

## Job's Comforters

**3:1-26** Job's first speech, in which he expresses his grief. I wish I had never been born "**3:25** What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me. **26** I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil."

### First Round of Speeches (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar)

**4:1-5:27** **Eliphaz's first speech: 'Be patient; all will be well – God looks after the righteous'**  
**4:6** Should not your piety be your confidence and your blameless ways your hope? **7** "Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed?  
**5:7** Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward.  
**8** "But if it were I, I would appeal to God; I would lay my cause before him.

**6:1-7:21** **Job's second speech: 'God, leave me alone'**  
**6:4** The arrows of the Almighty are in me, my spirit drinks in their poison; God's terrors are marshaled against me.  
**6:14** "A despairing man should have the devotion of his friends, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. **15** But my brothers are as undependable as intermittent streams,  
**7:20** If I have sinned, what have I done to you, O watcher of men? Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you? **21** Why do you not pardon my offenses and forgive my sins?"

**8:1-22** **Bildad's first speech: 'If you are innocent you will not die'**  
**8:2** "How long will you say such things? Your words are a blustering wind. **3** Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right? **4** When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin. **5** But if you will look to God and plead with the Almighty, **6** if you are pure and upright, even now he will rouse himself on your behalf and restore you to your rightful place.  
**8:20** "Surely God does not reject a blameless man or strengthen the hands of evildoers.

**9:1-10:22** **Job's third speech, in which he acknowledges he cannot compel God to be just.**  
**9:2** "Indeed, I know that this is true. But how can a mortal be righteous before God? **3** Though one wished to dispute with him, he could not answer him one time out of a thousand. **4** His wisdom is profound, his power is vast. Who has resisted him and come out unscathed?  
**9:14** "How then can I dispute with him? How can I find words to argue with him? **15** Though I were innocent, I could not answer him; I could only plead with my Judge for mercy.  
**9:33** If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both,  
**10:8** "Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? **9** Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again?"

**11:1-20** **Zophar's first speech: 'Repent!'**  
**11:13** "Yet if you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him, **14** if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, **15** then you will lift up your face without shame; you will stand firm and without fear.  
**16** You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by. **17** Life will be brighter than noonday, and darkness will become like morning.

**12:1-14:22** **Job's fourth speech: the friends' 'wisdom' and God's justice**  
**12:4** "I have become a laughingstock to my friends, though I called upon God and he answered — a mere laughingstock, though righteous and blameless! **5** Men at ease have contempt for misfortune as the fate of those whose feet are slipping.  
**12:13** "To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his. **14** What he tears down cannot be rebuilt; the man he imprisons cannot be released.  
**13:15** Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face. **16** Indeed, this will turn out for my deliverance, for no godless man would dare come before him!  
**13:23** How many wrongs and sins have I committed? Show me my offense and my sin. **24** Why do you hide your face and consider me your enemy? **25** Will you torment a windblown leaf? Will you chase after dry chaff?"

**14:1** "Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. **2** He springs up like a flower and withers away; like a fleeting shadow, he does not endure.

### Second Round of Speeches (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar)

**15:1-35** **Eliphaz's second speech: 'Beware the fate of the wicked'**  
**15:4** But you even undermine piety and hinder devotion to God. **5** Your sin prompts your mouth; you adopt the tongue of the crafty. **6** Your own mouth condemns you, not mine; your own lips testify against you.  
**15:20** All his days the wicked man suffers torment, the ruthless through all the years stored up for him.

**16:1-17:16** **Job's fifth speech: 'Shall I die without vindication?'**  
**16:2** "I have heard many things like these; miserable comforters are you all! **3** Will your long-winded speeches never end? What ails you that you keep on arguing? **4** I also could speak like you, if you were in my place; I could make fine speeches against you and shake my head at you.  
**5** But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief.  
**16:9** God assails me and tears me in his anger and gnashes his teeth at me; my opponent fastens on me his piercing eyes. **10** Men open their mouths to jeer at me; they strike my cheek in scorn and unite together against me.  
**16:19** Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. **20** My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; **21** on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend.  
**17:11** My days have passed, my plans are shattered, and so are the desires of my heart.  
**17:15** where then is my hope? Who can see any hope for me? **16** Will it go down to the gates of death? Will we descend together into the dust?"

