, *even* on *his* neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:
27] Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks.
28] And he dwelleth in desolate cities, *and* in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.
29] He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.
30] He shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.
31] Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompence.
32] It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green.
33] He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.
34] For the congregation of hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.
35] They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

Job 16

Job's Reply

In Chapters 16 & 17, Job does not know how to answer, but he is trying to be honest: the great thing about Job is that he is no hypocrite. He never tries to cover over or embroider his case.

- 1] Then Job answered and said,
2] I have heard many such things: miserable comforters *are* ye all.

Indeed, they are!

- 3] Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?
4] I also could speak as ye *do*: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.

- 5] *But* I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage *your grief*.

Sarcastic words, coming from a tortured man. Satan is using these friends for what Paul calls “fiery darts of the evil one.” We, too, need to be on our guard lest we become a channel for Satan’s accusations against someone who is suffering as Job is suffering here.

Job goes on to state the facts as he understands them: “All I can conclude is that God must hate me.”

- 6] Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged; and *though* I forbear, what am I eased?
7] But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company.
8] And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, *which* is a witness *against me*: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.
9] He teareth *me* in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

God must also be behind the widespread rejection of Job:

- 10] They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me.
11] God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.
12] I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken *me* by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark.
13] His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.
14] He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a giant.
15] I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust.
16] My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids *is* the shadow of death;
17] Not for *any* injustice in mine hands: also my prayer *is* pure.

Job charges God with all that is wrong in his life; but God is wonderfully patient. Job is not the highest example of faith in the Scriptures. But he is an example of how difficult it is for our natural view of life to be shattered. *God sometimes has to translate theology into painful experience before we really begin to grasp what He is trying to say* (Job 16).

- 18] O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.
19] Also now, behold, my witness *is* in heaven, and my record *is* on high.
20] My friends scorn me: *but* mine eye poureth out *tears* unto God.
21] O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man *pleadeth* for his neighbour!
22] When a few years are come, then I shall go the way *whence* I shall not return.

Job 17

Job’s Reply (Continued)

Despite the charges Job makes against God, at this point he recognizes that God must also supply the answer. God often sends trial to wean us from dependence on people and to find our resource in God Himself.

Job now prays that God will set him free; but largely from his friends!

- 1] My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves *are ready* for me.
2] *Are there* not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?
3] Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who *is he that* will strike hands with me?
4] For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt *them*.
5] He that speaketh flattery to *his* friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.
6] He hath made me also a byword of the people; and aforetime I was as a tabret.
7] Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members *are* as a shadow.
8] Upright *men* shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.
9] The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.
10] But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find *one* wise *man* among you.
11] My days are past, my purposes are broken off, *even* the thoughts of my heart.
12] They change the night into day: the light *is* short because of darkness.
13] If I wait, the grave *is* mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.
14] I have said to corruption, Thou *art* my father: to the worm, *Thou art* my mother, and my sister.
15] And where *is* now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?
16] They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when *our* rest together *is* in the dust.

Job 18

Bildad’s 2nd Discourse

In this chapter, Bildad goes on the defensive, again with his narrow, rigid dogma.

- 1] Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
- 2] How long *will it be ere* ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.
- 3] Wherefore are we counted as beasts, *and* reputed vile in your sight?
- 4] He teareth himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?
- 5] Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.
- 6] The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.
- 7] The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down.
- 8] For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.
- 9] The gin shall take *him* by the heel, *and* the robber shall prevail against him.
- 10] The snare *is* laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.
- 11] Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet.
- 12] His strength shall be hungerbitten, and destruction *shall be* ready at his side.
- 13] It shall devour the strength of his skin: *even* the firstborn of death shall devour his strength.
- 14] His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.
- 15] It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because *it is* none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.
- 16] His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.
- 17] His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.
- 18] He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.
- 19] He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.
- 20] They that come after *him* shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.
- 21] Surely such *are* the dwellings of the wicked, and *this is* the place *of him that* knoweth not God.

Job 19

Job's Reply

This chapter gives a piteous plea of Job, regarding his friends and the mystery of what is happening to him.

- 1] Then Job answered and said,
- 2] How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?
- 3] These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed *that* ye make yourselves strange to me.

- 4] And be it indeed *that* I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.
- 5] If indeed ye will magnify *yourselves* against me, and plead against me my reproach:
- 6] Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.
- 7] Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there is* no judgment.
- 8] He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.
- 9] He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head.
- 10] He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath been removed like a tree.
- 11] He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as *one of his* enemies.
- 12] His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

In vv. 13 - 19 we have a vivid description of the isolation he feels:

- 13] He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.
- 14] My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.
- 15] They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.
- 16] I called my servant, and he gave *me* no answer; I intreated him with my mouth.
- 17] My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's *sake* of mine own body.
- 18] Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.
- 19] All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.
- 20] My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.
- 21] Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.
- 22] Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?
- 23] Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!
- 24] That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

Little did he realize that these words would be literally fulfilled!

Then we encounter one of the most famous declarations in the Old Testament:

- 25] **For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:**
- 26] **And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:**

27] **Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.**

He concludes, “My heart faints within me!”

One of the earliest declarations of the resurrection of the body found in the Word of God.

Job never fails to see the majesty and power of God, and now comes the dawning realization that God is working out a great and mighty purpose, and that God Himself will be visibly present before men. And all that He has done will be vindicated.

Life is a mystery. We cannot comprehend it all: it is painted on too large a canvas for us to grasp the total design. But Job is learning to trust the God who is there; to believe that He will supply the answers he seeks.

- 28] But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?
29] Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword, that ye may know *there is* a judgment.

Ray Stedman adds this poem as a summary of the lesson of the Book of Job to this point:

*When God wants to drill a man,
And thrill a man,
And skill a man;
When God wants to mold a man
To play the noblest part,
When He yearns with all His heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world shall be amazed,
Watch His methods, watch His ways—*

*How He ruthlessly perfects
Who He royally elects.
How He hammers him and hurts him,
And with mighty blows, converts him
Into trial shapes of clay
Which only God understands,*

*While his tortured heart is crying,
And he lifts beseeching hands.
How he bends but never breaks*

*When His good He undertakes.
How He uses
Whom He chooses,
And with every purpose, fuses him,
By every act, induces him
To try His splendor out.*

God knows what he's about!

– Unknown¹

This is the message of Job to us.

Job 20

Zophar's 2nd Discourse

As we read the discourses of Job's comforters, we may recognize many of our own attitudes: Pharisaism is orthodoxy without godliness; outward rightness with inward wrongness.

- 1] Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,
- 2] Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for *this* I make haste.
- 3] I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.
- 4] Knowest thou *not* this of old, since man was placed upon earth,
- 5] That the triumphing of the wicked *is* short, and the joy of the hypocrite *but* for a moment?
- 6] Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds;
- 7] *Yet* he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where *is* he?
- 8] He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.
- 9] The eye also *which* saw him shall *see him* no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.
- 10] His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods.
- 11] His bones are full *of the sin* of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.
- 12] Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, *though* he hide it under his tongue;
- 13] *Though* he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth:
- 14] *Yet* his meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* the gall of asps within him.
- 15] He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

- 16] He shall suck the poison of asps: the viper's tongue shall slay him.
- 17] He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.
- 18] That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow *it* down: according to *his* substance *shall* the restitution *be*, and he shall not rejoice *therein*.
- 19] Because he hath oppressed *and* hath forsaken the poor; *because* he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;
- 20] Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.
- 21] There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.
- 22] In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.
- 23] *When* he is about to fill his belly, *God* shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain *it* upon him while he is eating.
- 24] He shall flee from the iron weapon, *and* the bow of steel shall strike him through.
- 25] It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors *are* upon him.
- 26] All darkness *shall be* hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.
- 27] The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him.
- 28] The increase of his house shall depart, *and his goods* shall flow away in the day of his wrath.
- 29] This *is* the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.

Job 21

Job's Reasoned Reply

Job seems calm and dispassionate, and begins with an appeal for a hearing.

- 1] But Job answered and said,
- 2] Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations.
- 3] Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.
- 4] As for me, *is* my complaint to man? and if *it were so*, why should not my spirit be troubled?
- 5] Mark me, and be astonished, and lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth.
- 6] Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

In vv. 7-13, he claims the facts contradict what these friends say. In fact, the entire life of the wicked is often an untroubled one.

- 7] Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?
- 8] Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

- 9] Their houses *are* safe from fear, neither *is* the rod of God upon them.
- 10] Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.
- 11] They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.
- 12] They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.
- 13] They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

They often defy God and still they prosper.

- 14] Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
- 15] What *is* the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?
- 16] Lo, their good *is* not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
- 17] How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and *how oft* cometh their destruction upon them! *God* distributeth sorrows in his anger.
- 18] They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.

How seldom to they get their comeuppance in this life? God's judgment is very infrequent:

- 19] God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know *it*.
- 20] His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
- 21] For what pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?
- 22] Shall *any* teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.
- 23] One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.
- 24] His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.
- 25] And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.
- 26] They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

Life seems to be unfair. "If there is a good God why does He let this kind of thing happen?"

He now turns on his comforters:

- 27] Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine against me.
- 28] For ye say, Where *is* the house of the prince? and where *are* the dwelling places of the wicked?
- 29] Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,
- 30] That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.
- 31] Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him *what* he hath done?
- 32] Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb.

- 33] The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.
- 34] How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?

The wicked live above the law; the system is prostituted to the favor of the elite...

3rd Round: Job 22

Eliphaz's 3rd Discourse

Here he finally loses his cool entirely...

- 1] Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
 2] Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?
 3] *Is it* any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it* gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?

Job never thought that at all. Although he does not understand what God is doing, he still sees Him as a God of justice and righteousness.

- 4] Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?

Satan is always trying to get us to blame God and accuse Him of being unfair and unjust.