**18:1-21** **Bildad's second speech: more on the dreadful fate of the wicked**  
**18:5** "The lamp of the wicked is snuffed out; the flame of his fire stops burning. **6** The light in his tent becomes dark; the lamp beside him goes out.

**19:1-29** **Job's sixth speech, in which he reacts in anger**  
**19:2** "How long will you torment me and crush me with words? **3** Ten times now you have reproached me; shamelessly you attack me.  
**19:14** My kinsmen have gone away; my friends have forgotten me. **15** My guests and my maidservants count me a stranger; they look upon me as an alien.  
**19:21** "Have pity on me, my friends, have pity, for the hand of God has struck me. **22** Why do you pursue me as God does? Will you never get enough of my flesh?  
**19:23** "Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, **24** that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! **25** I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. **26** And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; **27** I myself will see him with my own eyes — I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"

**20:1-29** **Zophar's second speech: 'The wicked will suffer and be destroyed'**  
**20:4** "Surely you know how it has been from of old, ever since man was placed on the earth, **5** that the mirth of the wicked is brief, the joy of the godless lasts but a moment.  
**20:27** The heavens will expose his guilt; the earth will rise up against him. **28** A flood will carry off his house, rushing waters on the day of God's wrath. **29** Such is the fate God allots the wicked, the heritage appointed for them by God."

**21:1-34** **Job's seventh speech: 'The wicked prosper and the righteous suffer'**  
**21:7** Why do the wicked live on, growing old and increasing in power? **8** They see their children established around them, their offspring before their eyes. **9** Their homes are safe and free from fear; the rod of God is not upon them.  
**21:13** They spend their years in prosperity and go down to the grave in peace. **14** Yet they say to God, 'Leave us alone! We have no desire to know your ways. **15** Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? What would we gain by praying to him?'  
**21:23** One man dies in full vigor, completely secure and at ease, **24** his body well nourished, his bones rich with marrow. **25** Another man dies in bitterness of soul, never

having enjoyed anything good. **26** Side by side they lie in the dust, and worms cover them both.

### Third Round of Speeches (Eliphaz, Bildad)

#### 22:1-30 Eliphaz's third speech: Job's great wickedness

**22:4** "Is it for your piety that he rebukes you and brings charges against you? **5** Is not your wickedness great? Are not your sins endless? **6** You demanded security from your brothers for no reason; you stripped men of their clothing, leaving them naked. **7** You gave no water to the weary and you withheld food from the hungry, **8** though you were a powerful man, owning land — an honored man, living on it. **9** And you sent widows away empty-handed and broke the strength of the fatherless. **10** That is why snares are all around you, why sudden peril terrifies you, **22:21** "Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you. **22** Accept instruction from his mouth and lay up his words in your heart. **23** If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored: If you remove wickedness far from your tent

#### 23:1-24:25 Job's eighth speech: 'I have tried to live a righteous life — others are far more wicked than I.'

**23:8** "But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. **9** When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him. **10** But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold. **11** My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. **12** I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

#### 25:1-6 Bildad's third speech: 'How can a man be righteous before God?'

**25:4** How then can a man be righteous before God? How can one born of woman be pure? **5** If even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in his eyes, **6** how much less man, who is but a maggot — a son of man, who is only a worm!"

#### 26:1-14 Job's ninth speech: 'Your advice has been useless'

**26:2** "How you have helped the powerless! How you have saved the arm that is feeble! **3** What advice you have offered to one without wisdom! And what great insight you have displayed! **4** Who has helped you utter these words? And whose spirit spoke from your mouth?"

### Job's Final Speeches

#### 27:1-28:28 Job's tenth speech: Job defends his integrity, the wisdom of God

**27:2** "As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice, the Almighty, who has made me taste bitterness of soul, **3** as long as I have life within me, the breath of God in my nostrils, **4** my lips will not speak wickedness, and my tongue will utter no deceit. **5** I will never admit you are in the right; till I die, I will not deny my integrity. **6** I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.

**27:12** "But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? **13** Man does not comprehend its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living.

**27:15** It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed in silver.

**27:20** "Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? **21** It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air.

#### 29:1-31:40 Job's eleventh speech, in which he reflects upon his woes

**29:2** "How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me, **3** when his lamp shone upon my head and by his light I walked through darkness! **4** Oh, for the days when I was in my prime, when God's intimate friendship blessed my house, **5** when the Almighty was still with me and my children were around me, **6** when my path was drenched with cream and the rock poured out for me streams of olive oil. **30:1** "But now they mock me, men younger than I, whose fathers I would have disdained to put with my sheep dogs.

**30:20** "I cry out to you, O God, but you do not answer; I stand up, but you merely look at me.

**30:27** The churning inside me never stops; days of suffering confront me. **28** I go about blackened, but not by the sun; I stand up in the assembly and cry for help. **29** I have become a brother of jackals, a companion of owls. **30** My skin grows

black and peels; my body burns with fever. **31** My harp is tuned to mourning, and my flute to the sound of wailing. **31:1** "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl. **2** For what is man's lot from God above, his heritage from the Almighty on high? **3** Is it not ruin for the wicked, disaster for those who do wrong? **4** Does he not see my ways and count my every step? **5** "If I have walked in falsehood or my foot has hurried after deceit — **6** let God weigh me in honest scales and he will know that I am blameless — **7** if my steps have turned from the path, if my heart has been led by my eyes, or if my hands have been defiled, **8** then may others eat what I have sown, and may my crops be uprooted.

**31:32** but no stranger had to spend the night in the street, for my door was always open to the traveller

**31:35** ("Oh, that I had someone to hear me! I sign now my defense — let the Almighty answer me; let my accuser put his indictment in writing. **36** Surely I would wear it on my shoulder, I would put it on like a crown. **37** I would give him an account of my every step; like a prince I would approach him.)

The words of Job are ended.

### Elihu's speeches – A younger man speaks

#### 32:1-33:33 Elihu's first speech: 'Suffering is a warning from God and instructive'

**32:6** "I am young in years, and you are old; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know. **7** I thought, 'Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom.' **8** But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding.

**33:19** Or a man may be chastened on a bed of pain with constant distress in his bones,

**33:26** He prays to God and finds favor with him, he sees God's face and shouts for joy; he is restored by God to his righteous state. **27** Then he comes to men and says, 'I sinned, and perverted what was right, but I did not get what I deserved. **28** He redeemed my soul from going down to the pit, and I will live to enjoy the light.' **29** "God does all these things to a man — twice, even three times — **30** to turn back his soul from the pit, that the light of life may shine on him.

#### 34:1-37 Elihu's second speech: 'Job is wrong to accuse God of injustice'

**34:10** "So listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong. **11** He repays a man for what he has done; he brings upon him what his conduct deserves. **12** It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice.

**34:35** 'Job speaks without knowledge; his words lack insight.' **36** Oh, that Job might be tested to the utmost for answering like a wicked man! **37** To his sin he adds rebellion; scornfully he claps his hands among us and multiplies his words against God."

#### 35:1-16 Elihu's third speech: 'Job should not have complained but called to God'

**35:12** He does not answer when men cry out because of the arrogance of the wicked. **13** Indeed, God does not listen to their empty plea; the Almighty pays no attention to it. **14** How much less, then, will he listen when you say that you do not see him, that your case is before him and you must wait for him, **15** and further, that his anger never punishes and he does not take the least notice of wickedness. **16** So Job opens his mouth with empty talk; without knowledge he multiplies words."

#### 36:1-37:24 Elihu's fourth speech: in praise of the power and wisdom of God

**36:5** "God is mighty, but does not despise men; he is mighty, and firm in his purpose. **6** He does not keep the wicked alive but gives the afflicted their rights. **7** He does not take his eyes off the righteous; he enthrones them with kings and exalts them forever.

**37:14** "Listen to this, Job; stop and consider God's wonders. **15** Do you know how God controls the clouds and makes his lightning flash? **16** Do you know how the clouds hang poised, those wonders of him who is perfect in knowledge?

**17** You who swelter in your clothes when the land lies hushed under the south wind, **18** can you join him in spreading out the skies, hard as a mirror of cast bronze?