- 5] *Is* not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?
 6] For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing.
 7] Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.
 8] But *as for* the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honourable man dwelt in it.
 9] Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.
 10] Therefore snares *are* round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee;
 11] Or darkness, *that* thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.
 12] *Is* not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!
 13] And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?
 14] Thick clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

- 15] Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?
 16] Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood:
 17] Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?
 18] Yet he filled their houses with good *things*: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

(He is mimicking Job, who said these very things in the previous chapter, verse 16.)

- 19] The righteous see *it*, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn.
 20] Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.
 21] Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.
 22] Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.
 23] If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.
 24] Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the *gold* of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.
 25] Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.
 26] For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.
 27] Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.
 28] Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.
 29] When *men* are cast down, then thou shalt say, *There is* lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.
 30] He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

Job 23

Job's Reply

In these next two chapters, Job doesn't even attempt to answer arguments any more. He simply cries out of a trouble heart, eloquently telling them, and God, how he feels.

- 1] Then Job answered and said,
 2] Even to day *is* my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning.
 3] Oh that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his seat!
 4] I would order *my* cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

- 5] I would know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.
- 6] Will he plead against me with *his* great power? No; but he would put *strength* in me.
- 7] There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.
- 8] Behold, I go forward, but he *is* not *there*; and backward, but I cannot perceive him:
- 9] On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him*: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him*:
- 10] But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

This expresses a great deal of confidence that God is a God of justice; and he knows that God will explain it to him some day.

- 11] My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.
- 12] Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary *food*.
- 13] But he *is* in one *mind*, and who can turn him? and *what* his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth.
- 14] For he performeth *the thing that is* appointed for me: and many such *things are* with him.
- 15] Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.
- 16] For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:
- 17] Because I was not cut off before the darkness, *neither* hath he covered the darkness from my face.

Job 24

Job's Reply (Continued)

Why is God silent? Why doesn't He judge evil?

- 1] Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?
- 2] *Some* remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed *thereof*.
- 3] They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.
- 4] They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.
- 5] Behold, *as* wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey: the wilderness *yieldeth* food for them *and* for *their* children.
- 6] They reap *every one* his corn in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.

- 7] They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they have* no covering in the cold.
- 8] They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter.
- 9] They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.
- 10] They cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry;
- 11] *Which* make oil within their walls, *and* tread *their* winepresses, and suffer thirst.
- 12] Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly *to them*.
- 13] They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.
- 14] The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.
- 15] The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth *his* face.
- 16] In the dark they dig through houses, *which* they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light.
- 17] For the morning *is* to them even as the shadow of death: if *one* know *them*, *they are in* the terrors of the shadow of death.
- 18] He *is* swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.
- 19] Drought and heat consume the snow waters: *so doth* the grave *those which* have sinned.
- 20] The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree.
- 21] He evil entreateth the barren *that* beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow.
- 22] He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and no *man* is sure of life.

There are two great questions that seem to go unanswered in life: Why is God absent when He is needed? Why is He so silent when He should speak?

Paul and Peter sees these evidences of God's patience and longsuffering:

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Romans 2:4

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

- 23] *Though* it be given him *to be* in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes *are* upon their ways.
- 24] They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all *other*, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.
- 25] And if *it be* not *so* now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

Job 25

Bildad's 3rd Discourse

Now Bildad replies with two worn-out arguments...

- 1] Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
- 2] Dominion and fear *are* with him, he maketh peace in his high places.
- 3] Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?
- 4] How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman?
- 5] Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.
- 6] How much less man, *that is* a worm? and the son of man, *which is* a worm?

Job 26

Job's Reply?

[Most expositors treat the remaining chapters as Job's reply, with Zophar remaining silent in this final round. E.W. Bullinger points out reasons that 27:11-28:28 may well be Zophar's 3rd discourse, which would provide symmetry among all three...]

Here Job seems to hang up the phone. His answer to Bildad is rich in irony:

- 1] But Job answered and said,
- 2] How hast thou helped *him that is* without power? *how* savest thou the arm *that hath* no strength?
- 3] How hast thou counselled *him that hath* no wisdom? and *how* hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

- 4] To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

Satan sent them, but God is using them.

- 5] Dead *things* are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.
- 6] Hell *is* naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.
- 7] He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing.
- 8] He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.
- 9] He holdeth back the face of his throne, *and* spreadeth his cloud upon it.
- 10] He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.
- 11] The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.
- 12] He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.
- 13] By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.
- 14] Lo, these *are* parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

There are mysteries in God that no man can plumb.

Job 27

- 1] Moreover Job continued his parable, and said,
- 2] *As* God liveth, *who* hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, *who* hath vexed my soul;
- 3] All the while my breath *is* in me, and the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils;
- 4] My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.
- 5] God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.
- 6] My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach *me* so long as I live.
- 7] Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.
- 8] For what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?
- 9] Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?
- 10] Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?

[27:11-28:28 - Zophar's 3rd? See note at the opening of Chapter 26.]

- 11] I will teach you by the hand of God: *that which is* with the Almighty will I not conceal.

- 12] Behold, all ye yourselves have seen *it*; why then are ye thus altogether vain?
- 13] This *is* the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty.
- 14] If his children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword: and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.
- 15] Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and his widows shall not weep.
- 16] Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay;
- 17] He may prepare *it*, but the just shall put *it* on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.
- 18] He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth *that* the keeper maketh.
- 19] The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he *is* not.
- 20] Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.
- 21] The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.
- 22] For *God* shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand.
- 23] *Men* shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

Job 28

- 1] Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold *where* they fine *it*.
- 2] Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass *is* molten *out of* the stone.
- 3] He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.
- 4] The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters* forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.
- 5] *As for* the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.
- 6] The stones of it *are* the place of sapphires: and it hath dust of gold.
- 7] *There is* a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:
- 8] The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.
- 9] He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.
- 10] He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.
- 11] He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and *the thing that is* hid bringeth he forth to light.
- 12] But where shall wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of understanding?
- 13] Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.
- 14] The depth saith, *It is* not in me: and the sea saith, *It is* not with me.
- 15] It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof.
- 16] It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.
- 17] The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *shall not be for* jewels of fine gold.

- 18] No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom *is* above rubies.
- 19] The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.
- 20] Whence then cometh wisdom? and where *is* the place of understanding?
- 21] Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.
- 22] Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.
- 23] God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.
- 24] For he looketh to the ends of the earth, *and* seeth under the whole heaven;
- 25] To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

(For many centuries, men did not know that wind had weight; but it is here in Job.)

- 26] When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:
- 27] Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.
- 28] And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.

There are two kinds of speakers:

Those who have something to say; and
Those who have to say something.

Job's three friends are the latter kind.

The Three Compared

All were committed to the same fixed theory of life: calamity is always the outcome of sin; a health and wealth gospel. They all measure things by this present life. All are static; no advance in views, except in expression, eloquence. They must justify Job at God's expense (or vice versa!).

Eliphaz:	Observation.	Moralist.	Apologist.
Bildad:	Tradition.	Legalist.	Lecturer.
Zophar:	Assumption.	Dogmatist.	Bigot.

Fortunately, they're finally finished.

Job 29

Job's Reply

Now we have Job's extended soliloquy as his final defense. He reviews all that has happened to him; first, he counts his blessings:

He undoubtedly has the better of it, although he yields to rash and reckless statements that he later regrets and acknowledges. He is suffering too deeply to aim at mere argumentation: he seeks the truth.

- 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 30

Job's Reply (Continued)

Now we get the other side: the painful present. The first 15 verses describe how he is mocked:

- 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 clefts 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 31

Job's Reply (Continued)

Now Job searches for a reason. Even in this early treatise, Job has learned that to keep clean before God he has to be careful about what he sees. He makes a covenant with his eyes.

- 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.

No adultery here. No injustice to his servants:

- 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?

No injustice toward the poor and defenseless:

- 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.

No trust in wealth:

- 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;

No secret idolatry:

- 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.

No gloating over the misfortune of others:

- 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.

Not stingy with his wealth:

- 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.
- No hypocrisy or secrets: (vv.33, 37)
- 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.

He has not abused the land; not caused pollution of the environment, etc. (How relevant this book is!)

The words of Job are ended.

* * *

Summary

In the first round, the three are one in the contention that God always prospers the upright and punishes the perverse. Job rebuts that from his own experience.

In the second round, Eliphaz emphasizes that *only* the wicked suffer. Bildad insists that the wicked *always* suffer. Zophar insists that any seeming prosperity of the wicked is *shortlived*. Job rebuts each from his own experience.

In the third round the previous theories are more vehemently restated, embroidered with evasive platitudes. Again, Job rebuts from experience.

If you intend to argue with Job you had better have your arguments well in hand. He is able to see through the error of logic in their position. Their theology does not square with experience. It is their creed they have faith in, and not God Himself. A man with true experience is never at the mercy

of a man with an argument. At this point we sit where Job sits: his questions become our questions. The pressures, the riddles, trouble us, too. We, too, have learned that God is greater than any theology can contain; yet, he is never inconsistent, never capricious, never malicious. He is loving, and yet we do not always understand what is happening.

Job has had faith in the rule of God; but now, at last, he has begun to exercise in the God who rules.

Another insight is that Job's view of himself is still woefully inadequate. He has been defending himself, yet we, too, have too little understanding of sin's attack upon us and the depravity of our own hearts:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Jeremiah 17:9

“Desperately” = incurably. Paul points out that there are depths of which we are still not aware:

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

1 Corinthians 4:3, 4

From here on there is a noticeable break in the book. A new voice will be heard—one that I call The Mystery Man.

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What did all three “comforters” have in common? How did they differ?
- 2) What was the fault in their reasoning? Or were they correct?
- 3) How did the three rounds differ? How were they similar?
- 4) How did Job's views evolve during the rounds?
- 5) How did his comforters change?

Discussion Questions:

“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”

- 1) What was Job’s primary dilemmas?
- 2) Why *do* the innocent suffer?
- 3) Why *do* the wicked prosper?
- 4) Where did Job miss-speak? Attack or defend his responses.

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Is Bullinger’s conjecture correct: Is Job 27:11-28:28 possibly Zophar’s 3rd discourse? Why? Or Why not?

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Elihu’s Discourse: Chapters 32-37. Who was he? What role did he fill? Why didn’t God rebuke him as He did the others?

Notes:

1. Qv., Stedman, p.86.

* * *

Session 5: Job 32-37 The Mystery Man: Elihu

Now, suddenly, the ash-heap trio are silenced, and a new voice is heard. He is somewhat a man of mystery: he appears with very little introduction and expositors are quite divided on his significance.

(There are even some that suggest that these six chapters were a later addition, but this can be rejected as unwarranted on structural, theological, stylistic and linguistic grounds.)

Job 32

“Program Notes” to this Cosmic Drama

- 1] So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own [LXX: “their”] eyes.

(Bullinger points out that the LXX is correct with “their” eyes; they held their peace, yielding that they had been wrong.)

- 2] Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.

Who was Elihu? What was his role? Why didn’t God criticize him later like He did the others?

“Elihu” means “My God is he.” He is also identified as the son of Barachel, which means “God blesses.” Buz was a land near Uz where Job lived. Uz and Buz were two brothers of Nahor, the brother of Abraham (Gen 22:20, 21). However, Barachel was “of the kindred of Ram,” which suggests that Elihu may have been an ancestor of David (Ruth 4:19-22).

- 3] Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.
- 4] Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he.
- 5] When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

Four times he indicates his anger burned.

- 6] And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.
- 7] I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.
- 8] But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.
- 9] Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.
- 10] Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.

The Mystery Man

Commentators differ widely as to what to make of Elihu. Some regard him as a rather brash young man, of cocksure arrogance of youth, seeking to upstage the older men in their errors.

Other simply see him as repeating the same arguments of the previous three elders. However, I agree with those few that see Elihu as playing a very significant role in the drama:

- 1) It is important to note that the rebuke that God gives Job's three friends at the end of this book *excludes* Elihu! (Why?) He is not rebuked, nor does he have to ask Job to pray for him, as the three friends are told to do (Job 42:7, 8).
- 2) He is given an extremely prominent part in this drama: the longest of all the discourses (six chapters).
- 3) He always speaks with courtesy and sensitivity to Job, yet with strong and assertive feelings which he confesses. His courtesy is in contrast with the caustic and sarcastic tone of the three "comforters."
- 4) Perhaps most significantly, Elihu does not speak from his personal experience but from *revelation* (cf. v.8 above).

This is consistent with what we have seen previously: that wisdom and understanding can come only from God, and He can give it to the young as well as to the old.

Elihu comes as the answer to Job's cry for an explanation. God often provides an answer in a manner which we do not expect.

Elihu seems to be a kind of "John the Baptist" of the Old Testament. He gives witness to the Mediator who is God Himself. Elihu appears as a preliminary intermediary before God appears on the scene. He begins where the friends began, and ends with words very similar to those of God's when He at last appears on the scene.

His patience exhausted, he first addresses the three "comforters:"

- 11] Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.
- 12] Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words:
- 13] Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.
- 14] Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

He then further describes the three "friends":

- 15] They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.
- 16] When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more;)

After than introduction, he begins he begins to get his thoughts "off his chest":

- 17] I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.
- 18] For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.
- 19] Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.
- 20] I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.
- 21] Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man.
- 22] For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away.

Job 33

Elihu's Address to Job

- 1] Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.
- 2] Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.
- 3] My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

His words will be honest, impartial, and from a humble heart:

- 4] The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.
- 5] If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.
- 6] Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.
- 7] Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

A contrast to the way the three friends spoke to Job. He then begins to analyze Job's view of God.

Problem #1: Job sees God as capricious, acting out of His feelings like people do, according to His mood. [This is how Allah is presented, in total contrast to the God of the Bible.]

- 8] Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying,
 9] I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.
 10] Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy,
 11] He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

He summarizes all that Job has been saying: that God mistreats him without a justification, in a capricious way. Elihu's answer is to the point:

- 12] Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

We must always remember that. This is the continual argument throughout the Bible:

O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

Romans 9:20-22

Elihu then moves to:

Problem #2: The matter of the silence of God.

- 13] Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.
 14] For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

We all struggle with this one: we call it “unanswered prayer.” We fail to account for timing and style. Often we don't recognize the answer when it comes. Elihu suggests two ways: First, in dreams:

- 15] In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;
 16] Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,
 17] That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.
 18] He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

One of God's objectives is to stop man from destroying himself. One of the ways He does that is through dreams. [Of course, not all dreams come from God speaking to us. But psychologists are quick to point out that often dreams are a way by which suppressed reality comes into our consciousness whether we like it or not.]

We tend to deceive ourselves. Unpleasant things are shoved into our “hidden chambers”—some call it the subconscious—and they often appear in our dreams. These can be warnings.

I'm not suggesting that we are building a case for interpreting dreams; however, the Scriptures are full of instances where God *did* speak to men by means of dreams.

Job referred to them earlier (Job 7:14); Daniel also (Dan 1:17); Peter even quoted the Scripture which indicates I may have an advantage (Acts 2:17; quoting Joel 2:28) being an old man!

Others include: Abimelech (Gen 20:3f); Jacob (Gen 30:10); Laban (Gen 30:24); Joseph (Gen 37) and his two cell mates (Gen 40) and Pharaoh (Gen 41); Gideon (Judg 7); Solomon (1 Kgs 3); Nebuchadnezzar twice (Dan 2, 4); Joseph, Mary's husband thrice (Mt 1:20; 2:12, 19, 22); and even Pilate's wife (Mt 27:19).

Another way that God's speaks to us is through *pain*:

- 19] He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain:
 20] So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.
 21] His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out.
 22] Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

“Job, your very sufferings are speaking to you. But not as your so-called friends are suggesting.”

A threat to our life tends to change our entire value system instantly. C. S. Lewis explains:

We can rest contentedly in our sins and in our stupidities, and everyone who has watched gluttons shoveling down the most exquisite foods as if they did not know what they were eating, will admit that we can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.¹

Elihu goes on to bring out a second point about pain:

- 23] If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:

- 24] Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit:
I have found a ransom.
25] His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth:

A foreview of the Gospel of grace: these last words even hint of a “born again” experience involving a ransom and a “Mediator.”

There is a light that has been growing in Job's heart:

- In Chapter 9 he cried out, “There is no umpire (“daysman”) between us that can lay his hand upon us both, man and God.” (9:32. 33).
- In Chapter 16, he declared, “Even now, behold my witness is in heaven, and he who vouches for me is on high” (16:19).
- In Chapter 19, he declares, “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God (19:25,26).
- In Chapter 23 he realized, “He knows the way that I take. When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold (23:10).

Elihu now explains that his Mediator will guide him, and he will be restored:

- 26] He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.
27] He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not;
28] He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

Pain did that, so Elihu exhorts Job:

- 29] Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,
30] To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.
31] Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.
32] If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee.
33] If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

Job's silence indicates that Job is now ready to listen. And when Elihu finishes, God Himself begins to speak as we shall see...

Your God Is Too Small

- 1] Furthermore Elihu answered and said,
- 2] Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.
- 3] For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.
- 4] Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

Elihu now examines Job's view of God in some detail, inviting all (including us) to join in judgment:

- 5] For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.
- 6] Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.

Part of Job's problem is that he sees God as unjust, unfair, and unwilling to explain what is going on.

- 7] What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?
- 8] Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.
- 9] For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

A strange statement from the man who began with the great cry, “The Lord gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD (1:21).” He now seems to have adopted the same attitude as the ungodly: “What advantage is it to me to behave myself? I might as well have sinned.”

This argument will now be examined in detail. Satan declared that he would bring Job to a place where he would curse God to his face. To that he must first make Job distrust God and feel that he had been treated unfairly. God intervenes by wise words from a Spirit-filled young man to keep Job from that final step. In vv. 10 - 30, Elihu takes up the truth about God's character:

1) God the Just Rewarder

God cannot be unjust.

- 10] Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

- 11] For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.
- 12] Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

No matter how long it may take, God will do it.

2) God the Sovereign Authority

God is beyond accountability to man.

- 13] Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?
- 14] If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;
- 15] All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

3) God the Impartial Ruler

- 16] If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.
- 17] Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?
- 18] Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly?
- 19] How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.
- 20] In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hand.

Those who prate so loudly about justice never hesitate to offer flattery to rulers for partiality.

4) The Omniscient Judge

No investigating committee needed.

- 21] For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.
- 22] There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
- 23] For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God.
- 24] He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

Cf. Psalm 139. God knows our thoughts even before they take shape...

5) The Absolute Executor

- 25] Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.
- 26] He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others;
- 27] Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways:

This is the root issue.

- 28] So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.
- 29] When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only:
- 30] That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.
- 31] Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more:
- 32] That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.
- 33] Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.

But reform is not what God is after: He desires repentance and relationship; the surrender of the right to run your life. He will accept no other basis of relationship.

- 34] Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.
- 35] Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.
- 36] My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of his answers for wicked men.
- 37] For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God.

Job is a righteous man, his heart is right, he wants to serve God, but he thinks he can do it by his own efforts.

The toughest lesson God has to teach us is to see the evil in what we think is nothing but good. Our best is but filthy rags in His sight! It is only our dependence on His *gift* of righteousness that will ever be acceptable to Him. Here is the struggle of Romans 7 here in the OT.

Remember that *it was God who initiated this contest, not Satan*. He did it to teach us—you and me—the ugliness of self-righteousness.

Job 35

We can now move through the next three chapters quickly as Elihu answers Job's argument. First he restates it:

- 1] Elihu spake moreover, and said,
- 2] Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?
- 3] For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin?
- 4] I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee.

You're Inconsistent

- 5] Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou.
- 6] If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?
- 7] If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?
- 8] Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.

What you do our do not do does not change God or affect Him in any way. God will be God no matter what you do.

- 9] By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.
- 10] But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night;
- 11] Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?
- 12] There they cry, but none giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

Men cry for help, but God knows that what they are crying for is merely relief. They want to be delivered from the painful effects of their selfish ways but then be allowed to go right back to being selfish. They are simply trying to use God. This is one reason for God's silence.

- 13] Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.
- 14] Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him.

This is a reference to Job's request for a trial.

- 15] But now, because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger; yet he knoweth it not in great extremity:

- 16] Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.

Elihu is trying to be gentle, to speak the truth in love.

Job 36

The Glory of God

- 1] Elihu also proceeded, and said,
- 2] Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.
- 3] I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

“From afar”: not coming from me personally.

- 4] For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.

This is not a brash or arrogant, as some commentator contend. The one whom he refers is “one who is perfect in knowledge” (37:16): God. He speaks by means of the Spirit!

God's Mercy and Justice

- 5] Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom.
- 6] He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.
- 7] He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.
- 8] And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction;
- 9] Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.
- 10] He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.
- 11] If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.
- 12] But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.
- 13] But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.
- 14] They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.
- 15] He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.

Job's Perilous Position

- 16] Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place, where there is no straitness; and that which should be set on thy table should be full of fatness.
- 17] But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee.
- 18] Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.
- 19] Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.
- 20] Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.
- 21] Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

The Glory of God (36:22 - 37:24)

• God is Beyond Man's Instruction

- 22] Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?
- 23] Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?
- 24] Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.
- 25] Every man may see it; man may behold it afar off.

• God is Beyond Man's Understanding

- 26] Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.
- 27] For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof:
- 28] Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.

(The water cycle. Note Solomon's comment, Eccl 1:7.)

- 29] Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle?
- 30] Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom [roots] of the sea.
- 31] For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance.
- 32] With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt.
- 33] The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.

God's doings in nature elaborated in an autumn storm (36:27-33); then in winter (37:1-13); finally in summer (37:17-18).

Job 37

(A dramatic electric storm breaks out; you need to live on a prairie to fully appreciate this passage...)

- 1] At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place.
- 2] Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth.
- 3] He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth.
- 4] After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.
- 5] God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.
- 6] For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.
- 7] He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work.
- 8] Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.
- 9] Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north.
- 10] By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.
- 11] Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth his bright cloud:
- 12] And it is turned round about by his counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

[Sounds like he has been watching from a weather satellite!]

- 13] He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.
- 14] Harken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.
- 15] Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?
- 16] Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

The most complex computer models are those of the weather system; imperfect at best.

- 17] How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?
- 18] Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking glass?
- 19] Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

Job can do none of these things. He cannot explain them (vv.14-16); he cannot duplicate them (vv.17-18); he cannot command them (vv.19-20).

Elihu closes with a glimpse of the matchless majesty of God:

- 20] Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.
- 21] And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.
- 22] Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty.
- 23] Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.
- 24] Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

Through the entire Bible, the only man or woman who ever receives anything from God is the one who comes with a humble and contrite heart.

The very next voice we hear will be the voice of God Himself, speaking directly to Job.

* * *

Prayer

Father, thank you for your loving care of us.

We thank you for our Mediator, who found a ransom for us in His own life's blood poured out on our behalf; who has made a way to set aside the daily contamination of our sins and helps us to face every day fresh and vital, forgiven, alive, without guilt, without a sense of rejection, having sent us an adequate power by which to live, and do the things we ought to do.

Thank you for the peace, the joy, the hope, and the love that He has brought into our lives...

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) Who was Elihu? What made him distinctive?
- 2) Why didn't God criticize him when rebuked the three "comforters"?
- 3) What were the problems with Job's view of God?

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) What was Elihu's role in the drama?
- 2) What lessons can we learn from him?
- 3) What are the similarities (and contrasts) between Elihu and John the Baptist?
- 4) How did Job's views evolve through the discourses?
- 5) How should we react to God's apparent silences?
- 6) How does God use pain in our lives? Examples.

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Review the role of dreams in the Bible: Job (Job 7:14); Daniel (Dan 1:17); Peter's quote (Acts 2:17; quoting Joel 2:28); Abimelech (Gen 20:3f); Jacob (Gen 30:10); Laban (Gen 30:24); Joseph (Gen 37) and his two cell mates (Gen 40) and Pharaoh (Gen 41); Gideon (Judg 7); Solomon (1 Kgs 3); Nebuchadnezzar twice (Dan 2, 4); Joseph, Mary's husband thrice (Mt 1:20; 2:12, 19, 22); and even Pilate's wife (Mt 27:19).

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 38 - 41.

Notes:

1. C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, Macmillan, New York, 1943, p.93.

Session 6: Job 38 - 40

God's Science Quiz

Enough of the “Comforters.” God Himself now speaks! This is the climax of the Book of Job.

In the final four chapters of this book we can count 77 questions, many of which man cannot even answer today. While the pursuit of scientific research is the legitimate pursuit of the mandate that God commissioned man with the Garden of Eden (Gen 1:28), the tragedy is that man has insisted on pursuing rationalizations independent of acknowledging the initiatives and nurturing of the Creator and His handiwork.

Science claims to be the pursuit of truth, but that is only propaganda: it insists on explanations that exclude the God that has given us that mandate. All the great “founding fathers” of science—Newton, Boyle, Pascal, et al.—pursued their challenges “to the glory of God.” However, most of the various fields of study have been taken over by humanists, and Christians, by their indifference, have acquiesced in this Satanic takeover.

Science, which should have been the great testimony to the majesty and glory of God, has, instead, become a device for ignoring and rejecting him, and preying on the uninformed.

Job 38

1] Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

For the first time since the prologue, God's special name, YHWH, is used. The sufferer's repetitious plea that God answer him was granted (Cf. 13:22; 31:35); having bemoaned the absence of an advocate (9:33; 16:19; 19:25) he now was confronted by God Himself! However, instead of answering questions, God asked them!

“Whirlwind” or storm (like Elihu described, 37:21-24): Often seen with His coming (Sinai, Ex 19:16-20, etc.). The clouds protect the audience from being consumed by the divine holiness.

“Wind”: Jesus to Nicodemus: John 3:6-8; at Pentecost: Acts 2:2.

- 2] Who *is* this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?
3] Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Some commentators suggest that these words apply to Elihu, but at the end of the book, Job applies these words to *himself* (Job 42:2-6).

God challenges Job who, by his ignorant words, has been “darkening the light” that could have come to him. [How many times have we done the same thing? We can't be listening when we are speaking! (We seem to be half-duplex, as the communications engineers would say!)]

“Gird up...loins”: when undertaking a strenuous task such as running, working, or fighting, a man would gather up his flowing robes and tuck it into a sash-belt (Ex 12:11; 1 Kgs 18:46). Equivalent to “be alert,” a struggle is coming!

Job wanted a trial before God; well, God now asks *him* some questions...

Where Were You?

- 4] Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

God now subjects Job to a series of questions in three different areas:

- God's Creation;
- God's Providential Care (& balance in nature);
- His Restraint of the Forces of Evil in the World.

It is astonishing to fully realize how *fundamental* the Creation is in Christian apologetics.

According to Genesis 1 (35 times in that one chapter), and these four chapters of Job, God created each thing with its own specific attributes, and the powers of reproducing “after its kind” (digitally defined!); each with its own definite object and purpose.

God's first question is, “Were you there?”

The essence of science is *observation*. The scientific method requires actual measurement, experimentation, prediction, and repetition. None of this is possible in the process of origins, so all we are left with are conjectures masquerading as conclusions.

One of the basic assumptions of science is “uniformitarianism”: that the present is the key to the past. However, we are continually confronted with tangible evidences that our solar system has been the subject of many non-linearities, buffeting, etc.; all of which cast uniformitarian presumptions into serious doubt.

Every naturalistic or pantheistic process contradicts the basic scientific laws of the present: causality, conservation, entropy, etc. There certainly is little humility among our cosmologists. “First there was nothing; and then it exploded!” We have invented the most insulting “god” of all: nothing (needed).

No one has ever solved the problem of origins. They can’t explain the origin of design because they cannot explain the origin of *information*. If we want to know how the world began, we must get the information from the only source available: the Designer Himself.

- 5] Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?
- 6] Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

Even today we only beginning to understand the fabric of space, the nature of matter, and spacetime, etc.

- 7] When the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy?
- “Sons of God”: These were not “the lines of Seth!” בני אֱלֹהִים, *Bene Elohim*, is always used of a direct creation of God; here, angels (Cf. Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. In the NT we find the same term in Jn 1:11,12 and Lk 20:36).

Now God turns to the most prominent feature of the planet: the sea (3/4 of the surface...).

- 8] Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb?
- 9] When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,
- 10] And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors,
- 11] And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

What controls the tides within bounds? The greatest geophysical upheaval ever was the flood of Noah. The geological strata and fossil

beds all over the world bear irrefutable witness to it. It was only through the specific intervention by God Himself and His providential care that those in the ark were saved.

By another geophysical upheaval, however, He “brake up” for the flood waters a “decreed place” and they were forever “shut up” in the deep ocean beds opened up to receive them:

Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

Psalm 104:6-9

The earth’s isostatic balances now preclude another global deluge.

Day and Night

Beginning with this verse, and continuing for four chapters, God’s questions deal with present processes and do constitute the proper domain of science and its commission to subdue the earth.

The subjects include:

- The rotation of the earth (v.12-15);
- The springs and pathways of the sea (v.16);
- The breadth of the earth (v.18);
- The travel of light (v.19);
- The dividing of light (24);
- The source of rain, and ice (v.28-30);
- The universal nature of physical laws (v.33);
- Electrical transmission of communications v.35).

Many of these discoveries were made by the great creationists of the past: Newton, Maury, Faraday, Morse, etc.

- 12] Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the dayspring to know his place;

The precession of the earth causes the sun to rise in a different place each morning according to the seasons.

- 13] That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

- 14] It is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand as a garment.
 15] And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.
 16] Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

The secrets of the deep are still largely hidden from us...

- 17] Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

Death is still a mystery to us. Science has not really made a dent there.

- 18] Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

This is one area we can answer, thanks to modern science...

- 19] Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where *is* the place thereof,
 20] That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof?

What is light? It's nature is still illusive. [wave? or particle? ... the non-locality of photons...]

- 21] Knowest thou *it*, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days *is* great?

And here are some real corkers, still:

- 22] Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

Crystallography?...

- 23] Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

Is this a reference to the role of eschatological hailstones (Josh 10:11; Ex 9:22-26; Isa 30:30; Ezek 13:11, 13; 38:22; Hag 2:17; Rev 16:21) or is this also a hint of some physics yet to be discovered?

- 24] By what way is the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

All meteorological phenomena are derived from the light from the sun: the evaporation of water, the clouds, and photosynthesis, etc. Even our

most elaborate computer models fail in this area.

- 25] Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

[Fractals and Chaos Theory are topics in advanced mathematics...]

- 26] To cause it to rain on the earth, *where* no man *is*; *on* the wilderness, wherein *there is* no man;
 27] To satisfy the desolate and waste *ground*; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

Why is there beauty in the desert? Or in the depths of the sea where there is no light to see it?

Why are flowers beautiful? (They serve no teleological purpose: bees are color blind!)

- 28] Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?
 29] Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?
 30] The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.

Ice violates a basic physical law. Virtually all materials expand when heated, contract when cooled. Water follows a strange exception by expanding when it freezes. If it didn't, life on the earth would prove impossible if ice didn't float and rivers froze from the bottom up.

- 31] Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

There are only two constellations in the heavens that are actually *gravitationally* linked: the Pleiades and Orion. The other groupings are of stars that are actually quite distant from each other and only *appear* to be a grouping... How did the writer know this?

- 32] Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

See our briefing pack, *The Signs in the Heavens*, for a review of the possible Biblical implications hidden behind what we call the Zodiac.

Ecological Frustrations

- 33] Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

- 34] Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?
 35] Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we *are*?
 36] Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

God even challenges us to research man's ability to do research itself! Where did the brain come from? Who designed the language and the machinery of the DNA, etc.?

- 37] Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven,
 38] When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

These next three verses belong to the next chapter:

Who Feeds the Animals?

God asks more questions about the biological world than with the physical.

- 39] Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions,
 40] When they couch in *their* dens, and abide in the covert to lie in wait?
 41] Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

God supplies their needs. God preserves the species; it is man who wipes them out.

Job 39

Obstetrical Care

- 1] Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? *or* canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?
 2] Canst thou number the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?
 3] They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.
 4] Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

God delights in their diversity:

- 5] Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?
 6] Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings.
 7] He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.
 8] The range of the mountains *is* his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

Who gave them this diversity? Who gave them these instincts? God did; for His own pleasure.

- 9] Will the wild ox ["unicorn"] be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

מִרְרָאִים, the aurochs, or wild ox (*Bos primigenius*), which inhabited the Middle East and other regions, but has been extinct since 1625.

- 10] Canst thou bind him with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?
 11] Wilt thou trust him, because his strength *is* great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?
 12] Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather *it into* thy barn?

The untameable nature of certain animals is given to them by God, a man can neither explain it nor change it.

- 13] *Gavest thou* the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

God addresses the stupidity of the ostrich, and takes the blame for it. This has to be one of the most humorous passages in Scripture.

- 14] Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust,
 15] And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.
 16] She is hardened against her young ones, as though *they were* not hers: her labour is in vain without fear;
 17] Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.
 18] What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.

She can outrun a horse, yet leaves its eggs exposed out in the open. It will not take care of its young. But God seems to like it that way...

There are many animals that seem to point to God's sense of humor: the camel, the duck-billed platypus (which looks like it was assembled from

leftover parts), etc. [The camel has been called “a horse designed by a committee.” The elephant has been described as that horse built to military specifications!]

- 19] Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?
- 20] Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils *is* terrible.
- 21] He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.
- 22] He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.
- 23] The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.
- 24] He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet.
- 25] He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

The horse has a unique character, loving conflict and competition. He then addresses the hawk and the eagle:

- 26] Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, *and* stretch her wings toward the south?
- 27] Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?
- 28] She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.
- 29] From thence she seeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off.
- 30] Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain *are*, there *is* she.

A great deal of emphasis on God’s provision for the animals. Remember that Jesus highlighted,

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Matthew 10:29

* * *

Job 40

- 1] Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,
- 2] Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *him*? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

Well, Job, are you able to argue with God? How have you done with this examination? How many questions could you answer?

- 3] Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
- 4] Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.
- 5] Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

“Yes, I’m not in your league; I’m out of my depth.” Job is silenced, but God is not finished: God has much to reveal yet.

- 6] Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
- 7] Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
- 8] Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

God now brings moral judgment into the discussion...and He invites Job to mount the Throne of God, as it were, to see what he would do with the problems that God faces.

- 9] Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?
- 10] Deck thyself now *with* majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.
- 11] Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one *that is* proud, and abase him.

God now puts His finger on the problem that is in Job’s heart: Can he handle the proud?

- 12] Look on every one *that is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.
- 13] Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in secret.
- 14] Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

If you can handle these, then you will be able to handle your own problems and give yourself the victory as you previously claimed.

Next Time: Dinosaurs and Dragons

Are the fire-breathing dragons of Chinese and other legends myths or an ancient reality? What are the *spiritual* implications of the “behemoth” in Chapter 40 and the “leviathan” in Chapter 41? They have 44 verses devoted to them, more than the other 12 representative animals

combined; yet they correspond to no known living animals. Why are they so prominent in this climactic passage?

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) How is the issue of creation related to prophecy (2 Peter 3:4)? Why the reference to “willful ignorance” in 3:5?
- 2) What are some of the most impressive evidences for creation?
- 3) Explore the references to the meteorological cycle in the Bible.
- 4) List examples of scientific enigmas alluded to in the Book of Job that are unresolved to this day.
- 5) List animals that reveal God’s sense of humor.

Discussion Questions:

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) What are the most conspicuous fallacies relating to the theory of evolution as opposed to creation?
- 2) Why was the creation emphasized by God in His response to Job?
- 3) How did God’s focus on moral judgments by the proud relate to Job’s predicament?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the numerous factors that have to be in perfect balance for life to exist: what scientists call the “Anthropic Principle.”
- 2) Study the lives of the great God-fearing scientists whose discoveries set the stage for modern science: Newton, Boyle, Pascal, Maury, Faraday, Morse, etc.

Preparation for Next Session:

Study Chapters 40 & 41. Review any available information on dinosaurs, and legends of dragons, etc.

Session 7: Job 40

Strange Creatures

When were the dinosaurs on the earth? What is the basis for the many myths and legends of dragons in the ancient histories of man? What ever happened to them?

Dinosaurs did not become extinct “millions” of years ago. They *are* mentioned in the Bible. Some of them were alive *after* the Flood of Noah; they are mentioned in the Book of Job.

Review: Job 40

Life has a way of overturning some of our convictions of our youth. Carl Jung, the famous Austrian psychologist, put it this way:

In the second half of life the necessity is imposed of recognizing no longer the validity of our former ideals but of their contraries; of perceiving the error in what was previously our conviction; of sensing the untruth in what was our truth, and of weighing the degree of opposition, and even of hostility, in what we took to be love.

That is what God is teaching Job now, helping him to see that his righteousness was an external matter only, and that internally there was a deep and serious problem.

God began by revealing his creative wisdom in all that He had made, in the manifold forces of nature, and he subjected Job to a penetrating examination on natural subjects.

Job 40

- 1] Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,
- 2] Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *him*? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.
- 3] Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
- 4] Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.
- 5] Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

Job came to the end of the first session with his hand on his mouth: silenced, but not convinced. Now God takes up the argument again and brings up another matter with Job:

- 6] Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
- 7] Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Again, prepare yourself for a confrontation!

- 8] Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

Can you handle the moral government of the earth? Job has already admitted that he is not in God's league when it come to understanding the world of nature or caring for the animals. What about the moral realm? That is where he had been charging God with a fault.

In this next session, God invites Job to mount the Throne of God—rhetorically speaking—and see what he would do with the problems God has to face.

- 9] Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?
- 10] Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

Pride Is the Real Issue

- 11] Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.
- 12] Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.
- 13] Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.
- 14] Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

(Pride itself may be, thus, more the focus of the forthcoming subject than simply the strange specific animals which follow!)

God brings before us two amazing creatures: a land animal and a sea creature.

Background

This oldest book of the Bible records the existence of several large, unusual creatures. In a passage describing a dozen representative animals, we find more space, 44 verses in fact, devoted to two animals that apparently are now extinct. Why?

One of these was a huge land animal called a “behemoth”¹ that was also extremely powerful, the largest of all the land animals,² and impossible to capture. Thus, they both, as highly feared creatures, may have been chosen to exemplify untameable evil, and perhaps more... But they are real: God described their diet, their physical strength, their habitat, and their fierceness.

The Behemoth

- 15] Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

Some think that the Behemoth is either the hippopotamus, an elephant, or a rhinoceros, even though these naïve conjectures can be easily refuted from the text. But fanciful attempts to identify him with existing animals are ludicrous. No known living animals conform to the characteristics enumerated. But this myopia confined to the familiar does not really fit the text. Furthermore, he can't be a mythical creature: God *made* him. (A Brachiosaurus?)

- 16] Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.
- 17] He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

Have you ever examined the tail of the elephant or the hippopotamus? It is small stringy thing, hardly “like a cedar.”

- 18] His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron.
- 19] He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

“Chief of the ways of God”? This certainly fits the mighty dinosaur (yet this may be intended to go far beyond a reference to any normal animal).

- 20] Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.
21] He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

“Fens” = swamps. They are still seen in such areas! See below.

- 22] The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.
23] Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up [a] Jordan into his mouth.

Hebrew: “a Jordan”: used as an illustration of a swift running current.

- 24] He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares.

As a “super-serpent,” he may well have been a grim reminder of the Nachash of Genesis 3...

Job 41

The Leviathan

Having spoken of the greatest *terrestrial* animal, now God also describes a type of sea dragon which is translated “leviathan.”³

Some think that this refers to a crocodile or a whale. (Or perhaps a “croco-whale”?) Again, this hardly fits the text.

And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:21

The Hebrew *tanniyn* is translated “whales,” but in 20 other places it is translated “dragons,” “sea monster,” or “serpent.”⁴

While the text is ostensibly referring to a creature now extinct, many contemporary reports continue. There are numerous documented reports of contemporary sightings of dinosaur-like creatures all over the world, particularly in such large scale swamps such as the 55,000 sq. mi.

Likouala swamp in Congo and Zaire and similar locales. In fact, in 1977 Japanese fishermen pulled up, from 900 ft down, the remains of a large plesiosaur-like creature, 32 ft long, weighing 900 lbs.

[For numerous photographs and other background materials, contact Kent Hovind at Creation Science Evangelism in Pensacola, Florida, (850) 479-3466 or his website, www.drdino.com.]

Let’s simply allow the text itself to layout the full picture...

- 1] Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?
- 2] Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?
- 3] Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?
- 4] Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?
- 5] Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?
- 6] Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?
- 7] Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?
- 8] Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.
- 9] Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?
- 10] None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?
- 11] Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.
- 12] I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.
- 13] Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him with his double bridle?
- 14] Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth are terrible round about.
- 15] His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal.
- 16] One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.
- 17] They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.
- 18] By his needings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.

It’s clear that the leviathan was impregnable to human efforts to slay or capture him. (Zoos are full of crocodiles; in fact, they have been hunted so successfully that they are considered an endangered species! The same applies to whales.)

Fire Breathing?

He apparently was a *fire-breathing* monster with a hide that could not be pierced with sword, spears, or hooks.

- 19] Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.
 20] Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron.
 21] His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

It is interesting that some dinosaur fossils have been excavated that show a strange protuberance with an internal cavity on the top of the head. It has been suggested that this might have served as a mixing chamber for combustible gases that would ignite when exhaled into the outside oxygen.

The Bombardier Beetle

There is a ground beetle, (*Brachinus in North America*, and *Pherosophus* in Africa, Asia, and the East), of the *Family Carabidae*, that has an internal cavity in which they secrete a defensive fluid which, when expelled from the posterior end of the abdomen, volatilizes explosively into a gas at high temperature when it comes into contact with the air, surprising its predators, and the smoke cloud blinds them, providing an opportunity for escape from its enemies.⁵

It is extremely relevant that the many dragon legends throughout history also allude to this “fire-breathing” characteristic.

Dragons Throughout History

The term “dragon” comes from the Greek *drakon*, which was used originally for any large serpent. (The term “dinosaur” is derived from the Greek meaning “terrible lizard,” alluding to its gigantic size.)

The notion that dinosaurs were extinct “millions of years ago” doesn’t seem to explain the prevalence of the “dragons” so prevalent throughout early history.

The dragon of mythology, despite whatever shape it later assumed, was essentially a serpent.

In the Middle East, the serpent or dragon was symbolic of evil. The Egyptian god Apepi was the great serpent of the world of darkness.

The Greeks and the Romans also at times conceived the *drakontes* as beneficent powers dwelling in the inner parts of the Earth. Their protective and terror-inspiring qualities led to their adaptation as warlike emblems on shields, prows of ships, etc.

The Chaldean dragon *tiamat* had four legs, a scaly body and wings.

The Chinese dragon, *lung*, was a majestic mythological beast that dwelt in rivers, lakes, oceans, and roamed the skies. They were generally depicted as four-legged animals with scales, snakelike body, horns, claws, and large, demonic eyes. They were regarded as the source of power and commonly adopted as imperial emblems.

Ancient Chinese cosmogonists defined four types:

- *T'en Lung*, “Celestial Dragon,” who guards the heavenly dwellings of the gods;
- *Fu Tsang Lung*, “Dragon of Hidden Treasure”;
- *Ti Lung*, “Earth Dragon,” who controls the waterways; and
- *Shen Lung*, the “Spiritual Dragon,” who controls the winds and rain.

Both Chinese and Japanese dragons are usually wingless, but were also regarded as being able to change their size at will, even to the point of becoming invisible. It is remarkable that they were also referred to as the “power of the air,” which is also a provocative Biblical reference.⁶

In fact, some of the references to the leviathan could not apply literally to any animal, even this one. They seem to apply ultimately to Satan, and to him alone.

Yet, the leviathan was a real animal, and not a mythical creature, as is clearly asserted in Psalm 104:25 in addition to this passage in Job.

- 22] In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.
 23] The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.
 24] His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.
 25] When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.
 26] The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.
 27] He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.
 28] The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.
 29] Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.
 30] Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.
 31] He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.
 32] He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.
 33] Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.
 34] He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.

Whoops! All along it seems that God was interweaving the descriptions of a giant sea creature and Satan himself. Here there certainly seems to be more in view than simply an earthly creature. Is there also a *spiritual* application here?

Review from Another Dimension

Some think that these creatures are mythical, legendary creatures, like the unicorn or the dragon. But while it is more likely that these may well have been actual creatures, they may *also* symbolized that which is invisible and supernatural.

Scripture has many examples of such rhetorical devices: Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and Revelation are full of examples of beasts that rise up out of the sea, or out of the earth, that signify far more than any natural animal: movements, leaders, invisible and supernatural powers.

An example occurs in Isaiah 27:

In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Isaiah 27:1

It is interesting that the literal Hebrew names are significant:

בהמות *Behemoth*, is the plural for “beasts”: perhaps suggesting many of the land beasts lumped together. Or, denotatively, the brachiosaurus, or some early member of what we commonly call dinosaurs.

לִיָּתָן *leviathan*, the “folded one”; as that twisted, folded serpent called “the dragon that is in the sea” in Isaiah.

The Beasts of Revelation 13

There are two “beasts” which emerge in Revelation 13: 1st from the sea; 2nd from the earth. Behind each of these is the great Red Dragon of Revelation 12:

...that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Revelation 12:9

Satan is, indeed:

...the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Revelation 12:10

Satan accuses us as he did Job, and God may allow him to test us as he did Job. Christ allowed him to test Peter:

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Luke 22:31, 32

Notice that it was that “*thy faith fail not*” that Jesus prayed for. But the Lord is our Defense Counsel. Cf. Heb 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2.

The *Nachash*, or “Shining One” of Genesis 3 is, of course, well known.⁷ Here we encounter the “anointed cherub” that was rendered a serpent as a result of the curse.

Personal Application

The Behemoth is totally *self-sufficient* (Cf. vv.15-18). Note v.19:

19] (KJV) He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

The Hebrew is difficult. The New English Bible renders it:

19] (NEB) He is the chief of God’s works, made to be a tyrant over his peers.

Here is an animal that seems to stand for the desire to rule over everyone else; a tyranny over all: self confidence, self-sufficiency, self-centeredness.

What better description of that enemy within us, our genetic inheritance from Adam: *the flesh itself*.

Leviathan Re-examined

The passage describing the “leviathan” in Job also goes beyond his denotative zoological characteristics and alludes metaphorically to him as a malevolent evil spirit.⁸ In fact, “He beholdeth all high things: he is

king over all the children of pride.”⁹ This secondary allusion technique is repeatedly employed to describe the background and career of Satan.¹⁰ He, indeed, is the father of the children of pride.

In the Book of Revelation, Satan is also presented as the “Red Dragon.”¹¹ This identification with the “dragon” seems to be also picked up in the prophecies in Isaiah:¹²

In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

In the Book of Revelation, we also view Satan’s doom:

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season... And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Revelation 20:1-3, 10

The Reality

So there really exists a real “dragon” far more fearful than any “cloned dinosaur” of Jurassic Park fame. His destiny, fortunately, is sealed as result of the empty tomb that we celebrate each Easter morning. The next time someone brings up “dinosaurs,” then why not really get into it. (After all, he brought it up.) It can be a great witnessing opportunity if you do your homework.

In Chapter 41 we encounter the Leviathan, a water animal that some infer may also refer to the *untameable world system*. Cf. Job 41:1-6. Cf. The Whore that “sits on many waters” (Rev 17:1), which are identified as “are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (17:15). How unconquerable it is (Job 41:7-9). God interjects a parenthetical challenge (vv. 10, 11), analogous to Jeremiah’s quip:

If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?

Jeremiah 12:5

God deals with him all the time; how is Job going to handle him? God emphasizes the Leviathan’s ability to defend himself (vv.12-17). It obviously portrays a deeply entrenched, well-defended system that cannot be overthrown. And of awesome fierceness and frightening power (vv.18-25)...invulnerable and irresistible (vv.26-32).

His key attribute is *pride* (vv.33, 34). This is what Job is up against: the “king over all the sons of pride.”

At last God has brought Job to an awareness that *these are the very things Job has in his own heart and life, and they describe forces over which he has no control*.

At this point God has made clear to Job what we were informed of at the very beginning of this book: behind his sickness and his protracted agony lies an intense struggle with Satanic power. We know that, but he does not. Now, at last, he is given a strong hint that the reason behind his illness is not his own failure or his own willful misdeeds, but a serious problem so embedded in his nature that he is not even aware that it exists—yet it is destroying him.

This is what God has to deal with, and this is what he deals with in us.

Job’s first reaction is a new view of God Himself.

That will be our concluding topic next time.

* * *

For more comprehensive information on dinosaurs, etc., contact: Kent Hovind, Creation Science Evangelism, 29 Cummings Road, Pensacola FL, 32503 (859)479-3466, www.drdino.com. And, Institute for Creation Research, 10946 N. Woodside Avenue, Santee, CA 92071.

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) List the various theories concerning the identities of the “behemoth” and contrast them with Scripture. Likewise, the “leviathan.”

Discussion Questions:

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) Why do these two creatures have more verses devoted to them than the previous ten?
- 2) How might they both be allusions to more than the animals themselves?
- 3) What are the possible *spiritual* applications of these two animals?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the role of dragon legends throughout history.

Preparation for Next Session:

Study Chapters 38-42 for the final climactic review.

Notes:

1. The Hebrew term literally implies “beasts.” Job 40:15-24.
2. Job 40:15, 19.
3. Job 41:1-34. Also, Psalm 74:14; 104:26.
4. Isa 34:13; Micah 1:8; Malachi 1:3.
5. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol 5, p.516; Vol 21, p. 656.
6. Eph 2:2
7. Gen 3:1?
8. Job 41:3-4, 9, 25, 33.
9. Job 41:34.
10. Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-19. In each of these passages, the scope clearly goes beyond the King of Babylon and the King of Tyre, respectively, to the power that lies behind them.
11. Rev 12:7-9
12. Isa 27:1

Session 8: Job 42 “The End of the Lord”

YHWH has treated Job to a tour of the moral problems of the universe. Using the symbolism of the two great beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan, God has given him a glimpse of the depth of evil in humanity: what the NT calls “the mystery of lawlessness.”

We make no advance from century to century; from generation to generation we struggle with the same moral problems since the dawn of human history.

As Job learns the problems in his own heart, problems that God must deal with continually, he bows his head before this breathtaking vision of God’s power, wisdom, and glory, and repents in dust and ashes.

Job 42

- 1] Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
- 2] I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Notice the new view of God: “I know He can do everything...” His view is expanded tremendously; he sees the absolute sovereignty of God. All that He does is right; always acting consistent with His character of *love*. He also has a new view of himself.

- 3] Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge?

[He is quoting God’s first address to him “...therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.”]

- 4] Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will question [demand of] thee, and declare thou unto me.
- 5] I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.
- 6] Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.

The inner eye of Job’s heart sees the nature of God. The result? “I abhor myself...” Now that is repentance!

He admits that he is ignorant. You were right about me. I do not know enough to challenge the wisdom of the Almighty. I speak without knowing what I am talking about.

He admits that he is arrogant. Something within me has been proud, lifted up, self-righteous, confident that I was right. I have been wrong all along. I despise myself.

Job has finally given up trying to defend and justify himself, so God begins to heal him and to pour into his life blessing he never dreamed of.

This is the whole story of Scripture: “Blessed are the poor in spirit [those who are bankrupt in themselves] *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*”

God will now begin to heal a life that repents before Him and will fill it with blessing and honor and glory and power. Nothing can compare with the glory and joy of discovering a relationship with God Himself.

That is what we will see in this closing section of the Book of Job. Here he is, confessing his sin and discovering the gift of forgiveness.

Judgment of the Ash-heap Trio

7] And it was *so*, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath*.

This must have been a stunning shock to Eliphaz and his two friends! They must have been confident that they had been defending the righteousness of God, zealous of His honor, upholding His sovereignty among men, and scathing in their denunciation of human pride and evil. Now, to hear that they are being charged by God Himself with *defaming* Him! This must have been a blow to their pride.

What was it that offended God so? They had formulated a theory of suffering in which God was nothing but an arbitrator of justice, a great cosmic judge who visited punishment upon those who did wrong, without exception and instantly.

He rewarded those who did right with prosperity and blessing, also instantly. A judge little concerned with compassion, love, mercy, and

patience. Their view of God was very distant and distorted from reality. Many Christians are like this. They see God as stern and harsh. Job’s three friends said nothing about His mercy, His compassion, His patience, His willingness to reach out to men and yearning for them to repent.

God sends the rain upon the just and the unjust alike. His blessings are not withheld from those who are wrong and rebellious. “The goodness of God is designed to lead to repentance” (Rom 2:4).

The “ash-heap trio” charged Job with hypocrisy, and outright wickedness, without any basis in fact whatsoever. They charged this man—whom God Himself said was upright in his conduct—with some deep and terrible sin in his heart. In doing so, *they represented themselves as being agents of God*. God takes offense at that because in doing so they were actually doing the devil’s work. The devil is “the accuser of the brethren.” They unwittingly had become his instruments to torment Job.

Eliphaz the Eloquent: Based on his own observation and experience, “Job suffers because he has sinned.”

Bildad the Brutal: Rests on tradition, “Job is a hypocrite.”

Zophar the Zealous: Rests on assumptions of orthodox dogma, “Job is a wicked man.”

[**Then a 4th: Elihu...**] An intercessor more than a judge...

Throughout we never have seen any recognition that Job had said anything right. However, twice in this account God says that Job said what was right about Him.

- 1) The moment that God showed him the sin deeply embedded in his heart, he immediately repented. No hesitation, no argument, no self-defense.
- 2) Job was always true to the facts as he saw them. He did not see them very clearly, and there are things about himself and about God’s rule in the universe he never understood, but he was always honest about what he could see. No distorting or twisting of facts to fit an inadequate theology.

- 3) He took his problem to God, even though God was his problem. *His three friends never pray for Job.*
- 4) When Job does repent, he declares without reservation that God is truly God, that He is holy and wise and just and good, even when he seems to be otherwise. Ultimately that is the highest expression of faith: we do not trust our human observation as to what is reality. We do not assume we have all the facts by which we can judge and condemn God.

8] Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job.

How humiliating. However, there is no resisting, no argument, no hesitation.

Seven is the number of completeness. The bull is the picture of service, even unto death. The ram, of energy. Job is to pray for *them* (they had never prayed for Job!)

Notice the insistence on intercessory prayer. No pardon without prayer on your behalf. Prayer is not a way to get God to do what we want. *Prayer is the way God enlists us in what He is doing.* Without prayer He will not do anything. Without Him, we can't. Without us, He won't.

James reminds us, "You have not because ye ask not." How impoverished our lives are, and the lives of our friends and family, because we underpray.

Here also is a beautiful picture of forgiveness. Job probably prayed: "O Lord, here are these three friends of mine. They have been stubborn, hard-headed, foolish, ignorant—just like I was. You forgave me and now I ask you to forgive them as well." Cf. Ephesians 4:32; Col 3:13.

9] So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

Job Restored

10] And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

James calls this "the end of the Lord" (James 5:11). This was His purpose from the beginning. God is unchanging, compassionate and merciful. He wants to reveal His heart to Job—and to us.

For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

Lamentations 3:31-33

God does not willingly afflict or grieve the sons of men. He will do it because He loves us and we need it

11] Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

12] So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had

	(vs. 1:3)
14,000 sheep, and	7,000
6,000 camels, and a	3,000
1,000 yoke of oxen, and a	500
1,000 she asses.	500

13] He had also seven sons and three daughters.

Why weren't these "doubled" also? They were: he hadn't really lost the previous ones! They will be with him in heaven (Cf. 2 Samuel 12:23).

14] And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.

יְמִימָה *Yemimah*, dove. Peace.

קִצְיֵהָ *Qetsiy'ah*, cassia, a rare perfume. Cf. Ex 30:24; Ps 45:8; Ezek 27:19.

קֶרֶן הַפְּיֹךְ *Qeren Hap-puwk*, "Horn of adornment."

Paul says that suffering has this effect on those who learn to take it as evidence of God's love:

...but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

Romans 5:3, 4

15] And in all the land were no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

- 16] After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations.
17] So Job died, *being* old and full of days.

Job was probably about 70 when the book opened, so he is now a really old man. God has really blessed him.

And God invites us also to forget the distrust, the fears, the anxieties of the past, and resentments of the present—the grudges, the criticisms, the hurts from others. Put them all at the Cross and begin again.

The question this book puts before us is, “On what basis am I going to live my life? Will it be on the old basis of self-sufficiency and do-it-yourself goodness before God, trying my best to be pleasing to God, but never realizing the depths of evil with which I have to deal? Or will it be to accept that gift of God which is waiting for me every day, fresh from His hand: the gift of forgiveness, of righteousness, and of a relationship in which He is my dear father and I am His cherished, beloved son?”

If so, my life can also be characterized by peace, fragrance, and beauty as his was. And so can yours.

The Lessons from Job

The Book of Job is far too complex for a “once over lightly” treatment. To probe some of its deeper lessons, we really must review the entire account again.

As the oldest book of the Bible, Job was probably a contemporary of Abraham, although he did not live in the Promised Land; he lived in a land called Uz, of which we know relatively little. Yet his faith and insights reflects a heritage which had been handed down from Adam and Eve, through Noah and his sons. And it is surprisingly *consistent with the greater revelation of Scripture as we find it in the Old and New Testaments*.

One of the many lessons of this book is what we find in *every* book of the Bible: *it strips away our illusions and presents life as it really is*.

[Nothing is more valuable than a valid perspective. One of the most painful—but essential—blessings is the stripping away of our delusions and erroneous presuppositions! That is why it is so important to

let the Spirit of God set us straight by the Word of God, correcting our thinking and “renewing our minds” (Rom 12:2).]

The first surprise to confront us in the Book of Job is the behind-the-scenes peek at what prompted the entire drama. We discover that a larger cosmic drama is being played out behind our own frustrations, suddenly adverse circumstances, perverse people, and other troubles.

Life Is Not a Spectator Sport!

We begin to get a glimpse of the powerful team of evil which is also directed at us and we discover that we, too, are the focus of his attack. We are no longer sitting in the bleachers: we, too, are in the middle of the game.

And we make a tragic mistake to see the situation only in terms of what is visible to us. We must never forget what we were shown in the first chapter as we face the problems in our own lives. We tend to presume that we deserve to have a good time and enjoy ourselves; that life yields to us what we have earned. But nothing could be further from the Christian position.

We are not here to have a good time. God gives us some good times, but *every one of them comes as a gift of His love and grace!* They are never something we really deserve.

We are here to fight against the powers of darkness (Eph 6:10-12). We are here to be engaged in continual combat with powerful forces seeking to control human history. That continually frustrates our attempts to plan our careers, our lives, our retirement... That is why God has taught us what is really going on behind the scenes right at the very beginning of this book.

Something Deeper

The primary lesson of Job is what the book reveals about the nature of human evil.

As we have gone through the many discourses of Job’s “friends” we see them view wicked people in terms of murderers, thieves, rapists, fornicators, cruel tyrants, etc.—unjust, wretched people. “These” are the wicked, as Job’s counselors see them.

But as we begin to understand more clearly, the things they point out as wicked are really only the fruit of something deeper in human nature: they emerge from a deep-seated root of pride that expresses itself as independence, self-sufficiency: “I can run my own life; I’ve got what it takes; I don’t need help from anybody.”

Jesus summarized it this way:

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies...

Matthew 15:19

All evil comes from the root of pride (Isaiah 14:12-16), which is evil in its purest form. What we also learn from this book is that pride is expressed, not only in terms of murder, thievery, and robbery, but also—as we have seen in Job’s three friends—as bigotry; pompousness; self-righteous legalism; critical judgmental attitudes; condemnation of others; harsh, sarcastic words and vengeful, vindictive actions against someone else. Human evil is not confined to the criminals of the land: it is present in every heart, without exception (Jeremiah 17:9). Pride is the root of all sin and it can express itself in many various ways.

The Nature of Faith

Job thought he was exercising faith when he obeyed God and did what was right, when it was clearly in his best interests to do so. Many people today think they are exercising great faith when they simply believe God is there; when they live their lives day by day with the recognition that God is watching and is present in their affairs. They do right because they know that if they do not they will get into trouble. This is, of course, a form of faith, but it is a weak faith. They live at a level of serving God only when it is in their best interests to do so.

This is the very accusation that Satan hurled at God when Job was discussed. “Job only serves you because you take care of him. Remove your hand of blessing and he’ll curse you to your face.” Cf. Job 1:9-11. Many are like that: the moment blessing ceases, or difficulty or trial comes along, they want to quit. (The lack of a persistent, enduring witness by visible leaders is among the greatest discouragements among the Body.)

The kind of faith that makes the world sit up and take notice is revealed as we serve God when it is difficult to do so—when serving Him is the

hardest thing we can do. This is what the Book of Job is all about. Remember Gethsemane. “Not my will, but thine be done.” This is what we see in Job. Though he trembles, though he falters, though he fails, the last thing he does is cling in helplessness to God. Job ultimately becomes an example of faith.

Great faith is exercised when we feel we are being the least faithful! When we are so weak that we cannot do anything but cling. In that moment all heaven is looking and rejoicing at the greatness of our faith.

The Nature of Fallen Man

All this reveals the true nature of fallen man: man, in the flesh, appears at his best in the person of Job. As the book opens we have a beautiful picture of a highly respected and greatly honored man: a sincere, moral, devoted, selfless, godly man who spends his time doing good deeds, helping many people, obviously intent upon doing what God wants. A deserving man. Many are like that, who are not even Christian, and yet live on those terms.

But this book is designed to strip away outward appearances and show Job as he really is. He finally came to see himself as self-deceived. He imagined he had the resources in himself to handle life and its problems. We too imagine we have the power to stand and be true to what we believe. We are boastful, like Peter, who said to Jesus, “I will never deny you. I will lay down my life for you.” He meant every word of it. Yet, when the hour of temptation came, he folded.

This book reveals that Job, too, discovered he was a lover of status and prestige. He longed for “the good old days” as they were stripped away from him. When all that was stripped away he was querulous, angry, and upset because he had been denied what he thought was his right.

We discover that Job’s self-vindication and self-justification makes God look less than He is. This is the terrible evil of that attitude. It robs God of His glory. Paul reminds us, “No flesh shall glory in His presence” (1 Cor 1:29). [*Every sin, every error, derives from a false view of the character of God.*]

The Cause(s) of Suffering

One (of the several) great themes of this book is the reason for suffering in the Christian life. None of us protest when we are told that suffering

is sent by God to punish wrongdoers. We view that as appropriate. (We have some we would like to add to His list.) That satisfies our sense of justice—except when we happen to be on the receiving end: then it is manifestly unfair.

We can even handle it when the Bible teaches that suffering is sent to awaken us when we tend to go astray. “Pain is God’s megaphone to rouse a deaf world,” quips our friend, C. S. Lewis. But that is not all that the Book of Job teaches us about suffering; there is something far greater than that.

The book reveals something that should have been obvious to us from the Gospels: the fact that *Jesus suffered*. He did not suffer because He was a wrongdoer. He did not suffer because He needed to have His attention captured by God. Yet His life was filled with suffering from beginning to end: rejection, misunderstanding, disappointment, cruelty, harsh words, unjust treatment—all the way through. As the OT also emphasized, He was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3).

Why did He suffer? He suffered because suffering is also a way of allowing God to demonstrate that *Satan is a liar and a cheat*. Satan’s premise, that was the underlying challenge in this book: that men serve God only because God blesses them. “If you remove the blessing, men will curse God to His face.” Man does not see any intrinsic value in God Himself. Only man’s self-interest makes him serve.

Far too many believers have confirmed that God-demeaning perspective of Satan. Suffering is sent to prove that Satan is wrong: God will be served even when He does not bless any longer: because He is God, and He is worthy of the praise, and the honor, and the service of mankind. That is why Jesus suffered. He suffered as a demonstration to all mankind that God was still God and was worthy no matter what happened.

Job teaches us that suffering is a means by which evil is answered and God is vindicated. It leads to a high and holy and glorious privilege to granted to some of us to uphold the glory of God in the midst of the accusations of the devil in this world.

Some of us suffer because we eminently deserve it. Sometimes it comes to awaken us. But sometimes it is granted to us as a high and holy privilege to be part of what Paul calls sharing the sufferings of Christ,

“filling up that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, for His body’s sake, which is the church (Col 1:24).”

But There’s More

The Book of Job also teaches us, through the symbolism of the two great beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan, how God handles evil. The world, the flesh, as well as the devil.

But the greatest theme of all: the revealing of the character of God Himself. Many see God as a cold, impersonal Being, distant from us, uncaring; often ruthless and vindictive, powerful, but without compassion. “The God of the Old Testament,” in contrast to that of the New Testament.

But this book teaches us that God is always exactly the same: compassionately aware of our problems, deeply concerned about us, carefully controlling everything that touches us; patient, forgiving, and ultimately responsible for everything that happens.

The Book of Job opens with three main characters: God, Satan, and Job. It closes with Satan faded into the background, completely disappeared. Job is kneeling as God declares, “OK, Job, I’m responsible. Any questions?” And as Job begins to glimpse that God is working out His vast, cosmic purposes, he has no questions to ask whatsoever.

“The End of the Lord”

The final view of God in this book is of a Being of incredible wisdom and power that is weaving a tapestry far beyond the dreams and imaginations of mere man; and that He is working out magnificent purposes of infinite joy that He will give to us *if* we wait for His ends to be fully accomplished.

The book alludes to a time when “the sons of God shouted with joy” at the creation of the world.

But the NT looks to the time when “the sons of God will be revealed” (Rom 8:19), and all creation will shout in a greater glory than was ever hailed at creation. It will be a new creation and how “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Rom 8:18). There is no higher honor than these:

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5:11, 12

We need to see life as God sees it. Never again in all eternity will we ever again have the privilege of bearing suffering for His name's sake in the day of reproach. What an honor if it be extended to any of us!

In His Name, indeed!

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What are the most important lessons from the Book of Job? In what way is the issue of suffering *not* the primary focus of this book?
- 2) List at least ten reasons why Christians have trials, and give examples.
- 3) List the other major occasions in which Satan was specifically defeated by the faith of one of God's chosen.

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) Why do the manifestly innocent suffer? How does the Book of Job deal with that ostensible paradox?
- 2) Discuss the lessons of Job in terms of the changes it suggests in *your* life—in practical, daily, terms.
- 3) Why does God so hate *pride*?
- 4) If Satan's defeat was settled at the Cross, why is he still so vigorously "still at it?" What's his agenda currently? Why? (2 Cor 2:11; Eph 6:11)

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) When did Satan "fall"? He was created perfect, and yet we find him as the source of evil and rebellion in Genesis 3. Cf. Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezek 28:13-19.

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Part of this commentary was excerpted from materials from the Institute for Creation Research. Send for catalogs: Institute for Creation Research, P.O. Box 2667, El Cajon CA 92021. Strongly recommended. (609) 448-0900.

Also, other background materials: Kent Hovind, Creation Science Evangelism, 29 Cummings Road, Pensacola FL, 32503 (859)479-3466, www.drdino.com.

Master Books (800)999-3777.
Films for Christ (800)332-3361.

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Notes:

