

The Book of Job

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1. The original study did not follow a prepared text but was extemporaneous in nature.
2. Although the transcriber tried to faithfully, with the Lord's help, set forth the thoughts that were presented in the study, the notes are not a verbatim rendering and, therefore, should be considered in that context.
3. Finally, Bro. Frank has not reviewed the notes for possible errors that may have inadvertently entered the text.

With this disclaimer in mind, may the notes be a blessing as a useful study guide.

THE BOOK OF JOB

(Study led by Bro. Frank Shallieu beginning March 1984)

Job is a picture of the Church, not of the world of mankind. Several reasons follow: (1) Throughout his experiences, Job was righteous and faithful. (2) He loved God, although he did not understand why he was having such hard experiences. (3) He got a higher reward as a result of faithfully passing his test than the world will get. The world gets restitution (that which was lost), *not double* that which was lost.

Job was in the land of Uz, and there Satan was allowed to test the mettle of his character. Job's experience or trial is analogous to that which the Church experiences during the Gospel Age in one aspect or another. Some have felt that only natural wisdom is portrayed in the Book of Job, but that observation is not correct because many of the trials that Christians have are along similar lines, for they are residing in the flesh and dealing with other human beings. Hence the trials that Christians have very often take the natural form. Seeing how Job reacted helps us to know how God wishes us to react under similar circumstances.

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.

Job 1:2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

Job 1:3 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.

First, Job's possessions are listed. Not only was he highly esteemed among men, but he was very wealthy.

Job 1:4 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.

Job 1:5 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.

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

Job 1:7 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.

Job 1:8 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?

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

Job 1:10 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.

Job 1:11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Job 1:12 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.

The Adversary felt that Job followed the Lord because of the material benefactions, prosperity, wisdom, etc., he received for his obedience. This particular allegory will not be treated at this time, but the final result is that Satan was allowed to test Job.

Job 1:13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

Job 1:14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

Job 1:15 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.

One day while Job and his wife were at home, his sons and daughters were attending a party in the house of Job's eldest son. Suddenly a messenger burst in the door to inform Job and his wife that a great calamity had just occurred. The oxen and asses that Job possessed in a certain part of his domain were taken by the Sabeans, and the servants who had the custody of these animals were slain. Thus Job lost his oxen and asses and the servants in one stroke.

Job 1:16 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.

The first messenger had hardly finished declaring the calamity to Job when a second messenger came running to the door to report that in another part of Job's property, a fire had burned up all of his sheep and the servants who were tending them.

Job 1:17 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.

No sooner had the second messenger finished his report when a third messenger arrived to say that the Chaldeans had come through his property and taken his camels and killed the servants taking care of them. What a variety of animals Job had possessed!—and they were all gone.

Job 1:18 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:

Job 1:19 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.

Yet another messenger came with even more devastating news. During the festivity in the eldest son's home, a great wind storm had arisen that collapsed the house and killed all of the young men.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Job 1:21 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.

Job 1:22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

All of these calamities had occurred one after the other. In one stroke, as it were, Job was deprived of all of his material goods plus the fruit of his own body. Although these calamities were crushing to Job, his beautiful character shone through. He declared that when he came into the world, he was naked, and it appeared that he was to leave the world the same way. No murmurings or complaints crossed his lips. Even though he did not understand the reason for these calamities, he *did not sin*.

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.

Job 2:2 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.

Job 2:3 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.

Job 2:4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

Job 2:5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Job 2:6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

Because Job's faith in God held firm, Satan then allegorically approached God again and said that if he could afflict Job's own person, his *own body*, Job would curse God. And so Satan was given that opportunity to test Job.

Job 2:7 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.

Job 2:8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

From the top of his head to the sole of his feet, Job was smitten with “boils.” For several reasons, these were not boils in the ordinary sense. They were a type of eruption that was not only very distressing but also very itchy and burning. We know this because Job used a broken piece of pottery to scrape his flesh to try to relieve some of his torment. However, the scraping greatly disfigured his flesh and the agony continued.

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

Job 2:10 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.

Job’s wife said, “Why don’t you curse God and die? At least you would be relieved of your suffering.” This was a very severe test on Job’s wife as well, and she succumbed—she was unfaithful in making this suggestion.

Of course Job realized that death would end his agony and his troubled spirit. What else was there to live for? Nevertheless, in all this, Job did not sin with his lips.

Job 2:11 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.

In the meantime, news of Job’s calamities had spread in the area, and three “friends” came to mourn with and comfort him. The three were Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite (Shiite today), and Zophar the Naamathite. The point of naming these individuals and their family background is to show that while the story began with an allegory about Satan talking with God, Job was, nevertheless, a *real person*. He actually lived in the land of Uz and these experiences literally happened to him.

Job 2:12 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.

Job 2:13 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.

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar sat down on the ground by Job’s side and commiserated with him for seven days—*without speaking*. Evidently Job did not speak either. Seven days and nights are a long time to silently commiserate with a person.

Job 3:1 After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.

Job finally broke the silence (verses 1–26). The three remained silent until after Job spoke.

There will not be an attempt to explain every verse. Rather, the *principles of interpretation* will be considered. (These are more valuable in some respects than the detail, but the detail is necessary in order to size up the situation.) The general perspective is all important in understanding the reason for the recording of Job’s experiences. True, the Book of Job is a gripping, dramatic story, but the *lessons* derived from it are more valuable

than the story itself. Many who have read the Book of Job know little about it because of the complexity of detail, the type of language, and the thinking that is employed by the wise men of the East. Incidentally, the three “comforters” were all wise in this world’s thinking; they were known for their apparent innate natural wisdom in matters of everyday life. This natural wisdom is evident from the way they talked. Job too was a very wise person along these lines, but far superior in his thinking.

There is an important element to consider in the counsel of the three when they were beholding Job. When they first came to visit Job and were approaching, they could see from “afar off” that he was disfigured (Job 2:12). They saw him in this pitiful state. Then they sat down with him and beheld his mental and physical anguish for seven days. It is important to realize that *their observations colored their thinking*. The reason for the philosophy subsequently expounded by Job and the three men is to show the “dos and the don’ts.” The reasoning of the three is presented to show that we must be careful *not to use their type of attitude* in connection with the judgment of others. Having a completely wrong concept can do great injury to an individual if he hasn’t the caliber of Job (and few do). Those who are instrumental in the destruction of others through wrong reasoning and advice are responsible for their words. It is like pushing a blind man over the cliff.

Therefore, it is important for us to observe Job’s attitude in his experiences and the attitude of the three observers. When a situation arises, and certain details are known, not everyone draws the same conclusion. Different conclusions are drawn from the same facts. Moreover, the *motivation* of those who observe determines how they react. For instance, Jesus was perfect in all that he did and said, and yet of those who observed him, some were very critical and they tried to thwart his ministry. Others who had the same facts and observed the same things responded favorably (“Never man spake like this man”—John 7:46) and followed him, some becoming disciples. Therefore, the *motive* is very important in matters of judgment; it can produce *opposite* results.

Job 3:2 And Job spake, and said,

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

Job 3:4 Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

Job 3:5 Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.

Job 3:6 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.

Job 3:7 Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

Job 3:8 Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.

Job 3:9 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:

Job 3:10 Because it shut not up the doors of my mother’s womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.

Job 3:11 Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?

Job 3:12 Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?

Job 3:13 For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,

Job 3:14 With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

Job 3:15 Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

Job 3:16 Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light.

Job 3:17 There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

Job 3:18 There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

Job 3:19 The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.

Job 3:20 Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul;

Job 3:21 Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

Job 3:22 Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?

Job 3:23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?

Job 3:24 For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.

When Job began to speak, he lamented the circumstances of his birth. He wished that the day of his birth, the day he was introduced to the world, had not occurred. Job said that had he not been born, he would not have come to the very day of agony and complete loss he was suffering. His words show the extremity of his suffering.

We must try to enter into his experience in order to understand the words he uttered. To criticize Job under such trying circumstances would be very unreasonable on our part. In the final analysis, when God speaks at the end of the chapter, even He did not find fault with Job along this line.

Job was now a poor man, bereft of all his property. With this loss went the loss of power, authority, and respect for his wisdom and judging. And so, those who look at another who is poor in this world's goods, and perhaps disfigured with illness or another deformity, usually allow these circumstances to enter into their thinking and judgment of him. It is very difficult to disassociate our thinking from the material aspect of an individual because "man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on [into] the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). Realizing that this is the principle enunciated in the Word

of God, we must try to develop this *detached perspective* in viewing others, and we must tread with care in our dealings with such an individual.

Job 3:25 For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.

Job 3:26 I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

Chapter 1 informed us that Job was very concerned for his family and prayed daily for their spiritual and temporal welfare. He was interested in their development and future, as well as in his own, because he knew the evil influences of the world and how easily one could be turned off from God through material prosperity. It is interesting, too, that many of the faithful individuals of the past remained wealthy, but what strong and wonderful characters they had to be to remain faithful! Wealth is a very difficult obstacle to overcome. Job had this experience with wealth, and he overcame.

Verses 25 and 26 refer to Job's concern for his family. The object of his prayers was for their "safety," but what Job feared would happen had occurred. Except for his wife, his family were all dead and everything was gone. Subconsciously he had had this fear and concern. (Of course we know they will have a resurrection.) Actually, Job's prayers were being answered—but not in the way he anticipated.

What was hard for Job to understand—and we must enter into his spirit and thinking here—was that daily he was faithful, daily he persevered, and daily he was concerned for the safety and welfare of his family, yet these calamities had occurred. In spite of his concern for their welfare day and night, extreme trouble had come. The core of his problem was that *he could not understand why these things were happening*. (He was unaware of the allegory between God and Satan.) He did not realize that he was being made a special target to further magnify God and his own character. In Old Testament times, material prosperity was often the reward for obedience, but here God was showing that favoritism was based not on personality, but on the *internal merit* of the individual under His tutelage and development.

After Job made this statement, one of the three wise men, Eliphaz, now began to speak.

Job 4:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

Job 4:2 If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking?

Job 4:3 Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

Job 4:4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.

Job 4:5 But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

Job 4:6 Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?

Job 4:7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

Job 4:8 Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

Job 4:9 By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

Job 4:10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

Job 4:11 The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

Job 4:12 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

Job 4:13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,

Job 4:14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

Job 4:15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

Job 4:16 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,

Job 4:17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?

Job 4:18 Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:

Job 4:19 How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

Job 4:20 They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it.

Job 4:21 Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom.

Job 5:1 Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?

Job 5:2 For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.

Job 5:3 I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

Job 5:4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.

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

Job 5:6 Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring

out of the ground;

Job 5:7 Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

Job 5:8 I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

Job 5:9 Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

Job 5:10 Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:

Job 5:11 To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

Job 5:12 He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.

Job 5:13 He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

Job 5:14 They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

Job 5:15 But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

Job 5:16 So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

Job 5:17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

Job 5:18 For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

Job 5:19 He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

Job 5:20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword.

Job 5:21 Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

Job 5:22 At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

Job 5:23 For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

Job 5:24 And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.

Job 5:25 Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.

Job 5:26 Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

Job 5:27 Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.

Eliphaz's line of reasoning, without going verse by verse, is as follows: He realized that in earlier days, Job, being a man of great wealth, was not only concerned with his family but was interested in other people, giving help and comfort as needed. He not only instructed others and gave intellectual counsel with regard to their problems, but he would commiserate with them and comfort and encourage them. Eliphaz said, "This is what you did for others in the past, but now when calamities come upon you, you cannot even comfort yourself." What a blow these words would be to Job! This type of testing is much like what Jesus was subjected to while on the Cross: "You saved others. Now come down and save yourself. Then we will believe you." In one way or another, the consecrated of the Gospel Age are similarly tested, and the higher one's development becomes (the more mature the individual), the more testing he receives.

The line of Eliphaz's reasoning is "Where do you have an example of the righteous being destroyed? Aren't the ones who please God rewarded? Even though the wicked may prosper for a while, isn't there a stigma attached to them and don't they receive calamities?" Eliphaz was saying that the righteous prosper and the wicked eventually perish. In other words, Eliphaz first hinted, and then was more bold, that Job must have sinned for this visitation to come upon him. "If we observe this in others, why should we, in considering your suffering, suddenly reverse these laws, excuse you as our friend, and say that with you it is different?" He continues, "This is our natural wisdom and observation of why things happen. Why should you be any different than others with regard to calamities?" Then Eliphaz introduced the subject of farming. "If the land is plowed with iniquity and the seed of wickedness is sowed, isn't a corresponding crop reaped?" Therefore, he was saying that Job was reaping what was in his character and the fruitage was his calamities. Some friend indeed!

The three friends came initially to comfort Job, but their observation of his extreme suffering colored their thinking. Instead of being his friends, they became his enemies, as it were. It would be better if they had never come in the first place, and Job says this later on and wishes that they would leave.

Eliphaz further reasoned: "Job, you are magnifying your innocence and your integrity, but do you mean to say that you are on a par with God? Can a mortal man compare his integrity before God in the manner you are trying to do when you are experiencing such calamities? Why, it is self-evident that something is wrong." What cruel reasoning!

Job and the three "wise" men knew of the first dispensation, in which holy angels fell from their first estate. With this knowledge in mind, Eliphaz continued: "When God had angels as His servants in the past, He found fault with them. If God had a reservation in dealing with spirit beings, then when He comes down here where people are made of clay and mud, would He think of them on a higher level? You are trying to justify yourself, but it stands to reason that God would find more problems down here."

The three comforters did not like the fact that in spite of all the calamities, Job still felt he was innocent. Poor Job was very perplexed and could not understand the trials. In his

place, we could not have understood either. Would we have done as well? Perhaps if we were of the Little Flock. In observing Job, we should be observing ourselves, the mettle of our own characters and to what extent we would endure under such circumstances. No wonder God later mentions Job by name as one of His top ten.

Eliphaz continued: “This pot of clay down here is trying to justify itself, but when we are born, we are as prone to iniquity as the sparks that fly upward. Unto God I would commit my cause.” He was suggesting that Job should pray about the matter. These same words are often said to brethren. A person who is undergoing extreme agony and confusion of mind cannot even utter an intelligent prayer; prayer becomes a groan, an agony of the spirit, which God can answer. “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26). The Holy Spirit can interpret unintelligible prayers and groans from the heart, and sometimes these are the most efficacious prayers.

Eliphaz resumes: “The destiny of those who are proud and forward is darkness.” In other words, “Job, not only should you pray about the matter, but you are manifesting a proud attitude in connection with your experiences. You know what the destiny is for the proud and forward—oblivion. God does not like that type of individual. Happy [blessed] is the man whom God corrects. If you listen to my instruction, maybe some good will be salvaged out of this situation. Therefore, do not despise the chastenings of the Almighty. If you commit your way to the Lord, not only might He salvage you, but He could do this on several occasions. You could have six such experiences, and eventually you will be delivered out of all of them. And even with the seventh experience, He can lift you up, but this depends on obedience. Such as are delivered do not sin.” All the time Eliphaz and the other two were thinking that the reason the calamities had come upon Job was because he had sinned. They felt this should have been obvious because of what was happening to him. “If you are in the proper attitude and a calamity comes upon you, you will have no fear. You are not manifesting the right spirit. The troubled spirit and anguish you manifest every time you open your mouth shows us that you have sinned. One who has not sinned can stand any trial and receive it rejoicingly.” How very courageous on the part of Eliphaz! His advice was the opposite of what the apostle Paul said about a severe trial: “*No chastening* [trial] for the present seemeth to be joyous, but *grievous*: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. 12:11). Many, even amidst our own brotherhood, have this wrong concept and have given absolutely wrong advice.

Again, “If you were of the proper heart disposition, you would live to a ripe old age. Just like the corn in the field that puts forth the mature ear, so the right-hearted man will live out his years to old age. This truth, which is obvious to us, we have observed and searched out. Listen to what we are trying to tell you. This is what God wants you to know, even if the advice comes through us.”

Job replies to Eliphaz in Chapters 6 and 7.

Job 6:1 But Job answered and said,

Job 6:2 Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together!

Job 6:3 For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up.

Job said, "My grief is becoming unbearable. It is like heavy sand weighing on my soul." Job is saying that the words of Eliphaz have added to his burden. Eliphaz's supposed comfort and counsel were just adding more weight and tipping the scale beyond endurance.

"Therefore, my words are swallowed up." In his overwhelming grief, Job couldn't properly respond to this situation.

Job 6:4 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.

Job 6:5 Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?

Job 6:6 Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

Job asked, "Does the wild ass bray or the ox low when it has food to eat?" No, when these animals are eating, they are satisfied and will not bray or low. Job was likening Eliphaz and his counsel to the wild ass and the ox. It was easy for Eliphaz, *who was not having the trial*, to give counsel to Job, but his logic and talking were like the braying of a wild ass. The advice Eliphaz was giving did not make sense; it did not correspond with the facts of nature. He was satisfied and not having the trial so he should not have been "braying." Eliphaz and the other two comforters were hypocrites in their counsel.

Either here or later, Job admitted that the counsel of Eliphaz was good and accurate, but *misapplied*. In other words, just because certain things are generally true, that does not mean they are true with regard to a particular situation. Eliphaz had logic, but it was *illogical* in Job's situation.

Job 6:7 The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat.

It was as if Job was being force-fed with things that were obnoxious to him. In his defenseless, sorrowful state, he had to listen to this garbage.

Job 6:8 Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!

Job 6:9 Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

Job 6:10 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.

Job tells that he had always been courageous and outspoken with regard to his God. He did not let his wealth interfere with reverence and worship. By both words and deeds, he had been faithful to his God.

Job 6:11 What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?

Job 6:12 Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?

“But is my flesh stone? Is it brass?” Job asked. In other words, man is psychologically affected by pain and other factors, and there is a point beyond which a man cannot endure. The three should have realized that he was bemoaning his fate and his experiences because he was almost at the breaking point. Instead they felt he should manifest a better spirit and attitude and have better control of his tongue. But he asks, “Am I a stone or brass that I can do such things?”

Many people are idealistic but very impractical in a particular situation. It is easy for one to talk who is not undergoing a trial. Poor Job was bereft of his children and possessions and was disfigured and in pain with sores from head to foot, but instead of comforting him, the three friends did nothing but criticize him.

Job 6:13 Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?

Job 6:14 To him that is afflicted pity should be shown from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

Job 6:15 My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away;

Job 6:16 Which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid:

Job 6:17 What time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.

In the land where Job and the three lived, there were wadis that had water only at certain times of the year. Job said to the three, “You, my friends, are like these wadis. For a time they appear to be refreshing, but when the sun comes up and as time goes on, they just evaporate and become a dry riverbed.” In the final analysis, those who came to refresh Job were as disappointing as a wadi of water that evaporates and provides no comfort or refreshment.

Job 6:18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

Job 6:19 The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.

Job 6:20 They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.

Job 6:21 For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid.

Job continued, “You see my cast-down condition and are afraid of my circumstance.”

Job 6:22 Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

“Did I ask you to come here to comfort me? Did I send out an invitation for you to come here? Don’t you realize what you are doing to me?”

Job 6:23 Or, Deliver me from the enemy’s hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

Job 6:24 Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

Job 6:25 How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?

Job 6:26 Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?

Job 6:27 Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your friend.

Job 6:28 Now therefore be content, look upon me; for it is evident unto you if I lie.

Job 6:29 Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in it.

Job 6:30 Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my taste discern perverse things?

Job 7:1 Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?

Job 7:2 As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:

Job 7:3 So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

Job 7:4 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.

Job 7:5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

Job 7:6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

Job 7:7 O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.

Job 7:8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

Job 7:9 As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

Job 7:10 He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

Job 7:11 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.

Job 7:12 Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

Job 7:13 When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

Job 7:14 Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:

Job 7:15 So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.

Job 7:16 I loathe it; I would not live always: let me alone; for my days are vanity.

“How forceful are right words, but cause me to understand where I err.” Job was saying, “Much that you say is true, but *not in this case*. All I want to know is *why* I am having this experience. If you can show me where I have erred, then your instruction would be helpful and valid. In searching my own heart, I cannot see where I have been unfaithful to my God. Your words are like desperate wind. In your desperation to help me, you are actually doing a destructive work and not helping at all. You overwhelm me with your criticism. I am now bereft of goods, cattle, children, health, etc., and am like a fatherless person and am in torment of mind. I would rather be strangled to death than to be subjected to the type of admonition you are giving me. Go away and leave me alone!”

Job 7:17 What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?

Job 7:18 And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?

Job 7:19 How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

Job 7:20 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?

This verse is sometimes misunderstood. Job was not admitting that he had sinned. He was saying: “According to you, I have sinned. You have been telling me over and over that I secretly sinned. So what is it you want to do to help me, O you who want to take the position of being spiritual doctors?” Job was being sarcastic. “Why have you set me as a target [mark]?” Just as one with a bow shoots arrows at a target, so the three were shooting arrows at Job and trying to penetrate him. He was being victimized by them.

“...so that I am a burden to myself.” Job was saying, “Your type of help is bothering me so much, and going in on me so deeply, that I am even being a burden to myself. I am feeling so discomforted that I would almost like to be put out of my misery.”

Job 7:21 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.

“You can see that I am just about ready to die. Couldn’t you at least give me some words of comfort before I go to sleep in the grave?” With these words, Job finished his response to Eliphaz the Temanite.

Next Bildad the Shuhite offered counsel to Job.

Job 8:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

Job 8:2 How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

Job 8:3 Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

Job 8:4 If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression;

Job 8:5 If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

Job 8:6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Bildad first talked about Job's children who died. "They must have sinned in order for them to die, so you should not express so much grief. God took them away because of what they did. Your children are guilty, and it appears that you too are guilty. As we look at your pitiful condition, it is apparent that you have sinned." Bildad agreed with Eliphaz.

Bildad continued, "If you were pure and just, this circumstance would be temporary. The fact that the circumstance is lasting some time proves you are guilty."

Job 8:7 Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

In other words, according to Bildad, had Job been faithful, his small beginning would have blossomed out into greatness. The Old Testament taught that those who were obedient prospered with fruitful fields, a number of children, their health, etc. (these were general conditions).

Job 8:8 For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

Bildad said that Job should look back to the example of his forefathers.

Job 8:9 (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)

Job 8:10 Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

Job 8:11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

Job 8:12 Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

Job 8:13 So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

Bildad drew a lesson from nature. "Reeds that grow in the marsh areas are abundant and green, but at a certain time, for some mysterious reason, they turn brown and wither—and not because a sickle has been put to them. They simply perish. The reeds are an example in nature of those who appear to worship God in their greenness, but really are forgetting Him. Hence they are mystically, invisibly, cut off by God. Such are the paths of all those who forget God and are hypocrites."

Job 8:14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.

Job 8:15 He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but

it shall not endure.

Job 8:16 He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

Job 8:17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.

Job 8:18 If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

Job 8:19 Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

Job 8:20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

“God will not cast away a perfect man or help evildoers.” Bildad had the same opinion of Job that Eliphaz had.

Job 8:21 Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.

Job 8:22 They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwellingplace of the wicked shall come to nought.

Bildad was saying, “If you had been faithful to God instead of just expressing distress and being mournful—a display that is disgusting us—you would be laughing and joyous.” What cruel words to cast at Job! He was undergoing a traumatic, emotional experience.

The purpose of this study is to extract *overall lessons* from the Book of Job. The semantics of the three supposed comforters and of Job in trying to combat their line of reasoning are one thing, but the overall lessons and experiences are more important. The *theme* should not be lost in pursuing detail.

Job began to reply to the reasoning of Bildad.

Job 9:1 Then Job answered and said,

Job 9:2 I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?

“I know it is so of a truth.” In each case, Job admitted that the three did possess logic, but in his case they were misjudging the situation. First of all, they lacked the right disposition of heart. They did not properly apply knowledge to Job’s experience. If they could have told Job where his fault lay, what the wrong was, then all they were saying would have been right. But they did not know the facts, and yet they were giving all kinds of advice. It would be like trying to give a sermon on principles without understanding them.

Job 9:3 If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

“How should man be just with God?” Job was not talking to God but to his own soul or emotion. When he questioned things that were happening, it was like the way we question things in our minds. We try to search out the meaning of an experience or trial we are going through. If Job were to audibly pray to God in front of the three, as they had suggested, for everything that he might use to justify himself, the Lord might find 999

things against him. If he had only one fragment of truth to offer before Almighty God, he would be overwhelmed. God was too inscrutable to be reasoned with. Job was questioning *himself* inwardly, not God.

Job 9:4 He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

Job 9:5 Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

Job 9:6 Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.

Job 9:7 Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.

Job 9:8 Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

Job 9:9 Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.

Job 9:10 Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

Job 9:11 Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.

Job continued: "God moves mountains with earthquakes. Man doesn't see Him doing this, but the effects of His *great power* are seen. God, who originally made the heavens, can stop the sun and hide the stars. Why, He could go right by me, and I would not even know it."

Job 9:12 Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

Job 9:13 If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.

Job 9:14 How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him?

Job 9:15 Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge.

Job 9:16 If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.

Job 9:17 For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.

Job 9:18 He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

Job 9:19 If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong; and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?

Job 9:20 If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Job 9:21 Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.

Job was saying, "I do not question my own integrity, but even if I were perfect (which I am not), I still am only mortal man. I am no match for my God." Job humbly recognized that he was of the dust.

Job 9:22 This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

Job 9:23 If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

Job 9:24 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?

Job 9:25 Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good.

Job 9:26 They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.

Job 9:27 If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself:

Job 9:28 I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

In other words, if Job tried to justify himself, God could always find fault with him— but not with his heart intentions. His sincere desire was to serve God, even though he might fall on certain occasions. God could find fault with anyone in regard to infractions due to infirmities and weaknesses of the flesh, but intentional or purposed disobedience was another matter.

Job 9:29 If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

"If I were a wicked person, why did I try to serve my God, and why did I help and comfort other people, distribute my goods and benefactions, and witness on His behalf? Now that I am in this travail, did I labor in vain back there?" Job did not understand why he was having these afflictions. In searching his past, he could see that he did try to serve his God.

Job 9:30 If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;

Job 9:31 Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

Job 9:32 For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.

"For God is not a man that I should reason with Him." A man is no match for God.

Job 9:33 Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

"Neither is there any daysman between us." In other words, if Job could communicate his grief and sorrow to another individual who would act as intermediary and take his case to God, then Job would plead his cause. Jesus is the "Daysman," the "dayspring from on high" (Luke 1:78).

Job 9:34 Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me:

Job 9:35 Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.

Job was saying that if the trouble were removed from him, then perhaps he could reason and speak about why he had had the experience and what he had gone through—but not during the affliction. Under the present circumstance, he was in no condition to give a sermon and he did not understand the reasons. But perhaps later, when the rod was removed, he could look back and trace the leadings of God. That was a wise remark, for the reasons for a trial are sometimes seen *afterward*. “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless *afterward* it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. 12:11). Of course the “*afterward*” may occur beyond the veil, for a severe experience may take the Christian’s life. This was even true with Jesus. “[*Afterward*] he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied” (Isa. 53:11). Jesus’ experience was so severe that he could not fully understand it in his grief and suffering, but when he was raised from death and in a more peaceful atmosphere later, he could look back and see the philosophy of *why* certain things had to happen.

In answering Bildad, Job stated that he did not contact God direct and try to justify his cause because he felt there was some reason for his experience even though he couldn’t understand it. He respected the majesty and power of God. Job said that God does very mysterious things—things past finding out—as observed in nature. For example, in verse 11 Job said, “God can go right by me and I don’t even see Him because He is a spirit being. How could I present my cause before the GREAT GOD? How can I choose my words? And even though I feel that I am righteous, I am still reluctant to discuss this matter with Him directly.”

In verse 20 Job said, “If I attempt to justify myself, my own mouth would condemn me.” In verse 22 he summed up: “But this one thing I do observe: that even in the present world, destruction comes upon both the perfect and the imperfect. The good and the bad all die.” The three felt that Job had sinned in order to have such calamities come upon him. One said, “Perhaps your children committed iniquity. Perhaps you did not pray enough.” Yet Job had prayed daily for his children and offered sacrifice for each of them. Therefore, Job did not think sin was the cause of his affliction. He concluded, “Don’t you see that in nature, trouble comes on all alike? Man is born for trouble.”

Job is often misunderstood. Many of his statements seem to be criticizing God, but he is not. Here is the problem. In many of the prophetic books of the Old Testament, four different people will be speaking in one or two verses without any introduction as to which one is speaking. The Second Psalm is a good example where the speaker switches from God to Jesus. Now in this book, when Job answered his comforters and their reasoning, we must remember that he was answering *them*, and not God. When Job made certain statements, it sounded as if he was talking direct to God, but he wasn’t—and he even said he would not do this. He was thinking out loud and presented his case in the first person. And then sometimes he would turn to the one who had been criticizing him and address him without any change indicated in the context. That is what causes the confusion. It seems as if he is saying one thing, whereas he is actually saying the opposite.

Job 10:1 My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will

speak in the bitterness of my soul.

Job 10:2 I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; show me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Job did not know why God was punishing him, for he did not understand the philosophy of the permission of evil. And that is what the Book of Job is about: *the permission of evil*. Job represents the Church, and even the Church does not know why they have certain trials and experiences. Christians often ask: Have I done something wrong? Have I displeased the Lord? Perhaps the purpose of a trial is just to discipline them for a future office so that they will be hardened, matured, and educated, through experience, to know how to deal with certain problems in the Kingdom. Of course it is true that a trial may be the result of a fault, so we are instructed to examine ourselves to see if in any way our words and/or actions have been amiss; but sudden and peculiar—sometimes *very peculiar*—experiences come upon us where we have great difficulty tracing God’s hand.

During the harvest period, we have been enlightened with the philosophy of the permission of evil, but the harvest is just a small portion of the Gospel Age. With the mere fragments of Scripture that many Christians had down through the age, there was not the understanding we are privileged to have now. Therefore, Job’s experience is the *general experience of the Church*. The fact that the three “comforters” (critics) were companions of Job would suggest they represent professing Christians with a background similar to Job’s—his neighbors or friends—who likewise could not understand God’s dealings with him. Job was *highly favored* of the Lord, but they interpreted his experiences as signs of *disfavor*. Similarly Jesus’ death on the Cross was a proof to the majority that he was in disfavor with God because “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. 3:13). If many can look at a *perfect* man and still misjudge him, how much more would they misjudge an *imperfect* man? Thus the three comforters represent the line of reasoning frequently used by others to criticize those who are at heart trying to serve and please the Lord.

Job 10:3 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?

This was not a direct confrontation with God. Job was thinking out loud, talking, so that the others could share his thinking. Job was perplexed. God’s past dealings with him had been favorable. God had worked in Job prior to his affliction. Job was “the work” of His hands in that he was a judge; he was able to comfort others because of God’s instruction. But now the three critics, in their arguments and reasoning, seemed to be having God’s favor. His favor seemed to be shining “upon the counsel of the wicked.” Job was talking about the three men, not about the world, for he knew their backgrounds, as will be shown later on in the book. He had enough trouble with his own afflictions without stopping them in their tracks by exposing their problems. Here in verse 3 he was just thinking that the three were ostensibly being favored.

Job 10:4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?

Job 10:5 Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man’s days,

All translators feel that Job is questioning God in these verses, but that is not the case for several reasons. One reason is that in the Hebrew the wording in a question and a

statement is often alike, so that one would not know, except by the context, which was intended. And sometimes it is impossible to know even from the context. An illustration would be when James and John wanted to sit on Jesus' right and left hand in the Kingdom. (Although this was Greek, the principle would be the same.) Jesus replied, "Are ye able?" Later he said, "Ye are able." Both would be literally stated the same way—the difference would be in the *intonation*. "Ye are able" can be both a statement and a question: "Ye are *able*?"

Thus those who were listening to Job's reasoning could tell the difference. For this reason and because of the limitation of their vocabulary, Jews, Arabs, and others often talk with their hands to show what they are trying to say, lest they be misunderstood.

Job was first musing that God seemed to be favoring the counsel of the wicked. Then he turned to them and said, "You have eyes of flesh. You are seeing me in my circumstance, but you cannot read my heart. You do not fully comprehend. You see as man sees, not as God sees. Your days are numbered as a man. A man is temporary, mortal; he is not in the same category as God."

Job 10:6 That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

The three were trying to find out from Job what secret sin he had committed that caused these calamities to come upon him. They were searching diligently after his sin.

Job 10:7 Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.

Now Job addressed God: "You know that I am not wicked, and there are none who can deliver out of your hand." Frequently Job was musing *about* God and talking *to* the three comforters, and then he would revert back and address God. To properly understand Job's character, we must understand this concept.

Job 10:8 Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.

Job said that God's hand had fashioned him, not only with regard to his physical frame in the womb but spiritually speaking too. But he could not understand his afflictions: "yet thou dost destroy me." In other words, "You began this wonderful work in me, but now I am being destroyed."

Job 10:9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

Elsewhere in the book, Job said he knows that a man is made of clay and that he will return to the dust, but here he is asking, "Is this the case now?" "I was made of clay. Am I now going back into the dust whence I arose?"

Job 10:10 Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?

Job was saying, "My shame is manifest to everyone (particularly these three). I am exposed and poured out and curdled as milk and like cheese."

Job 10:11 Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones

and sinews.

Job 10:12 Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

Job 10:13 And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee.

Job 10:14 If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

Job 10:15 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;

Job was “full of confusion” because of not understanding the permission of evil. “Therefore see thou mine affliction.” Job was formed and fashioned as a man with noble stature. He was respected and was a comforter to others, and he recognized these qualities and abilities were the Lord’s doing. But now the tables were turned, and he was reduced, as it were, to skin and bones. It seemed as if God were *defashioning* him. It was like a reverse process, and he could not understand even though he searched his heart. He knew he was not perfect, but his heart intentions were.

“If I be wicked, woe unto me.” He didn’t think he had been wicked. “And if I be righteous . . .” should be “And I be righteous . . .” The supplied “if” should be omitted.

Job 10:16 For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me.

He was having a double experience: of first being wonderfully blessed by the Lord and then being severely afflicted. Of course God did not cause the affliction direct but was *allowing* Satan to reverse the process and to take away from Job everything that the Lord had previously given him. God *permitted* this in order to show the *true mettle of Job’s character*. Satan was trying to get Job to curse God, but God knew that would not happen.

Job 10:17 Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.

In other words, not only did Job experience the loss of family, goods, and health, but these three “comforters” were compounding his misery. Multiple witnesses (the three comforters) were taking advantage of his low circumstance.

Job 10:18 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!

Job 10:19 I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

Job would have preferred the grave to this particular experience.

Job 10:20 Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

Job 10:21 Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;

Job 10:22 A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

Verses 20–22 are another change. Job again addressed his comforters. He was next to death—his days were numbered—and they were pushing him into the grave. They were showing no mercy to a dying man. “Isn’t what I am suffering enough? Why do you have to, in addition, find fault with me? Let me have some peace before I go into the tomb of darkness.”

Earlier portions of Job demonstrate that “let me alone” is a diversion of thought. In Job 4:13–17 Eliphaz was trying to show Job that his attitude of wondering why God had afflicted him was completely wrong. The dream that Eliphaz related was an attempt to put the fear of God in Job. In 7:14 Job was answering Eliphaz, “Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions.” Job was not saying that God was scaring him with dreams, but was addressing Eliphaz. He was responding to what Eliphaz had said earlier. “Why do you scare me with these dreams?” In Job 7:18 Job said, “And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?” Day after day these three sat by his side as inquisitors. “How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?” (Job 7:19). To “swallow down my spittle” would be the death rattle; it would mean death. In Job 7:20 he said, “I have sinned.” But all along, Job had been stating that he had *not* sinned. The thought is: “Say that you are right. Suppose that I have sinned.” Job was clearly talking to the three comforters, not to God. “What shall I do now, O thou preserver of men?” Job was being sarcastic to Eliphaz the Temanite, who was supposed to be comforting him. “You are so solicitous for my soul and my welfare, and yet look at what you are doing to me,” Job told Eliphaz. “Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?” In other words, “Why don’t you pardon me, and at least give me a little comfort by being merciful to me?” Job wanted to die in peace. “So say I have sinned. Be merciful and leave me alone.”

Therefore, based on these other examples, Job was talking to his comforters, not God, when he said “Let me alone” in Job 10:20. They were badgering him.

The third comforter, Zophar, now began to speak.

Job 11:1 Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

Job 11:2 Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?

Zophar said, “Job, you are a bag of wind. You are trying to justify yourself with a multitude of words, but your words are confusion. Your many words should be answered.”

Job 11:3 Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

In answering Eliphaz, Job had been a little sarcastic in one verse. Now Zophar said, “Do you think you can keep us quiet with the multitude of your words and your mocking? Shouldn’t it be the other way around? Shouldn’t you be ashamed at our reasoning against you? Do you think that by your repeated declarations of innocence, you can pull the wool

over our eyes without a rebuttal? Do you think we will listen to your great multitude of words without saying anything?"

Job 11:4 For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

Job 11:5 But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

Job 11:6 And that he would show 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.

In other words, "Oh, if only God could speak! Then you would see what He thinks about the matter. Even though you are in a miserable state, you deserve to suffer double [twice as much]. God exacts much less from you than your sins deserve." The arguments of Zophar are the same as those of Bildad: "How long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?" (8:2). "If you would seek the Almighty and make supplication to Him, things might be different" (8:5,6).

Job 11:7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

Job 11:8 It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

Job 11:9 The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

Zophar was criticizing Job. All the words in verses 7–9 are true, but Zophar was finding fault with Job, who had a tremendous amount of wisdom. God revealed to Job things about science and nature that were far over the heads of his comforters. In his previous remarks, Job had mentioned something about the stars, but they thought he was talking nonsense and imagining things pertaining to God. This line of fault-finding will be repeated later because the three comforters became very critical about Job's knowledge of the heavens, science, etc.

Job 11:10 If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

Job 11:11 For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it?

Zophar was saying that Job was a vain man. "God is so great and broad. Can anyone really understand Him? Don't you see what God is doing to you? And yet you still say that your doctrine is pure, and you are still trying to justify yourself. God knows vain men [the three thought Job was a vain man]. God sees the wickedness in you, Job." Zophar's object lesson was for Job's benefit.

Job 11:12 For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.

Zophar continued: "Job, you are "like a wild ass's colt [you don't know what you are talking about]. You are a real youngster as far as the things of God are concerned."

In summarizing verses 7–12, Zophar was saying, "Job, do you expect God to come down from on high, from His lofty position of power, to answer your petition—the petition of a

vain, sinful, wild, and asinine man? Not only are you vain and sinful and speaking empty words, but your wild statements trying to justify yourself as innocent are like the braying of a jackass. The nature of your statements is asinine. When God cuts off or shuts up, His very silence toward you is, by inference, an implication of your guilt." (Job's restored and increased blessings at the end of the book would be a great surprise to the three tormentors.)

Job 11:13 If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

Job 11:14 If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

Wickedness was being imputed to Job. The word "if" meant "since." The three believed Job had sinned and felt he should confess.

Job 11:15 For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:

"For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot." In other words, "If you confess your sin, then you can lift up your face and the Lord's favor will be on you."

"Yea, thou ... shalt not fear." Job had been expressing fear as to the reason for his afflictions. Zophar was criticizing Job's moaning and groaning and lack of understanding, and saying, "Don't you realize that God is punishing you? Why, you wouldn't fear *anything* if you were as righteous as you declare yourself to be! Those who are without spot are very bold and courageous. Nothing makes them fearful."

Job 11:16 Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away:

What a foolish statement! Zophar said Job should *forget* his sufferings *in the midst* of the severe experience itself. Afterwards that would be possible, but how could Job forget when he was in pain from head to foot? A Christian who is seriously afflicted with pain and disease has difficulty even uttering an intelligent prayer with proper decorum. The mind is confused in such a circumstance. But Zophar was saying, "You wouldn't be in this situation unless you had sinned."

Job 11:17 And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

"Job, if you would confess your sin and forget your sufferings, these blessings would be your lot." To the shame of the three comforters, the conditions in verse 17 do become Job's circumstance later on—but not while he is *going through* the tribulation. Later God's favor again shone on Job—and in a double fashion.

Job 11:18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

Job 11:19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.

"Many shall make suit unto thee." Zophar was saying that many would come to Job with

their problems if Job would get right with God. (That is what Job had done *prior* to his affliction when he had sat as a judge, comforting others.) The comforters had said to Job earlier, “You who comforted others, can’t even comfort yourself!” This is what taunters said to Jesus on the Cross: “You healed others. Come down from the Cross and heal yourself.”

A summary of verses 13–19: “Job, if you earnestly pray to God and confess your guilt and mend your ways, then your sufferings can be reversed and you can return to God’s favor. You must confess your wrongdoing, and then you will cease to be afflicted.”

Job 11:20 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.

“But the wicked will not escape, and their hope will shrivel up.” Zophar felt that Job would be strong and bold and not talk about his illness if he were in favor with God. Zophar was judging matters according to the Law—that obedience brought health, prosperity, etc. But God was not dealing with Job according to the Law (Job lived prior to the Law), and Job pictured the Church in these experiences.

“Job, if you continue on in your wickedness and do not heed my counsel, then your hope of salvation will be about as solid as the giving up of a belch of wind. [‘Giving up of the ghost’ does not mean ‘dying’ here.] That is how solid your hope is under your present condition because you have not really prayed earnestly to God and confessed your guilt. Not only is your salvation like a belch of wind, but your destiny is hopeless.”

Job 12:1 And Job answered and said,

Job 12:2 No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

Job began his reply to Zophar with sarcasm. “No doubt *you* are the class of people you are accusing *me* of being. Your wisdom and reasoning will perish with you.”

Job 12:3 But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?

“But I have understanding as well as you.” In other words, “You are not talking to a nincompoop. I am a man of knowledge. You address me on things that are easy to understand. Don’t you realize that *I* have some understanding?” Job was trying to show that their type of criticism was at such a low level that it implied Job did not know anything. And it is a fact that many who do not understand the Bible will quote Scripture to try to ridicule a Christian.

Summary of verses 1–3: Job said to Zophar, “What you have just said aptly applies to *you*, my comforters, rather than to me. I am equally aware of how God operates: of what He can do, of what He will not do, and of how He will treat the wicked. Your advice does not fit my circumstance.”

Job 12:4 I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn.

Notice that in all his experience, Job did not let loose one iota on his integrity. Faith

should be an anchor to the soul. A *Manna* comment says that letting go of the anchor of faith—even for a moment—puts the Christian in great jeopardy. The anchor of faith was all that was sustaining Job.

Job 12:5 He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

In beholding Job in this pitiful state, men would consider him an unpleasant sight. We may know a person who is strong, good-looking, and wise, but when that person is on his deathbed (perhaps with senility), there is a drastic change. It is almost as if we are looking at a cadaver. *We should not judge* that person's life by what we see of him at the end. Many of the Little Flock die in shame and ignominy.

In verses 4 and 5, more was implied than just the mere statements. Evidently the statements of the three comforters were accompanied with facial expressions, genuflections, etc. Job continued, "You mock, you smirk and grin, and you feel that God answers your prayers but not mine, yet I am upright, I am innocent." The grit of Job was apparent here. He refused to be beaten down because *he knew he was innocent* and he was completely unaware of anything he could have done to justify his experience. "In your self-confidence and conceit, you view my case with a prejudiced eye—plus the fact you are not suffering and in misery as I am. You find it easy to criticize and regard my reasoning as a flickering candle."

Job 12:6 The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

It was easy for the three comforters, who were not in agony and distress, to judge Job with contempt for his misfortune. Ostensibly, to a casual observer, the three would seem to be correct in their criticism of Job.

The gist of verse 6 is "You reason that the ways of a righteous man are pleasant and that the ways of a wicked man are troublesome." When the Law came to Israel, it was true that when the Israelites were obedient, they prospered in many avenues of life, and if they did evil, calamities came upon them. But keep in mind that the Book of Job was written *before the Law*. Gentile nations and the world have never been under the Jewish Law, so Job's type of advice is applicable today to all but the Jew. "You reason that the ways of the good bring reward and the ways of the evil bring a corresponding reward of trouble. Isn't this really a fallacy? Is it not apparent all around us, in many instances, that the tabernacles of robbers prosper?" Job was contradicting the reasoning of the three. "All around us the wicked actually prosper in the present life." What is interesting is that someone with a prejudiced, jaundiced viewpoint who wants to find fault with another—no matter who the person is, even Jesus Christ himself—will do so. This means that when any errant behavior occurs, we must carefully search our hearts to make sure that any criticism is in strict accordance with the Word of God, and not in accordance with our fallen human nature.

Job 12:7 But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:

From verse 7 through the end of Chapter 12, Job soliloquized starting with the animal creation.

Job 12:8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

Job 12:9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

Job 12:10 In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

Job 12:11 Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?

Job 12:12 With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

Job 12:13 With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

Verses 11–13 are a key part of the chapter. In these verses Job said, “The one who analyzes matters and is of a discriminating mind discerns that the judgments we see in earth, both favorable and unfavorable, come upon both the good and the bad.” In other words, the judgments are mixed, and we call these mixed judgments an “act of God.” Many insurance policies do not cover events or circumstances that are considered “acts of God” (catastrophic happenings that are not due to anyone’s fault but are acts of providence).

Job 12:14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

Job 12:15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn [flood] the earth.

Job 12:16 With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his.

Job 12:17 He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

Job 12:18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

Job 12:19 He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

Job 12:20 He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

Job 12:21 He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

Job 12:22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

Job 12:23 He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.

Job 12:24 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 [out].

Job 12:25 They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

From verse 7 through verse 25, Job was saying that the breath of all things in nature is in God's hand—the animal creation and the human creation, the mighty and the weak, the deceiver and the deceived, etc. From one standpoint, the life of all who have breath in their nostrils is from God. In witnessing the life each has, we see, in both nature and man, that there are obvious imperfections and aberrations as well as good points. The good, the bad, and the indifferent are manifest in both the animal and the human creation.

Put in other words, Job's thoughts in verses 7–25 were as follows: "Don't we observe mixed judgments in nature itself? in God's animal and physical creation? The good and the evil come upon all ... just as God's sun (favor) shines on the good and the evil alike. Therefore, we cannot necessarily judge a person's character by a hasty appraisal of outward evidences of either affliction or prosperity."

Job was building a case for the reasoning he would pursue a little later.

Chapter 13 is an artificial break and should just continue on as part of Job's remarks in Chapter 12.

Job 13:1 Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

In other words, in his lifetime Job had observed nature with its complexity, and he had observed man's aberrant behavior.

Job 13:2 What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you.

Job now returned to reasoning used earlier with the three comforters (Job 12:3), where he said he was not inferior to them. Job 12:7–13:1 was laying the groundwork to show he was a man of understanding and able to philosophize.

In verses 1 and 2, Job said, "I have gained considerable knowledge by viewing matters in the light that I just mentioned, ie, with a *discriminating* mind and not by jumping to hasty conclusions. I am not inferior to you three in my reasoning." Job would not allow himself to be browbeaten. If a person were in front of a council of "wise" men, their browbeating could unnerve and cause fear in that person—even in a person with a discriminating mind. But to his credit, Job was standing staunch in saying that in searching his heart, he could find no justification for his calamities. (Of course, although Job did not know it, he was being tested to prove how *good* he was, rather than being punished.) Neither Job nor his comforters could explain the reason for his calamities.

Job 13:3 Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.

Job was saying in effect, "There is nothing wrong in reasoning with God." This is a much different thought than *accusing* God. Job was trying to understand his dilemma. While, in his confused state, he was musing out loud on these things, this musing was *vastly different* from a direct accusation. It was a very different matter for Job to be honest and open in his thinking, and to direct a thought as a question to God in regard to His dealings with Job.

Stated another way, "If it were possible, I would like to reason with God, and this is not really a sinful thing to do."

Job 13:4 But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.

The three comforters had been acting as lawyers and physicians in regard to Job's sufferings. Job said to them, "In setting yourselves up as God's lawyers, you are manipulating your imaginations. You are trying to act like God's lawyers, and at the same time you are pretending to be my doctors. Actually in both cases, you are misusing the office: as lawyers before God, you are forging lies in your reasoning with me, and as physicians, you are of no value."

Job 13:5 O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.

Job was more or less telling the three comforters that it would be better for them to keep quiet, and to utter things they know, not things they do not know. Withholding their statements would show wisdom.

Summary of verses 4 and 5: "But you, my physician friends, have completely misdiagnosed my affliction. It would be altogether wiser if you would just withhold your advice." (Incidentally, the territory in which Job resided was known for wisdom. Therefore, whether the wisdom was right or wrong, the type of language used and the way it was couched are difficult to fully comprehend.)

Job 13:6 Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

Job began to plead his cause again.

Job 13:7 Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

"Do you presume to be God's lawyer, and yet you speak untruths? You are speaking untruths for God about me; you are speaking lies."

Job 13:8 Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?

"What right do you have to presume to plead God's case against me? Your very presumption is wrong."

In verses 6–8, Job said, "Now hear my reasoning. Instead of you acting as God's lawyers, let me plead my own defense."

Job 13:9 Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?

Job said, "Since you falsely judge my motives, might you not do the same with regard to God's motives?"

Job 13:10 He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.

Job 13:11 Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?

"If your judgment of others is according to personality; if you favor others not based on the Word or mind of God, not based on what God thinks of that individual; if you favor persons according to how they impress you and not upon truth—if you do these things rather than to judge correctly according to God's *true* judgment, aren't you afraid to act in

God's stead?"

The reasoning of the three comforters in regard to Job was pure imagination, and they brought God into their criticism of Job to justify that criticism. They were judging according to their impressions of Job, who, being a sick man in deplorable condition, no longer looked like an upright, just, steadfast man of God. Job asked, "Aren't you afraid to bring God into the type of judgment you are making?"

Job 13:12 Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.

Job's reasoning was as follows: "What you are doing is like the clay judging the potter's workmanship." The three comforters, the "clay," were judging God's workmanship in Job, rather than the other way around. The potter made the clay, not the clay the potter.

In verses 9–12 Job said, "In appointing yourselves as God's representatives—as it were, His prosecuting attorneys—aren't you a little fearful of butting in? Can't God judge this matter Himself without mortal man, *a mere lump of clay*, intervening on His behalf and actually impeding the meting out of true justice?"

Job 13:13 Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.

Again Job said to the three, "Hold your peace, leave me alone!" "Let me present my own case."

Job 13:14 Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?

"Since it is my own life that is at stake, I am willing to die with my own conviction. I am willing to die thinking I have not done wrong."

Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

"Even if God were to slay me, yet would I trust Him. Moreover, I do not doubt in the least that ultimately, in my maintaining my integrity I will be acquitted and vindicated."

Job 13:16 He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

"Since I am not a hypocrite in stating my case, God will vindicate me. What I am saying is the truth. Therefore, the God of truth will vindicate me."

Job 13:17 Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.

"Hear now my case." This verse ties in with verse 6, "Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips."

Before going directly into the case (beginning now with verse 18), Job uttered the prologue of verses 6–17.

Job 13:18 Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified.

"I have stated my case forthrightly, and I know that I will be justified."

In verses 13–18 Job said, “I fully realize that in pleading my own case, I am taking my very life into my hands, and yet I will plead my cause fully convinced of my own innocence. True, I may not be successful in convincing you who act also as jury members, but should I die, and thus in your minds convince you of my guilt, yet somehow I will ultimately be exonerated by God, who is acting as my Judge and as my Deliverer.” Job was implying that should he die and they be still convinced of his guilt, then on the other side of death, God would somehow vindicate him. The principle Job was applying is similar to Abraham’s reasoning when he was preparing to offer up his son Isaac: “If God slew Isaac, yet would He raise up Isaac from the dead through the seed of promise.” Job was manifesting FAITH while being *fully* tested. Job is an example of the type of individual the Lord is especially looking for.

Job 13:19 Who is he that will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

“Who is going to plead my case? Certainly not you three. Therefore, I alone am left to plead my case. Shouldn’t I at least have the pleasure of stating my own case before I expire? I cannot go down into the grave without stating my case that I am not guilty. I would die even more quickly if I didn’t plead my case.” In other words, Job was summoning his strength to plead his cause. His dander was up with regard to how they were badgering him.

In considering the three, Job was saying, “Who else is there around here to plead my cause if I don’t do it myself? No one else is sympathetic. Therefore, if I don’t plead my own cause, for no one else will, I might as well give up altogether. Because I am convinced of my innocence, I will be my best pleader.”

Job 13:20 Only do not two things unto me: then will I not hide myself from thee.

Job 13:21 Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid.

Job was still talking to the three comforters. “Do not do two things unto me: (1) Do not cease to be my friends. I cherish our past relationship prior to my sufferings. Don’t allow my current calamity to cause you to stop being my friends. (2) Don’t scare me with all of your false philosophy.”

Job 13:22 Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.

“If you three would do these two things—if you would *really be my friends*, not my enemies, and if you would not imagine false reasonings against me—then, under those conditions, we could reason together, all of us. With this attitude, I would listen to you and you would listen to me. It is a two-way street. If you have this attitude, I will accept your type of reasoning, but your very attitude is wrong.”

In verse 20–22, Job said, “Only two things do I ask of you as the jury listening to my case. What are they? First, do not attempt to menace and threaten me. Drop your hostile attitude toward me. Second, let us reason in good faith and with goodwill, one with another. Under these circumstances, I will listen and respond to your queries, or, if you prefer, I will confide in you—make known to you my problems—and listen to your admonition.” Their hostile, prejudiced viewpoint produced a climate that was not conducive to a constructive conclusion. “If you can change your attitude, I will reply

differently.”

Job 13:23 How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.

“If we could have this friendly relationship and reasoning attitude, then be specific and tell me where I have sinned.” If the three could not tell Job where he had sinned, then why accuse him of sin?

Job 13:24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?

“The very attitude that you manifest toward me is unfriendly.”

Job 13:25 Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

“Here in my sorrow, in my present poor health when I am nigh unto death, would you scrunch me?” A dry leaf is very fragile and will crush easily. “Will you hound me? Will you pursue a dying man into the grave? Before this calamity, I was green, but now I am dry. I have lost my vitality. In this dry situation, why do you try to hasten it on—like chasing dry stubble before the wind?”

Job 13:26 For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

“You search my whole life history in an attempt to find some flaws. You are not even trying to sympathize with me.”

Job 13:27 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.

It is important to keep in mind that Job is addressing *his comforters*, not God. Job is either musing or directly talking to them.

He continued, “You do not permit me to plead my cause. You restrict and harass me. Then you scrutinize the finest detail in my past to find where I have sinned, and then, imagining that you did find a sin, you brand me as a criminal.” (A criminal’s foot was branded in the stocks to mark him as a guilty person.)

Job 13:28 And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is motheaten.

“Last of all, you dispose of me like a worthless garment ready for the refuse heap.”

Summary: Job maintained his integrity *throughout* his experience, and the three comforters *consistently* tried to tear down his convictions about his past. They did not think he was speaking honestly the thoughts of his heart, but felt that he was twisting the facts. They believed he had sinned and that he merited the affliction.

The purpose of this study is to set up principles of interpretation and to try to get the feel of the circumstances.

Summary of verses 23–28: “Instead of you regarding me as an enemy, this is what I would

like you to do. Please make known to me *in a specific manner* what my transgression and sin is. Why should you beat me up in my already weakened condition? Why do you tally up from an old, out-of-date list of grievances from the distant past in the early days of my immaturity?" They could not find something immediate that Job had done wrong, so they searched way back in his life for something errant he might have done—but that was not relevant to Job now as an adult. "Indeed you persecute me and you put me in stocks and bonds, as it were. You despise me as one riddled with guilt and shame. Why, you even despise the garment, feeling that you dare not touch it."

Job continued to speak in Chapter 14, and he made certain statements in this chapter that they should have observed in generality.

Job 14:1 Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

Job 14:2 He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

The first statement was about man's frailty. Man's frailty should be an uncontested truth—not only his brevity of life and the troubles that come upon him but his sinful condition. All mankind are frail as the results of sin working in their members.

Job 14:3 And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?

Job was asking, "Do you criticize fallen man by focusing attention on me? You are singling me out in a special sense and concentrating your criticism on me when imperfection exists all around you. If this is your attitude and you continue to pursue this course, then consider that you yourselves are members of Adam's race and that you also stand in judgment with me. If you are looking for imperfection in me, can't you see that the entire human family is guilty and that you are in this as well as I?"

Job 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

In verse 4 Job reiterated what was previously said: "The whole human race is tainted with sin."

Job 14:5 Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

"Man's days are like those of a condemned criminal; they are numbered by the death sentence until the person dies. You, my criticizers, should know this, for it is everywhere apparent. This testimony is with you—and to such an extent that it is within man's power to compute actuarial tables of life expectancy of both male and female."

Keep in mind that Job was talking to the three comforters, *not to God*, as is usually assumed. If he were talking to God, his words would put God in a very unfavorable light.

Job 14:6 Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.

"Why don't you desist from troubling me and consider me as a man, as a fellow human

being? Grant me this decency: let me die in peace.”

Job 14:7 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.

Job 14:8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

Job 14:9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

In verses 7–9 Job called attention to the fact that there is some hope of life when a tree is cut down and the stump remains.

Job 14:10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

“But with man, it is different. When a man dies, where is he? He is put in a coffin or just buried in the ground and eaten by worms. He soon dissolves or decomposes into the elements of earth and nothing is left.”

Job 14:11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

Next Job used illustrations that man evaporates at death. “Just as a lake can dry up, so man evaporates at death and is no more.” Note: Job was *not* saying there is no resurrection, so this statement does not contradict other statements in the Book of Job.

Job was saying in verses 11 and 12a, “When I am gone, you, my comforters, will no longer be troubled with my presence, and I will be relieved of my sufferings.”

Job 14:12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

In verse 12b, Job said, “When the heavens are changed at a future date, then the dead will be resuscitated.”

Job 14:13 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!

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

Job 14:15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

The thought in verses 13–15 is as follows: Job, being so confident of his innocence, said that when he died, although he would have to wait until the dispensational change occurred, he would then be brought into favor with God. Job was applying restitution promises to his circumstance.

Job 14:16 For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

Job 14:17 My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

In verses 16 and 17 Job took a different tack. He realized that his days were numbered, that he was member of the fallen race. He was *not* saying that he was without sin, but that he hadn't committed a sin to justify the unusual experience he was having. He realized that, as a member of Adam's race, he was a sinner.

The end of verse 16 should be a statement, not a question: "Thou dost not watch over my sin." The question form would imply God was cruel and ruthless in His dealing with Job, but Job was saying the opposite. He was not questioning God's close scrutiny of him.

"Thou dost not watch over my sin. My transgression is covered." Today we would say that the robe of Christ's righteousness covers Adamic sin but not willful sin. Job realized he was a member of Adam's race—from that standpoint he was not innocent—but God was not faulting him for *willful* sin. Willful sin must be expiated, and therefore, if Job had committed willful sin, he would not be trying to proclaim his innocence, and he would understand that his sufferings were punishment.

Job 14:18 And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

Job 14:19 The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.

Job 14:20 Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

Job 14:21 His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.

Job 14:22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

Verses 18–22: Job was aware of change and decay all about him in both animate and inanimate nature. He could see change and decay in rocks, humans, earth's soil, animals, etc. Therefore, he himself could not expect to escape discomfort and pain while he was in the flesh—and neither could anyone else. Man is born for trouble and affliction. Job did not expect to be relieved of that which was common to man, but, considering his original circumstance of wealth, health, etc., his sudden affliction and losses were extraordinary. It was these that he did not understand—his very pointed experiences, which were beyond that which commonly befalls man. But even though his sufferings were extreme and he could not rejoice while experiencing them, nevertheless, he would bear them. The principle was "Though God slay me, yet will I trust him."

In order to get in the mood or atmosphere of the circumstances that surrounded Job, we must review certain things before proceeding.

The Book of Job opened with an allegorical scene in heaven where Satan was criticizing Job and accrediting Job's righteousness to the Lord's heaping favors on him. To prove Satan's reasoning was wrong, God allowed Satan to test Job to the utmost but not to take his life. Everything was taken away from Job: children, cattle, goods, wealth, and health (he was afflicted from the top of his head to the soles of his feet with sores).

Three “comforters” came from their respective locales to commiserate with Job. First, they sat down in silence beside him for seven days. Finally, Job broke the silence and stated his case and how he felt in this trial and circumstance. Then the three comforters took turns trying to analyze the situation. All three discredited Job’s reasoning and accused him of sinning. Job felt that he had been just and upright before God and that he had tried to serve God to the best of his ability, but he could not explain or fully understand why the trial had come upon him.

Throughout all of the affliction, Job was a righteous man. The Lord criticized Job a little but did not find any real fault in him. He knew Job was trying to serve Him with his heart. Job’s trial was not due to disobedience. For these reasons and others, Job represents the Little Flock.

Each of the three in turn answered Job, and after each spoke, Job replied to the reasoning. When the second round occurred, the three again spoke in the same order. Evidently this decorum was based on mutual respect. And all four stated their cases without interruption.

The study of Job continues from the standpoint of the *overall theme*. This is a very important point to grasp in order to understand why Job replied as he did to his tormentors. The statements should be considered in their context.

The Book of Job is difficult to explain, but if it is rightly understood, the character of Job is fully appreciated. After all, God named Job in a particular sense as being on His honor roll (Ezek. 14:14,20).

Of the three comforters—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—Eliphaz was the most honored and perhaps the oldest. The other two recognized his leadership and allowed him the first opportunity of replying to Job. Zophar was the last to reply (starting with Chapter 11), and then, after Job’s answer, a second round of comments began.

That statements in the Book of Job were the statements of sages. In other words, they were not just frivolous talk. Because they were couched in the Eastern idiom, they can be difficult to understand and must be studied carefully.

Job 15:1 Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,

In Chapter 15 Eliphaz the Temanite again spoke, beginning the second round of comments.

Job 15:2 Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?

Job 15:3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

Eliphaz professed surprise that such empty talk and shallow reasoning should come forth from one who had a previous reputation for great wisdom. “Job, your reasoning is not relevant to the issue.”

Job 15:4 Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.

Job 15:5 For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty.

Job 15:6 Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee.

In verses 4–6 Eliphaz said, “Job, instead of confessing your sins openly before God (and us), to the contrary, you continually have the nerve to justify yourself with cunning words.” He used an expression identified with the snake in the Garden of Eden: “the tongue of the crafty.” He accused Job of trying to justify himself with sophistry. “Job, your very utterances in pursuing this course betray that you are guilty.”

Job 15:7 Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?

Job 15:8 Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

Job 15:9 What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us?

Job 15:10 With us are both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father.

Job 15:11 Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?

Job 15:12 Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at,

In verses 7–12a Eliphaz was asking, “Where does all your secret knowledge come from [about the condition of the dead, restitution, etc.]? What do you know that we don’t know? Did you get the knowledge from your father? Well, he wasn’t that old and we have living relatives who are much older. Does God keep you secretly informed? You are carried away with your own importance and self-esteem.”

Actually, Job did have secret information because he mentioned many things in this book that are almost superhuman. Therefore, he was instructed in a way the three were not aware of.

Job 15:13 That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?

In verses 12:b and 13 Eliphaz was saying, “You stubbornly remain blind to your own faults. You wink at your own sin.” And misunderstanding what Job had previously said in 14:3, Eliphaz further accused, “Instead, by your attitude and reasoning, you find fault with God.”

Job 15:14 What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

Job 15:15 Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

In verses 14 and 15 Eliphaz asked, “What is this line of reasoning you presented about

fallen man, saying that a clean thing cannot come out of an unclean thing? Such reasoning does not apply, for God does not even trust his holy angels. Even the pure heavens are unclean in God's sight."

Job 15:16 How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

"How much more abominable is common, ordinary man to whom you liken yourself!" Job had asked the three to consider him as just a fellow human—to consider him from a humanitarian standpoint—if they could not understand his sufferings. Now Eliphaz took that remark and gave it an evil slant.

Job 15:17 I will show thee, hear me; and that which I have seen I will declare;

Job 15:18 Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it:

Job 15:19 Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.

In effect, Eliphaz was saying in verses 17–19, "Let me tell you, Job, what I have gained from life's experiences, the wisdom I have obtained from my forefathers, who openly explained these matters to me. Their testimony was united—without a voice of dissent by some stranger or intruder in their midst. The unanimous opinion of my forefathers is the wisdom I have obtained, and what you are saying, Job, is not true."

And so, many try to counteract truth by quoting authorities in the nominal system or other scholars as absolute proof to justify their wisdom, which can be a false premise.

Job 15:20 The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

Job 15:21 A dreadful sound is in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.

Job 15:22 He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.

Job 15:23 He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.

Job 15:24 Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.

Job 15:25 For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

Job 15:26 He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:

Job 15:27 Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.

Job 15:28 And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.

Job 15:29 He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

Job 15:30 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.

The net effect of what Eliphaz said in verses 20–30 is that trouble and anguish come upon the wicked.

Job 15:31 Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompence.

“Job, you are deceived, and let not the one who is deceived trust in his own vanity.”

Job 15:32 It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green.

“Before you die, while you are still in the present life, something even worse will happen.”

Job 15:33 He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.

Job 15:34 For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.

Now Eliphaz was making some very nasty remarks: “The prosperity, the peace, the reputation you had before your affliction were obtained by *bribery* and cunning. That is how you got rich. You did not get rich lawfully but through bribery.”

Consider how Eliphaz’s attitude changed. In his first discourse (Job 4:2), Eliphaz very gently approached Job: “Can we commune with you without offending you? Do you mind if we make some remarks?” It is a fact of life that many people who are gentle can be very cruel in their remarks. Gentleness is considered an evidence of Christlikeness, and strong or hard words are regarded as being of the Adversary. But that may or may not be the case—*the circumstances must be weighed!*

In Chapter 15, at the time of the second round of comments, Eliphaz dropped his mask. No longer did he approach Job gently—his remarks were cutting and strong.

Job 15:35 They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

“The wicked conceive mischief and bring forth vanity, and their belly is prepared for deceit.” Eliphaz stated this as a generality, but he was applying the criticism to Job. “They are schemers who cleverly obtain their wealth through bribery. That which is done wrong in secret comes forth as vain statements, which try to cloak the misdeeds. The wicked hunger for and desire illegitimate reward, and they use cunning deception to obtain that which they lust after.”

Job 16:1 Then Job answered and said,

Job answered Eliphaz the Temanite the second time.

Job 16:2 I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.

“Miserable comforters are all three of you!” The three were fault-finders, not comforters, even though their original intention was to comfort Job (2:11).

Job 16:3 Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

Job continued, “When will your vain words end?” In other words, all the previous comments of the three were not pertinent to Job’s situation. “What prompts you to continue to give me advice?”

Job 16:4 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.

“If our positions were reversed, if you were in my stead and I were in your stead, I could find plenty of fault and shake my head at you.” The implication is that when-ever one of the three replied critically, the other two would nod their heads in agreement. It also implies that if Job were answering one of them, all three would disagree by shaking their heads. In other words, there was animated agreement for their own speaking and animated disagreement for Job’s words; it was not just a philosophical discussion back and forth. Job was saying, “I could shake my head at you too.”

Job 16:5 But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.

Job said, “Although I could take this type of recourse if the roles were reversed, I would not, but would comfort you.”

Job 16:6 Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged: and though I forbear, what am I eased?

“In any event, whether I speak in rebuttal to you or I don’t speak, my situation does not change—I am still suffering.”

Job 16:7 But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company.

Most translations give the thought that God made Job weary, but the “he” refers to Eliphaz and the statements he had just made. With his response Eliphaz wearied Job, and all three were desolate companions. It would have been better for Job if the three had not attempted to be comforters because they just wearied him.

Job 16:8 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.

Job’s afflictions were taking a toll in both his face and his body. Certainly he wasn’t eating full meals during the seven days of silence and now during the comments back and forth. Every criticism added to his misery and discomfort.

Job 16:9 He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his

teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

Job was saying that Eliphaz, as well as the other two, were tearing him apart with their comments. In fact, they manifested their dislike of him in this experience.

Job 16:10 They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me.

Job 16:11 God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.

Job 16:12 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.

Job 16:13 His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.

Job 16:14 He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a giant.

Verses 10–14 remind us of Jesus and his sufferings on the Cross (see Psalm 22). The “he” in verses 12–14 is a personification of the wicked, who compassed him about and treated him in this manner. Job’s experiences were real, but his life as a whole is an allegorical representation of the sufferings of *The Christ*, head and body members.

Job 16:15 I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust.

Job was saying that in his depression he did not have to sit in sackcloth and ashes because he was already figuratively clothed in them. The very skin of his body was like burlap in its sad condition. He had sat in the ashes in order to comfort the itching of his body (2:8). The itching would have felt somewhat like a severe case of poison ivy. (His disease could not have been boils in the usual sense of open, running sores because to scratch such boils would just intensify the pain. Rather, he was experiencing a tremendous disturbing of his body and bloodstream from head to foot. To try to alleviate the dreadful itch, he had disfigured it with ashes.)

Job 16:16 My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death;

Job’s eyes reflected the agony of his suffering, weeping, and depression.

Job 16:17 Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure.

Job again declared his innocence. His affliction was not due to any injustice on his part, and his prayer was pure.

Job 16:18 O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.

Job pleaded to God that the earth would not cover his blood and his cry would “have no place.” In other words, when all was said and done, Job would like the memory of his experience to be perpetuated. Usually, as time goes on after someone is buried in the grave, people forget about the individual. Job wanted the memory of his experience to benefit others and not be localized in one place. (Job repeated this theme later on.)

Job 16:19 Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.

Job felt that the true story of his innocence was recorded in heaven, no matter how it might be distorted in men's eyes down here. The book of record in heaven recorded the truth.

Job 16:20 My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

"Mine eye poureth out tears unto God." These inward groanings of his spirit manifested themselves emotionally through the tears in his eyes. Stated another way, the teardrops of his eyes were like a groaning prayer to his God for help.

Job 16:21 O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!

Instead of the three comforting Job, they did the opposite. Job was saying, "Oh for someone who would represent me as a lawyer and defend me before God!" Incidentally, this is what happened later on when Elihu came on the scene. Elihu, a fourth personality, was more or less a mediator.

Thus God answered these requests of Job. (1) The memory of his experience was not hidden in one locality but was made known when the Book of Job became part of Holy Writ. (2) Elihu represented Job.

Job 16:22 When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

"In a few years I will not return." As Job said elsewhere, he would not return from the grave until the old heavens pass away (until the new heavens and the new earth were established—the Kingdom). Lest one think Job did not expect to come forth from the grave, verse 22 must be considered with his other statements that affirm a resurrection. He was saying that he would be in the grave for years and years.

Job 17:1 My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me.

The fact that the word "graves" is in the plural suggests that Job was not talking so much about the hole in the ground as the *grave diggers*. "The grave diggers are ready for me." His ill health was ominous, and he did not expect to live much longer.

Job 17:2 Are there not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?

Mockers surrounded him, and he could see their continuing hostility.

Job 17:3 Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me?

Job was hoping that God would be a surety for him, because who else would clasp hands with him? There was no one else to sympathize with him and to give him comfort and strength to uphold him in his trial.

Job 17:4 For thou hast hid their heart from understanding; therefore shalt thou not exalt them.

Since God had blinded the eyes of understanding of the three supposed comforters, therefore they would not ultimately triumph. In the final analysis, the three would not be exalted or triumph.

Job 17:5 He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.

“He who betrays his friends, the eyes of his children will fail.” The children of one who betrayed his friends would be adversely affected.

Job 17:6 He hath made me also a byword of the people; and aforetime I was as a tabret.

The KJV is confusing. It sounds as if at one time Job had been like a song or a musical instrument and now he was a byword of the people—an opposite experience. But if this verse is considered with following verses, the thought would be: “I have become, as it were, a byword among the people, and one to be spit upon in the face.”

Job 17:7 Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow.

“My sad countenance and my weakened body condition, which is a mere shadow of its former self, seem to bear evidence that I am guilty.” If we judge a Christian by the trial he or she is having, sometimes an innocent person appears guilty.

Job 17:8 Upright men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.

Job 17:9 The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

In verses 8 and 9 Job was saying, “Instead of the righteous element in society being discouraged because of what they see I went through, they will be strengthened.” Many have observed in history that in times of great suffering, true Christianity *prospered*. During times of real persecution and suffering, true Christianity did not diminish but flourished. In such times the Christian was forced to take a positive step, and once having done that, the instruments of the wicked just made him grow stronger. The Christian became determined to take a stand in opposition to the wrong.

“The righteous minority, instead of further diminishing on account of my plight, are appalled at my experience and become more determined than ever to brace themselves against the ungodly—and they will grow stronger by doing so.”

Job 17:10 But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you.

“But as for you three comforters, come now and try again.” However, it was really useless, because up to that point, none of the three had manifested any real understanding.

Job 17:11 My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.

Job was saying, “My days are past, and my previous plans and desires have been

completely shattered by the experience I am going through.”

Job 17:12 They change the night into day: the light is short because of darkness.

“Night, they say, makes room for day.” Sometimes a hard experience ends up with a good experience.

Job 17:13 If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.

Job 17:14 I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.

Job 17:15 And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

Job 17:16 They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.

Verses 13–16: “If my only future residence is the grave, if I make my bed in *sheol*, and if I say to the pit ‘My father’ and to the worm ‘My mother,’ where then would be my hope?” If that were the case, then hope would descend into the grave and hope would be buried as well as the body of Job. We find out later on that Job did not accept this premise.

Job 18:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

Bildad, the second comforter, now replied the second time.

Job 18:2 How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.

“How long will you continue to vex us and try to break us down with your words? Why are you so obstinate about giving in to us, your comforters, who are trying to show you what your true situation is? How long will you resist by saying you are innocent?”

Job 18:3 Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?

“Why are we counted as beasts?” Bildad was replying to Job’s previous response of saying he felt he was being torn to pieces by Eliphaz as well as by the counsel of the three as a whole. Job had likened them to brute beasts in their attack on him. “Why are we considered vile in your sight?” Contrary to many Bible commentators, Bildad realized that Job previously (16:9) was not finding fault with God but was implicating the comforters.

Job 18:4 He teareth himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?

Bildad said that Job was tearing himself apart by his reasoning. Previously Job had said, “O earth, cover not my blood, and let my cry not be confined to a place” (Job 16:18 paraphrase). Bildad was now saying, “Job, you attach a great deal of importance to yourself. You want your experiences recorded for posterity. You want the earth to not cover your blood. Just who do you think you are?”

Job 18:5 Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall

not shine.

In earlier arguments the three were prodding Job to confess his guilt, using statements like “You must have done something wrong for these experiences to come upon you. Come on now, confess. What have you done wrong?” But now they were incensed and saying Job was the wicked one. The statement in verse 5 “The light of the wicked shall be put out” was talking about Job. They were saying that Job was wicked and that he was trying to hide his guilt from God and from them.

Job 18:6 The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.

Bildad said, “Job’s dwelling and he himself will be removed from earth’s scene and go into oblivion.”

Job 18:7 The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down.

Job 18:8 For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.

Verses 7 and 8: Just as a person who is trying to evade something eventually puts his foot in his mouth, so Bildad was saying that Job would entangle himself with his own argument. In the final analysis, all of Job’s reasoning would be like a net that would confine, restrain, and eventually entrap him in his guilt.

Job 18:9 The gin shall take him by the heel, and the robber shall prevail against him.

Job 18:10 The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

Job 18:11 Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet.

Verses 9–11: Bildad claimed that Job would be continually confronted with mishaps until he went into the grave.

Job 18:12 His strength shall be hungerbitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side.

Other translations give the thought: “Calamity is hungry for him; destruction is awaiting the least stumbling.”

Job 18:13 It shall devour the strength of his skin: even the firstborn of death shall devour his strength.

Verse 14 tells what the three thought was Job’s problem.

Job 18:14 His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.

Verses 13 and 14: “Job, your problem all along has been your confidence in your innocence and your wisdom. That is why God afflicted you with a skin disease. Confidence in your innocence and your wisdom has been leading you step by step to the grave, to the king of terrors.”

Job 18:15 It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

“Doom inhabits your dwelling, and brimstone will fall upon your habitation.”

Job 18:16 His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.

“Nothing of your substance will remain. Your roots will perish below the ground, and your works above the ground will be lopped off.” Jude 12 describes Second Death as being “twice dead, plucked up by the *roots*.”

Job 18:17 His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

Here Bildad said that the remembrance of Job would perish and that his name would be forgotten by both the contemporary generation and future posterity. (Of course Job’s experience turned out to be the opposite. How shame-faced the three would have been to see Job’s reversal with twice as many blessings!)

Job 18:18 He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.

Prior to his affliction, Job was quite well known. Here Bildad told him, “You will be chased out of the limelight into oblivion.”

Job 18:19 He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.

“You will be bereft of any posterity unto the third generation.”

Job 18:20 They that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.

Here Bildad contradicted his own argument. He had said that Job would not be remembered or have a grave site when he died. But here in verse 20 Bildad said that Job would be an example of the wicked for both current and future generations.

Job 18:21 Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

Bildad summed up his thinking: “Job, you are a wicked person and you do not even know God.”

Many feel that the Book of Job is human philosophy and that it is not profitable to the new creature. But the fact that there are more than 40 chapters, and the fact that God has recorded these conversations between Job and his “comforters” and Elihu, means that the book is of value. It is helpful to be aware of the wrong thinking and reasoning of those who criticized Job.

Job 19:1 Then Job answered and said,

Job answered Bildad in Chapter 19.

Job 19:2 How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

“How long will you continue to vex me and tear me apart with your words?”

Job 19:3 These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me.

“You have reproached me ten times. Are you not ashamed of your critical attitude? Don’t you realize what you are doing?” Actually, as recorded, Job had been reproached only five times: (1) Eliphaz, (2) Bildad, (3) Zophar, (4) Eliphaz, and (5) Bildad. The mention of “ten times” of reproach indicates the conversations were longer than recorded—about twice as long. Stated another way, about half of the Book of Job was not preserved.

Job 19:4 And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.

This verse is important. In trying to rebut an argument, when we find that we cannot get our point across, we sometimes take the stand of the person who opposes us and say, “Let us assume that what you say is correct.” That is what Job did here—he took the comforters’ side of the reasoning. “Let me assume that you are correct and that I have erred (although I have not).” Job was setting up a proposition that must be kept in mind when reading succeeding verses. Job *was not confessing his guilt*.

Job 19:5 If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me, and plead against me my reproach:

Job 19:6 Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

Job 19:7 Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.

Job 19:8 He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.

Job 19:9 He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.

Job’s position in society had been well recognized as a judge, a wealthy person, and a man of moral, upright character. Now, in his sufferings, his position of esteem had degenerated into one of abhorrence in the sight of the people.

Job 19:10 He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed [uprooted] like a tree.

Job 19:11 He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.

Job 19:12 His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

Job 19:13 He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.

Job 19:14 My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

Verses 13 and 14 show that relatives, friends, and acquaintances all despised Job. They no longer wanted to know him or be seen in his presence.

Job 19:15 They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

Even Job's household servants had turned away from him.

Job 19:16 I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I entreated him with my mouth.

When he called his personal servant, the servant pretended not to hear him. Job had to *beg* the servant to hearken to his request.

Job 19:17 My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's sake of mine own body.

Because of Job's disease, even his breath was affected with halitosis. Having lost his children, he wanted to have more, but he was offensive to his wife and she would not allow him to get close.

This tells us several things. For one thing, Job's calamities did not come in one day but in a gradual crescendo. The initial physical illness got worse and worse and worse until eventually the three heard about his sufferings and came to comfort him. They found him sitting down bemoaning his afflictions. There followed the seven days of silence and then the conversations. Therefore, the troubles enumerated in verses 5–20 all occurred to Job *before the comforters even came to him*.

Job 19:18 Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

Job continued, "Whenever I come into the presence of children, they ridicule me."

Job 19:19 All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.

"All my close, intimate friends abhor me. Those whom I love have turned against me." This happened before the comforters even came. Job was telling the comforters what had previously happened to him.

Job 19:20 My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

Nearly all that was left was Job's body frame, for he was bereft of almost everything of value in life.

Verses 5–20 lead up to the point expressed in verse 21.

Job 19:21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

“If what you say is true and God has done all these things to me, *then have pity on me, my friends!*” Twice Job said, “Have pity on me!” In other words, “Suppose what you are saying is true. Then can’t you have any compassion on me with my afflictions? Look at the series of troubles I am experiencing.” The “O ye my friends” was sarcastic. The three originally came as comforters but ended up being his vicious accusers.

Job 19:22 Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?

“Aren’t you satisfied with the calamities that have already befallen me? Do you have to add to my affliction? Aren’t you satisfied with the judgments that have already been pronounced?”

Job 19:23 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

Job desired that a book would be written about his experiences, and this is exactly what has happened. Incidentally, Solomon had this desire too, and both have books. God answered Job’s and Solomon’s inward desires.

Job 19:24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

Job wanted his words to be recorded on a cuneiform tablet, a more durable substance, and not on a perishable skin or parchment reed. In effect, this happened, for even though the Bible is paper, it is reprinted over and over.

Job 19:25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

Job 19:26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

“Though my skin is destroyed and I be reduced to bone, yet from out of my flesh shall I see God.” The KJV says “in my flesh,” but the Hebrew has “from my flesh,” ie, *apart from* my flesh or *aside from* or *outside of*. This is the lot of the Ancient Worthies, who will eventually get a spiritual resurrection. Job will *literally see God* at that time.

Job 19:27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

“Whom my eyes and not another’s shall see, though my reins and my hopes and my desires now perish. I will see God at that time, even though my desires now perish.”

Job 19:28 But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?

Job continued, “Those who criticize me should realize they could find faults in themselves that could be equated with my supposed guilt. Rather than persecute and so strictly judge me, they should personally examine themselves.”

Job 19:29 Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.

Job warned his comforters of a future judgment that would come upon them because of

their persecuting spirit.

Job 20:1 Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

Zophar was the third to offer a second-round rebuttal.

Job 20:2 Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste.

Job 20:3 I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

Zophar was still smarting from the answer Job had given him the first time Zophar had uttered criticism of Job. Now was his turn to speak and he wanted to get these matters off his chest. "Job, I heard your reproof that put me to shame."

Job 20:4 Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth,

Job 20:5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?

Job 20:6 Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds;

Job 20:7 Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?

In verses 4–7 Zophar was talking about *Job*, "Though the excellency of the wicked rise up to heaven and his head reach unto the clouds, yet the wicked shall perish forever like his own dung." He felt that Job had exalted himself and was so heady that his head was up in the clouds in his presumption and that he would perish like his own dung.

Job 20:8 He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.

Verses 7b–9: "They who have seen Job shall say, 'Where is he?' He shall not be found but shall be chased away as a vision of the night. Those who saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place behold him anymore."

Job 20:9 The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

Job 20:10 His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods.

Job 20:11 His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.

Job 20:12 Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue;

Job 20:13 Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth:

Job 20:14 Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him.

Verses 9–14: Zophar felt that Job was guilty. He was hiding the sin under his tongue—he did not want to confess it but kept professing his innocence. Job’s guilt was in his mouth rolling around, and no matter how he tried to hide it, the bitterness of his guilt would get into his bowels and come out.

Job 20:15 He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

Job had been the wealthiest man in the land of Uz. He had accumulated great riches in his belly, but because he was guilty, he had been forced to vomit them out.

Job 20:16 He shall suck the poison of asps: the viper’s tongue shall slay him.

Job 20:17 He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.

“Job, because of your refusal to confess guilt, you will not again see material prosperity.”

Job 20:18 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.

Job 20:19 Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;

“Job, God violently took your house and goods because you got that wealth by oppressing the poor.” (Actually Job had done the opposite: he had visited the sick and the afflicted.) Zophar was saying that Job’s house was not founded upon properly earned wealth but had been obtained through greed and oppression of the poor.

Job 20:20 Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.

Job 20:21 There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.

Job 20:22 In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.

Job 20:23 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.

Verses 20–23: Zophar was carried away. His philosophical argument had become more and more animated, and since it was based upon wrong principles, he was uttering untruths. In the heat of the discussion, the poison in his heart was coming out in unjust accusations and judgments of Job.

Job 20:24 He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through.

“Job, you will flee away from the short distance of a spear, but then a bow and arrow will pierce you through from a distance.”

Job 20:25 It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him.

Job 20:26 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.

In verse 25 and 26 Zophar was saying, “When the arrow is withdrawn from your body, its point will rip out your liver. Terror will be upon you, and all darkness will be hidden in your secret places.”

Job 20:27 The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him.
Job 20:28 The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

Job 20:29 This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.

Zophar’s “comforting” message was just *filled with terror and lies*.

Job’s experiences and sufferings illustrate the battle of the new creature versus the arguments of the world, the flesh, and the devil that assail the Christian in the present life.

Some may get the impression from a previous remark that it is not well known that various experiences came upon Job prior to the comforters coming into his presence, the seven days of silence, and the long philosophical dissertations. That statement needs clarification, for everyone who reads the Book of Job is well aware that suddenly, in one day, he lost his property, sons, goods, livestock, etc. The point is that the attitude of the public toward Job was not recorded in the earlier chapters, so most people, in reading about Job’s sudden losses in one day, think the next thing that happened to him was the *sudden* onset of boils from head to foot. But actually the experiences of others losing their respect for him, children mocking him, and his relatives not wanting to be seen in his company all took place *prior* to the coming of the three comforters. So it was after Job had the disease for a *period of time* and *after it had progressed* to an unbearable state that he sat down and the three comforters came to him.

A note of caution in studying the Book of Job: Although the RSV is good on some verses and the Authorized KJV is definitely superior on other verses, on some verses the RSV, in trying to aid understanding, presumes to add words that are not in the Hebrew and thus interjects a wrong thought.

As the study of the Book of Job continues, Chapters 21–28 will be covered quickly with an attempt being made to give the overall gist for the three comforters and Job. For the most part, the RSV will be used, with some of the corrections being offered.

Job 21:1 But Job answered and said,

Job replied to the last remarks of Zophar.

Job 21:2 Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations.

“Listen carefully to my words, and let this be your consolation.” Earlier one of the

comforters had said, "Listen to the consolations of God, how He blesses those who reverence and serve Him." The implication was that Job was not in harmony with God and that they were acting in the role of consolers. Job remembered these words and now began to reply.

Job 21:3 Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.

"Bear with me, and I will speak, and after I have spoken, mock on." Remember, Job had lost everything, was afflicted with a disease, and had a horrible appearance, yet he was very spirited, as we can tell by listening to the spirit of his arguments. He was a forceful character.

Job 21:4 As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?

"As for me, is my complaint against man? Why should I not be impatient?" Job was saying, "Anyone in my situation certainly would not act like one in good health."

Job 21:5 Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth.

"Look at me, and be appalled, and lay your hand upon your mouth."

Job 21:6 Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

"When I think of my condition, I am dismayed, and shuddering seizes my flesh." Job next revealed his innermost thoughts.

Job 21:7 Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

"Why do the wicked live, reach old age, grow mighty in power?"

Job 21:8 Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

"Their children are established in their presence, and their offspring before their eyes."

Job 21:9 Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.

"Their houses are safe from fear, and no rod of God is upon them."

Job 21:10 Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

"Their bull breeds without fail; their cow calves and does not cast her calf." Their cows had no stillborn calves.

Job 21:11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

Job 21:12 They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

"They sing to the tambourine and the lyre, and rejoice to the sound of the pipe."

Job 21:13 They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

“They spend their days in prosperity, and in peace they go down to *sheol*.”

Job 21:14 Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

Job 21:15 What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

Verses 14 and 15: “They say to God, ‘Depart from us! We do not desire the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit do we get if we pray to him?’”

Job 21:16 Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

“Behold, is not their prosperity in their hand? The counsel of the wicked is far from me [that is, far from Job].”

Job 21:17 How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger.

“How often is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out?” That was the advice the three comforters had given Job. “The reason you are having all these afflictions is that you have sinned, and God snuffs out the lamp of the wicked.” Job was trying to show that such reasoning was not true, generally speaking. “Why do you single me out as an exception when all around you are many examples of the wicked not suffering affliction?” Job had just said, “The wicked reach old age and their children with them, and they die in peace.” Yet the three claimed Job was being afflicted because he was wicked.

Another important point: At the end of the Gospel Age, we have been blessed with present truth, in which we see many things in a broad perspective. However, the great majority of God’s children never saw this perspective because the time was not then due for understanding. An example is the philosophy of the permission of evil. Except for the harvest, the history of the Church has been a questioning of the permission of evil. One example is Revelation 6:10, “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” This text reveals a relative impatience. The saints back there could not understand why a God of Justice would allow gross injustice to prevail for such a long period of time. Daniel 7:25 tells that during the Dark Ages, the patience of the saints of the Most High was almost worn out by the persecutions of Papacy. Matthew 24:12 states that the love of many waxed cold. The faithfulness of the saints depended upon their acquiescence to their consecration to God, but nevertheless, the question arose. Today we should not question the permission of evil because the plan of God has been laid out before us and we understand the philosophy. The Book of Job is a description of the experiences of The Christ, head and body; some portions apply particularly to Jesus, and other portions are more pertinent to the Church.

Moreover, the Book of Job includes some of Jesus’ thinking prior to his baptism. Prior to age 30, Jesus lived as a *natural* man. Not until Jordan and his baptism were the heavens opened to him. He did not have the knowledge of his prehuman existence from the time he was born up until his baptism. Therefore, at that time, he desired to know the reason

for some of his experiences. This desire led him to study the Old Testament very diligently.

“How often is the lamp of the wicked put out? That their calamity comes upon them? That God judges or punishes the wicked in His anger?”

Job 21:18 They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.

How often are they “like straw before the wind [like stubble blown in the desert away from God’s presence], and like chaff that the wind carries away?”

Job 21:19 God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it.

The RSV takes liberty with this verse: “You say, ‘God stores up their iniquity for their sons.’” The Bible does say in regard to certain ones who disobeyed that judgments would be visited more particularly on their children of succeeding generations. Job was not finding fault with this principle, but it did not really apply to him. The comforters were saying his children died because of what he had done, but Job was on the scene, the children were dead, and the comforters were criticizing him.

“Let Him recompense it to themselves, that they may know it.” Job was looking for the time when the visitation of judgment would come upon the head of the wicked, upon the one who had given birth to the wickedness. Ezekiel said the time would come when the father who had eaten the sour grape would die for his *own* iniquity, rather than for the iniquity to be visited on his children.

Thus there are two applications and two periods of time when each principle would be true. But God *will requite* the ones who are responsible for wrongdoing, even if they go peacefully into the grave. Job longed for this time, although he had little knowledge of the divine plan. (His knowledge was along other lines.)

Job 21:20 His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

Job said, “Let their own eyes see their destruction, and let them [the ones who perpetrated the evil deeds, and not so much their children] drink of the wrath of the Almighty.”

Job 21:21 For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

“For what do they care for their houses after them, when the number of their months is cut off?” In other words, “When they are in the tomb, what care do they have if their children suffer? In the grave they are unaware if their sons come to honor or dishonor.”

Job was looking forward to the time when the perpetrator would get the punishment.

Job 21:22 Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

“Will any teach God knowledge, seeing that He judges those that are on high?”

Job 21:23 One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

Job 21:24 His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.

“One dies in full prosperity, being wholly at ease and secure, his body full of fat and the marrow of his bones moist.”

Job 21:25 And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

“Another dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted the good.”

Job 21:26 They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

“They lie down alike in the dust, and the worms cover them.” Once animals or persons (good or bad) are dead and in the grave, they are equalized. They are all in oblivion, at least temporarily.

Job 21:27 Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.

Job continued: “Behold, I know your thoughts, and your schemes to wrong me.” In other words, the moralizing of the three comforters was all slanted with innuendoes that Job was wicked. They philosophized and gave moral lessons, but the gist of the philosophizing was to show Job that he had a problem.

Job 21:28 For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?

“For you say, ‘Where is the house of the prince? [This is sarcasm, for Job was the prince. He had a house and influence and was well known.] Where is your house? Where is the tent in which the wicked dwell?’” They had said Job was the wicked one.

Job 21:29 Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,

Job 21:30 That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

“Have you not asked those who travel the roads, and do you not accept their testimony that the wicked man is spared in the day of calamity?” Job was saying, “You are ignoring the facts as they really are. God does not necessarily visit punishment upon the head of the sinner in this life. In fact, have you not listened to the travelers who pass by, going from town to town with the news? They testify that many of the very wicked die in luxury and in peace.”

“Do you not accept their testimony ... that the wicked man is rescued in the day of wrath?” Sometimes calamities befall good people and the wicked are spared.

Job 21:31 Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him what he hath done?

“Who declares his way to his face, and who requites him for what he has done?”

Job 21:32 Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb.

“When he is borne to the grave, watch is kept over his tomb.” In death the wicked who are rich have mausoleums, fences, guards, gardeners, etc.; they are protected and memorialized.

Job 21:33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.

“The clods of the valley are sweet to him; all men follow after him.” Seeing the honor that comes after death, others follow the example of the wicked person in the present life. Thus the wicked become an example to others.

Incidentally, despite Job’s calamities and disease, his mind was active and clear.

“Men follow the example of the wicked, and those who go before him are innumerable.” The wicked person has predecessors as well as successors who pursue the same evil course.

Job 21:34 How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?

Job continues to address the comforters: “How then will you comfort me with empty nothings? There is nothing left of your answers but falsehood.” The three had implied that God visits punishment upon the head of iniquity and, therefore, because Job was being punished, he must have done something wrong. That was their philosophy, but Job was saying, “Look about you. Judgments fall on both the good and the evil.”

Job 22:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

Eliphaz again replied to Job.

Job 22:2 Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?

“Can a man be profitable to God? Surely he who is wise is profitable to himself.”

Job 22:3 Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?

“Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous, or is it gain to Him if you make your ways blameless?” Job was continually saying he could not understand what was happening to him because he had not done anything wrong. The three continually tried to break him down. After a while, they went a step further and told him what he had done wrong. They fabricated a whole scenario about what he did to his servant and to his neighbors, about how he took bribes, etc.

Job 22:4 Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?

“Is it for your fear of Him that He reproves you, and enters into judgment with you?” In

other words, “Are you trying to tell us that you are suffering because you are doing *good*?” Eliphaz was trying to show the foolishness of Job’s reasoning. “You are trying to maintain your innocence, and yet the facts show you must have done something wrong. Look at your condition, and your children are dead and your house is gone.” The arguments of the three were powerful from the standpoint of onlookers. And that is how the world has viewed the Church in some instances. The Church professes to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and yet the world sees calamities befall them. To the world this is incongruous. What they do not comprehend is that the calling of the Church is to suffer.

Job 22:5 Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?

“Is not your wickedness great? There is no end to your iniquities.” Eliphaz was saying, “If you are suffering this much, your sins must be proportionately numerous and grievous.”

Job 22:6 For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing.

“For you have exacted pledges from your brothers for nothing, and stripped the naked of their clothing.”

Job 22:7 Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.

“You have given no water to the weary to drink, and you have withheld bread from the hungry.” Notice, Eliphaz was now issuing a detailed indictment, which was a *complete falsehood*.

Job 22:8 But as for the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honourable man dwelt in it.

Job 22:9 Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

“The man with power possessed the land, and the favored man dwelt in it. You have sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless were crushed.” In other words, Eliphaz was accusing Job of getting riches by taking advantage of widows and orphans through seizure of their properties.

“The favored man dwelt in it” is, in principle, something like Naboth and his vineyard. King Ahaz wanted the property, but Naboth was not interested in selling. Therefore, to get the property, Jezebel manipulated Naboth’s death through falsehoods. In that account, Naboth was the “favored man” who originally had the vineyard. The king and queen (Job) wickedly connived to get the property.

Job 22:10 Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee;

“Therefore snares are round about you, and sudden terror overwhelms you.” Eliphaz was saying that Job’s fears were the result of a guilty conscience.

Job 22:11 Or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.

“Your light is darkened, so that you cannot see, and a flood of water covers you.” “Job, you

are overwhelmed in this experience.”

Job 22:12 Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!

Job 22:13 And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

Job 22:14 Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

In verses 12–14 Eliphaz began to pursue another tack: “Is not God *high* in the heavens? See the highest stars, how *lofty* they are! Therefore you say, ‘What does God know? Can He judge through the deep darkness? Thick clouds enwrap Him, so that He does not see, and He walks on the vault of heaven.’”

There are people who magnify extremes. They take your testimony and twist your words to give them a connotation that you did not intend. After thus exaggerating certain of your statements into a falsehood, they then try to pursue another, more magnanimous, broad, and honorable position for themselves in contrast with your meanness. While deprecating you and emphasizing your lowly stature, they honor their own nobility of thought.

Just as the three had fabricated lies concerning Job’s personal life, so now they were beginning to get sarcastically visionary. “Perhaps God has gone on an errand!”

Job 22:15 Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?

Job 22:16 Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood:

Verses 15 and 16: “Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have trod? They were snatched away before their time.” Eliphaz went back to the old theme that the wicked are judged in the present life. The logical conclusion to such faulty reasoning is: “If you die in prosperity, you are not wicked.”

“Their foundation was washed away”; ie, “Their rug was pulled out from under their feet.”

Job 22:17 Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?

“They said to God, ‘Depart from us,’ and ‘What can the Almighty do to us?’”

Job 22:18 Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

“Yet He filled their houses with good things—but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.”

Job 22:19 The righteous see it, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn.

Job 22:20 Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.

Verses 19 and 20: "The righteous see it and are glad; the innocent laugh them to scorn, saying, 'Surely our adversaries are cut off, and what they left the fire has consumed.'" Eliphaz was saying that while there was a time when Job had peace and prosperity, the sufferings came on Job because God punishes the wicked. The "righteous" who saw Job's change in circumstances were the three comforters; they could "see" his problem. In saying they wanted to help Job, they were so sure that they and their philosophy were right and that Job was entirely wrong.

Job 22:21 Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.

"Agree with God, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you." Eliphaz was saying Job was stubborn and not being guided by the providential afflictions. "Just admit you are guilty and God will deal with you in a different way. If you make peace with God by confessing, good will come to you."

Job 22:22 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.

"Receive instruction from His mouth, and lay up His words in your heart."

Job 22:23 If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

Job 22:24 Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.

Job 22:25 Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.

Job 22:26 For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.

Verses 23–26: "If you return to the Almighty and humble yourself, if you remove unrighteousness far from your tents, if you lay gold in the dust, and gold of Ophir among the stones of the torrent bed, and if the Almighty is your gold, and your precious silver, then you will delight yourself in the Almighty, and lift up your face to God."

Eliphaz was accusing Job of greed and of being a miser. "Instead of laying up gold, bury that gold and make God your gold." Sarcastic! "Why don't you center your love and affections on heavenly things, on the Almighty, instead of on this greedy gain down here?"

Job 22:27 Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

"If you do these things, you will make your prayer to Him, and He will hear you, and you will pay your vows."

Job 22:28 Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the

light shall shine upon thy ways.

“And you will decide on a matter, and it will be established for you, and light will shine on your ways.”

Job 22:29 When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.

“For God abases the proud, but He saves the lowly.”

Job 22:30 He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

“He delivers the innocent man; you will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands.” The three brought in partial truths, some of which apply to the next age. Their counsel was a jumble of *partial truths mixed in with false reasoning*.

Job 23:1 Then Job answered and said,

Job 23:2 Even today is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning.

Job began his reply to Eliphaz: “Today also my complaint is bitter, His hand is heavy in spite of my groaning.”

Job 23:3 Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!

“Oh, that I knew where I might find God, that I might come before His judgment seat to plead my cause and get a direct answer from Him!”

Job 23:4 I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

“I would lay my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments.”

Job 23:5 I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

“I would learn what He would answer me, and understand what He would say to me.”

Job 23:6 Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me.

“Would He contend with me in the greatness of His power? No; He would give heed to me.” God had nothing to fear from Job. Job just wanted to present his cause.

Job 23:7 There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.

“There an upright man could reason with Him, and I should be acquitted for ever by my judge.” God is approachable under certain conditions: “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isa. 1:18).

Job 23:8 Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him:

“Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him.”

Job 23:9 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:

“On the left hand I seek him, but I cannot behold Him; I turn to the right hand, but I cannot see Him.”

Some Christians are so open and guileless that they confess even to the stranger their character flaws. They do not realize that the stranger may look upon the confession as weakness, whereas a confession can show strength of character—it can show humility and contrition. Such a Christian is expressing a desire for purity and nobility, but has found that the imperfect flesh cannot live up to the standard of the heart.

Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

While Job admitted that he could not understand the reason for his afflictions even though he desired to know, by *faith* he realized that God was there and did have reasons. “But He knows the way that I take; and when He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

Job 23:11 My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

“My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and have not turned aside.”

Job 23:12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

“I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured in my bosom the words of His mouth.” Earlier Eliphaz had said, “If you would only lay up heavenly treasure ...” Job replied, “I have been doing that all my life.”

Job 23:13 But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

“But He is unchangeable and who can turn Him? What He desires, that He does.”

Job 23:14 For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.

“For He will complete what He appoints for me; and many such things are in His mind.”

Job 23:15 Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

“Therefore I am awed in His presence; when I consider God, I am in dread of Him.” God’s thinking and dealing with Job were so high he couldn’t grasp them. He was puzzled and confused as to the purpose of his sufferings.

Job 23:16 For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:

Job 23:17 Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the

darkness from my face.

Verses 16 and 17: "God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has terrified me; for I am hemmed in by darkness, and thick darkness covers my face in this experience." This is also the experience of The Christ. On the Cross, Jesus asked, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Some professed Christians erroneously teach that to be faithful, one must at all times have close communion with God. In their opinion a Christian who manifests a weakness in going through a trial is below standard. Yet the Bible indicates that even the most stalwart Christians have some shaky moments during trials. Jesus also said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). Thus there are moments in a Christian's life that may appear to be weakness but are actually designed to be, in the final analysis, a bedrock of faith. It may momentarily seem to the Christian that he is going down into a bottomless pit, but one who is delivered from such a circumstance walks in *renewed strength*, as though on a rock. One who is tried deeply and/or to the core but continues to cling to the Lord will be rewarded.

Job 24:1 Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?

"Why are not times of judgment kept by the Almighty, and why do those who know him never see his days?"

Job 24:2 Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

Job 24:3 They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

Verses 2 and 3: "Men remove landmarks; they seize flocks, they pasture them, they drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge."

Job 24:4 They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.

"They thrust the poor off the road; the poor of the earth all hide themselves."

Job 24:5 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.

"Behold, like wild asses in the desert they go forth to their toil, seeking prey in the wilderness as food for their children."

Job 24:6 They reap every one his corn in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.

"They gather their fodder in the field and they glean the vineyard of the wicked man."

Job 24:7 They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold.

"They lie all night naked, without clothing, and have no covering in the cold."

Job 24:8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for

want of a shelter.

“They are wet with the rain of the mountains, and cling to the rock for want of shelter.”

Job 24:9 They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

“(There are those who snatch the fatherless child from the breast, and take in pledge the infant of the poor.)”

Job 24:10 They cause him to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf from the hungry;

Job 24:11 Which make oil within their walls, and tread their winepresses, and suffer thirst.

Verses 10 and 11: “They go about naked, without clothing; hungry, they carry the sheaves; among the olive rows of the wicked they make oil; they tread the wine presses, but suffer thirst.”

Job 24:12 Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them.

“From out of the city the dying groan, and the soul of the wounded cries for help; yet God pays no attention to their prayer.” This is the permission of evil. Prior to the harvest period, the Lord’s people did not understand this philosophy. We should empathize with their feelings and questions.

The permission of evil has been a test for mankind, and Satan used it as a lever in the first dispensation. Those of the angels who began to waver in their trust of God deflected and followed him because there was no punishment. When their disobedience increased, there was still no punishment ... until the Flood.

Job was not saying he was perfect, but he knew that he had *always loved God*, that he treasured God’s commandments and principles, and that he had justly treated his fellowman.

Job 24:13 They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

“There are those who rebel against the light, who are not acquainted with its ways, and do not stay in its paths.”

Job 24:14 The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.

“The murderer rises in the dark, that he may kill the poor and the needy; and in the night he is as a thief.”

Job 24:15 The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth his face.

“The eye of the adulterer also waits for the twilight, saying, ‘No eye will see me’; and he

disguises his face.”

Job 24:16 In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light.

“In the dark they dig through houses; by day they shut themselves up; they do not know the light.”

Job 24:17 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.

“For deep darkness is morning to all of them; for they are friends with the terrors of deep darkness.” In other words, the wicked like darkness and regard it as their friend. In contrast, the righteous like the light. The Apostle Paul told us to “Walk as children of the light” (Eph. 5:8). Job just could not understand why the wicked prospered.

Job 24:18 He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

Job 24:19 Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned.

Job 24:20 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.

Verses 18–20: “You say, ‘They are swiftly carried away upon the face of the waters; their portion is cursed in the land; no treader turns toward their vineyards. Drought and heat snatch away the snow waters; so does Sheol those who have sinned. The squares of the town forget them; their name is no longer remembered; so wickedness is broken like a tree.’”

Here Job was answering the line of reasoning in which the three comforters had said that the wicked are judged in the present life. According to their reasoning, the wicked are carried away swiftly by the current and punished when God is angry with them.

Job 24:21 He evil entreateth the barren that beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow.

“They feed on the barren childless woman, and do no good to the widow.”

Job 24:22 He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and no man is sure of life.

“Yet God prolongs the life of the mighty by His power; they rise up when they despair of life.”

Job 24:23 Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes are upon their ways.

“He gives them security, and they are supported; and His eyes are upon their ways.”

Job 24:24 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.

“They are exalted a little while, and then are gone; they wither and fade like the mallow; they are cut off like the heads of grain.”

Job 24:25 And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

“If it is not so, who will prove me a liar, and show that there is nothing in what I say?” In other words, whether Job took the viewpoint of the three comforters or gave his own slant, he was trying to say that the facts were on his side. He said the three were changing the rules when it came to him. “All around us partiality is not necessarily shown. God does not discriminate against the wicked as you would seem to indicate.”

Job 25:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

Job 25:2 Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places.

“Dominion and fear are with God; He makes peace in His high heaven.”

Job 25:3 Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?

“Is there any number to his armies? Upon whom does His light not arise?”

Job 25:4 How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?

“How then can man [like you, Job] be righteous before God? How can he who is born of woman [like you, Job] be clean?”

Job 25:5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

Job 25:6 How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?

“Behold, even the moon is not bright and the stars are not clean in His sight; how much less man, who is a maggot, and the son of man, who is a worm!”

Bildad was getting fictional. He was dreaming. In writing about deceased people, some novelists fabricate conversations and even write what the person was (supposedly) thinking about. People get so carried away in their reasoning that they become visionary. Bildad was trying to show how much he knew and, by implication, how little Job knew. However, Job later made some startling revelations.

Job 26:1 But Job answered and said,

Job 26:2 How hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arm that hath no strength?

“How you have helped him who has no power!” Job was being sarcastic. “With all your noble and magnanimous thoughts, you have not been of any help or profit to me.”

“How you have saved the arm that has no strength!” Job was saying, “Here I am in a weakened condition, and with all your greatness, you are not even able to give me some help.”

Job 26:3 How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

“How you have counseled him [me] who has no wisdom, and plentifully declared sound knowledge!” Job’s sarcasm continues.

Job 26:4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

“With whose help have you uttered words, and whose spirit has come forth from you?”

Job 26:5 Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.

“The shades below tremble, the waters and their inhabitants.”

Job 26:6 Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

“Sheol is naked before God, and Abaddon has no covering.”

Job 26:7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

“He stretches out the north over the void, and hangs the earth upon nothing.” These were startling revelations for that day. Job had a lot of scientific and astronomical knowledge.

Job 26:8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

“God binds up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them.” In other words, God takes water from the oceans, puts it in a skin, and carries it through the heavens, sometimes for thousands of miles. No water drops out of the skin unless He wants it to rain. This is the greatness of God. The water can come down gently or suddenly and inordinately, causing a flood and destruction.

Job 26:9 He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.

“God covers the face of the moon, and spreads over it his cloud.”

Job 26:10 He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.

“He has described a circle upon the face of the waters at the boundary between light and darkness.” Because of its revolutions, at any given time, one half of the earth is dark and the other half is light. The earth turns and turns, and there is constantly a turning point of darkness and light. When we see the sun go down, it is on the turning point of light and darkness on the horizon, and darkness is the result. Although from our perspective there is only one horizon, that horizon is really moving all the time because the earth revolves. The line of demarcation between light and darkness constantly changes.

Job 26:11 The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.

“The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astounded at His rebuke.”

Job 26:12 He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.

“By His power He stilled the sea; by his understanding He smote Rahab [Egypt].” This was prophetic—an illusion to the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt. “Rahab” is likened to Egypt, the kingdom of darkness, but is actually Satan in the final analysis. Satan has dominion over the kingdom of darkness and slavery in the large sense, and he and all of his followers will eventually be thrown into the depths of the sea, as it were, and drowned. The destruction of Pharaoh and his host at the time of the Exodus was a prototype of the yet-future destruction.

Job 26:13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

“By His wind the heavens were made fair.” Ill weather can suddenly be followed by the most serene and beautiful weather, as if the Lord has drawn aside the curtain that was beclouding the earth and brought in a peaceful aftermath.

“His hand pierced the fleeing serpent [Rahab, Satan].”

This panorama is dramatized in the heavens. God set the stars in the heavens as signs, as well as for times and seasons.

Job 26:14 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?

“Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways; and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the *thunder* of His power who can understand?” We see only very ethereal, ephemeral evidence of God’s power. Imagine hanging the earth upon nothing! And even this is but a whisper of His real power. If we cannot understand the whisper, how could we understand the “thunder” of His power?

Job 27:1 Moreover Job continued his parable, and said,

Job continued his discourse.

Job 27:2 As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul;

Job 27:3 All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils;

Job 27:4 My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

“As God lives, who has taken away my right, and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter [who has permitted this bitter experience to come upon me]; as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit.”

Job 27:5 God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.

“Far be it from me to say that you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me.”

Job 27:6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

“I will hold fast my righteousness, and will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.”

Job 27:7 Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.

“Let my enemy be as the wicked, and let him that rises up against me be as the unrighteous.”

Job 27:8 For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?

“For what is the hope of the godless when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life?”

Job 27:9 Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

“Will God hear his cry, when trouble comes upon him?”

Job 27:10 Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?

“Will he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?”

Job 27:11 I will teach you by the hand of God: that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.

“I will teach you concerning the hand of God; what is with the Almighty I will not conceal.”

Job 27:12 Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it; why then are ye thus altogether vain?

“Behold, all of you have seen it yourselves; why then have you become altogether vain?”

Job 27:13 This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty.

Job 27:14 If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword: and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

“This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage which oppressors receive from the Almighty. If his children are multiplied, it is for the sword; and his offspring have not enough to eat.” This seems to be exactly the opposite of Job’s earlier line of reasoning, but he was saying his faith was such that *in spite of all evidence to the contrary*, not

only his integrity but the integrity of God **MUST REQUIRE** the evil. If it is not required in the present life, the implication is that it will be in the future.

Job 27:15 Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and his widows shall not weep.

“Those who survive him the pestilence buries, and their widows make no lamentation.”

Job 27:16 Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay;

Job 27:17 He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

“Though he heap up silver like dust, and pile up clothing like clay; he may pile it up, but the just will wear it, and the innocent will divide the silver.” Again notice, Job did not reason this way earlier. By *faith* he knew justice would prevail eventually—the scales would be reversed and that which the wicked accumulated would be given to the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. Those of a contrite spirit would be blessed ultimately. “The meek ... shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

Job 27:18 He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth that the keeper maketh.

“The house which the wicked build is like a spider’s web, like a booth which a watchman makes.” That is, the house was seasonal, temporary, not meant to last. And so the wicked are ephemeral; they will pass away.

Job 27:19 The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he is not.

“He goes to bed rich, but will do so no more; he opens his eyes, and his wealth is gone.”

Job 27:20 Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

“Terrors overtake him like a flood; in the night a whirlwind carries him off.”

Job 27:21 The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.

“The east wind lifts him up and he is gone; it sweeps him out of his place.”

Job 27:22 For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand.

“It hurls at him without pity; he flees from its power in headlong flight.”

Job 27:23 Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

“It claps its hands at him [the wicked], and hisses at him from its place [saying, ‘Get out!].” Because Job changed his line of reasoning, this book can be very confusing if the different dispensations are not understood. Here at the end of the age, we have been marvelously blessed with understanding.

Job 28:1 Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they refine it.

“Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place for gold which they refine.”

Job 28:2 Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone.

“Iron is taken out of the earth, and copper is smelted from the ore.”

Job 28:3 He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

“Men put an end to darkness, and search out to the farthest bound the ore in gloom and deep darkness.”

Job 28:4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.

“They [miners] open shafts in a valley away from where men live [in search of gold, silver, etc.]; they are forgotten by travelers.” The miners dig so deep in search of gold, silver, iron, etc., that people can almost walk into their hole without knowing activity is taking place under their feet.

“They hang afar from men, they swing to and fro.” Job was telling the technique that miners used. They dug a hole, and after a while the hole was so deep that they could not use a ladder, so they used a rope. They were lowered down on a rope and they swung into horizontal passages in search of the ore. This technique was used in making tombs in Egypt. A shaft might be dug straight down for 200 feet before it branched off in a horizontal shaft that led to a room with a sarcophagus. This technique was an attempt to keep the tomb intact by thwarting grave robbers.

Job 28:5 As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.

“As for the earth, out of it comes bread [the ore was turned into money to buy food and goods]; but underneath it is turned up as by fire.”

Job 28:6 The stones of it are the place of sapphires: and it hath dust of gold.

“Its stones are the place of sapphires, and it has dust of gold.” In other words, many minerals are igneous; ie, they were produced by fire and crystallized into beautiful jewels as they cooled. Miners go below ground to get these jewels. Specifically, lapis lazuli, the sapphire of that day, is being described here.

Job 28:7 There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture’s eye hath not seen:

Job 28:8 The lion’s whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

“That path no bird of prey knows, and the falcon’s eye has not seen it. The proud beasts have not trodden it; the lion has not passed over it.”

Job was saying that while man is looking for this “bread” (livelihood) deep in the earth,

the falcon with its sharp eyes capable of seeing perhaps 20–30 miles doesn't see the miners underground. Even though the falcon has keen vision, it is limited to an aerial perspective. And the "proud beasts," some of whom have a keen sense of smell, touch, taste, and/or sight, are completely unaware of what is happening below their feet. Job's spontaneous dramatization was strong! He was leading up to a certain point.

Job 28:9 He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

"Man puts his hand to the flinty rock, and overturns mountains by the roots." Man sometimes tunnels into the foot of a mountain—way down deep underneath the mountain.

Job 28:10 He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

"He cuts out channels in the rocks, and his eye sees every precious thing."

Job 28:11 He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.

"He binds up the streams so that they do not trickle, and the thing that is hid he brings forth to light."

Springs can sometimes flood the place where miners are working. Miners had a type of cement to apply when water began to trickle out of the rock, thus hoping to prevent a flood. Job had a considerable knowledge about mining—in addition to being approved of God and the wealthiest man in the world (prior to his affliction). Yet the three comforters were trying to advise, instruct, and admonish Job!

Job 28:12 But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

"But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?"

These questions are the *crux of the matter*, the *purpose of Job's dramatization*.

Job 28:13 Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

"Man does not know the way to it, and it is not found in the land of the living."

Job 28:14 The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me.

"The deep says, 'It is not in me,' and the sea says, 'It is not with me.'"

Job 28:15 It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

"Wisdom cannot be gotten for gold, and silver cannot be weighed as its price."

Job 28:16 It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

“Wisdom cannot be valued even in the gold of Ophir, in precious onyx or sapphire.”

Job 28:17 The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.

“Gold and glass cannot equal it, nor can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold.”

Job 28:18 No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

“No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal; the price of wisdom is above pearls.”

Job 28:19 The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

“The topaz of Ethiopia cannot compare with it, nor can it be valued in pure gold.”

Now Job’s knowledge of jewels becomes apparent. Some individuals in the world have profound wisdom, and yet because they do not have college degrees, they can sit unnoticed in a group of people who are engaging in idle chatter. Job was one such individual. The three judged that his wealth was ill-gotten; they ascribed wrong motives of self-aggrandizement, whereas he had obtained wealth through *wisdom*.

Wisdom cannot be purchased.

Job 28:20 Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?

“Whence then comes wisdom? And where is the place of understanding?” Job repeated the question for emphasis.

Job 28:21 Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.

“It is hid from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air.”

Job 28:22 Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

“Abaddon and Death say, ‘We have heard a rumor of it with our ears.’” More powerful dramatization to bring out his point about wisdom!

Job 28:23 God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

“God understands the way to it, and He knows its place.” In other words, “God knows where wisdom is. Wisdom is not hidden from Him.”

Job 28:24 For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven;

“For He looks to the ends of the earth, and sees everything under the heavens.”

Job 28:25 To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

Job 28:26 When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:

Job 28:27 Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

“When He gave to the wind its weight, and meted out the waters by measure; when He made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then He saw it and declared it; He established it, and searched it out.”

Job 28:28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

“And God said to man, ‘Behold, the *fear of the Lord*, that is wisdom; and *to depart from evil*, that is understanding.’” The point of the entire dramatization was: “Man cannot see wisdom ... whether down in the mine, up in the air, on the land, or on the horizon of the sea. God diligently weighed out the winds and microscopically meted out the planets and the earth, so why don’t you ask Him? *He is the One who has the wisdom*. Therefore, reverence God! He is not only the fount of all blessing but the fount of wisdom, light, love, etc. These are resident in Him. If you acknowledge God and look to Him by faith, He will teach you wisdom.” The Apostle James tells us to ask for wisdom: “If any of you lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and *it shall be given him*. But let him ask *in faith*, nothing wavering (James 1:5,6a).” Man looks everywhere else for wisdom, whereas he could cry to *God* at any time. Consider the nation of Israel today. Although the nation is in a very precarious position, the leaders and the people do everything but look to God for answers and help. “The [reverential] fear of the Lord is wisdom” is the climax.

Job 29:1 Moreover Job continued his parable, and said,

In Chapters 29–31 Job continued his concluding statements in presenting his case before the Lord and his thoughts to the three comforters. Some translators do not like the word “parable” and use the word “discourse,” but actually there is a lesson beyond a lesson here. Job’s experience, being natural and physical, had a practical benefit that can be received by observing his experience and the conclusion with God’s remarks. The Book of Job is also an allegory and, therefore, is to be viewed from more than one standpoint. With any book or parable of that nature, it is of primary importance to understand the natural picture before considering the spiritual application.

Job 29:2 Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me;

Job 29:3 When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness;

It is apparent from this statement alone that the Book of Job did not take place in one, two, or three days. In fact, earlier in the book mention was made of a seven-day period of complete silence in which the three comforters were present. And before that an allegorical contest took place between Satan and God, after which multiple severe losses and illness came upon Job.

“Oh that I were as in *months past*” shows that some time had elapsed since the beginning of Job’s afflictions. The light of God’s favor was on Job’s head prior to his afflictions. At

that time he was respected by the community and he also had the blessing of his family and fellowship with God. Job was wishing the former days would return.

This particular chapter will show the happiness of Job *in the past*, Chapter 30 will show Job's *present* sufferings, and Chapter 31 will give concluding remarks.

Job 29:4 As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle;

RSV: "... when the friendship of God was upon my tent."

Job 29:5 When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me;

Job 29:6 When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil;

Job 29:7 When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street!

The implication is that Job had a special relationship with God in which information was imparted to him above that given to ordinary men. Some of his earlier discourses also revealed this special relationship. For example, Job's knowledge that the earth was a sphere had come from God. He also knew of a future resurrection and of an age to look forward to and that he would sleep in the grave until an appointed time. He had knowledge that superseded even that of others in his day who were in relationship with the Lord. The first chapter showed that Job was the most important man on the earth in that day. (Similarly, Moses was the meekest man on the earth in his day.)

Job wanted to return to his days of communing with God, having a family, being respected in society, and possessing wealth. It was not wrong for him to wish to return to wealth because one with riches and goods who has the proper heart condition can be a blessing to other people. Wealth affords opportunities of extending benefactions to others.

Job lived in the city of Uz in the area of Arabia. In the past, as he was going through the city en route to the marketplace gate where judgment took place and preparing himself for the court decisions of the day, he noticed certain things (verses 8–10).

Job 29:8 The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up.

The young men, being more timid, felt uneasy when Job approached, and they withdrew themselves to a discreet distance. On the other hand, the "aged" (those of Job's age and older) stood up out of deference or respect to him; they recognized that he was indeed a man of God and lived according to his profession.

Job 29:9 The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth.

"Laid their hand on their mouth" means they stopped talking and became nervous as they saw Job approach. In awe and confusion, they felt the inappropriateness of carrying on their normal conversation in the presence of such an important person. Obviously, Job was a very unusual man prior to his affliction.

Job 29:10 The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their

mouth.

Because of Job's great knowledge and noble and pure character, even the nobles, who were respected in other matters, didn't know what to say when they saw him coming. They were lost for words, as it were, in seeing him coming to the gate and preparing himself for the day's decisions.

Job 29:11 When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me:

They could see that Job's comments were appropriate for the occasion, whatever it might be, and they saw also that his life was a testimony to his words; in other words, they saw that he spoke from experience. The principles enunciated were practiced in his own life and behavior.

Job 29:12 Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.

Job 29:13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

Job's ministry and judgment were a blessing to those who were desperately in need. However, he did not wrest judgment in giving ear to the poor. He was not biased in rendering his decisions but was very solicitous of their welfare not merely in connection with the matter immediately at hand but also subsequently, in the future. When a husband died and left a widow, Job kept her circumstance in mind both in the court and afterwards, and surely helped her personally. Thus the result of his ministry was wholesome, practical, and sincere—as well as wise.

Job 29:14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.

Those who went to Job appreciated how he could unravel difficult, complex matters. He gave helpful explanations and instruction and a way out.

Job 29:15 I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.

Job 29:16 I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.

Some matters would be so complex—and could even be so emotional—that it was not possible to fathom from the statements of the disputants or those involved in litigation enough sense and facts upon which to base a proper decision. In such cases, Job searched out the matter either there in the court or later. If necessary, he suspended judgment until he could look into the matter in more detail. In other words, he did not render hasty or unwise decisions.

Job 29:17 And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

Job 29:18 Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand.

In cases that came before Job in which he could see that greed and/or power was the motivation resulting in the victimization of others, he was not afraid to render a stern

reprisal, and he would make sure such individuals were not successful in court decisions. He made sure that a person was not victimized through a technicality of the law. This principle is shown in Amos 3:12, which says that a good shepherd is one who will take the lamb out of the jaws of the lion and come back with a leg or other body part to show he risked his life trying to save the lamb (Amos 3:12). Job was saying that he would break the jaws of the wicked in order to effect the deliverance of the victim. He was happy that he was providentially put in a position where he could render such judgments. His happiness was based on the principle that if you do good to others, you multiply your days—you prolong your life. Job was confident that obeying God's will and doing good would work a blessing for him. The Law, which was given later, stated this principle, and the Israelites were naturally blessed when they obeyed God's commands and lived proper lives (Deut. 4:40).

Job 29:19 My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

Job 29:20 My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.

Job 29:21 Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.

Job 29:22 After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them.

Men who heard Job's wisdom were so in awe of how he straightened out matters that they did not speak but were silent. It was like hearing the wisdom of Solomon.

"My speech dropped upon them." Job's words of wisdom distilled upon them; not only was Job blessed but he blessed others by his wisdom.

Job 29:23 And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.

Job 29:24 If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.

In other words, Job was so respected and so dignified that if he laughed, the people felt it was incongruous and didn't fit his deportment. (A similar rule is taught in business courses: management should keep their distance and not fraternize too much with the employees.) Job was not a backslapping type of personality given to levity, so when on occasion he genuinely laughed, the beholders were a little nervous as to the motivation. They felt he was too noble for laughter.

"The light of my countenance they cast not down." Job was not discouraged in judgment by the gloom and oppression of the circumstance. He gave the impression that he wanted to see *proper* judgment rendered for *both* sides of the issue, for *both* the claimant and the defendant. He approached cases from this constructive standpoint, and they sensed that his judgment was meant to be right, that he was careful not to be prejudiced in judgment.

Job 29:25 I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners.

In other words, Job's being the chief of the judges came about naturally. When he spoke, others hung on every word because they so respected his judgment.

He was like “a king in the army.” In ancient times, to be a king of an army, one had to be superior to almost everyone else in that army. That is why some of the greatest generals and army commanders excelled physically and mentally; those underneath obeyed because they could see the superiority—the fearless quality, the good judgment, etc. They would rally around such a general and even risk their lives because they could see he was superior.

Job 30:1 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.

In Chapter 29, Job told how happy and blessed he had been prior to his affliction. Chapter 30 is the opposite; now Job starts to tell of his *present* suffering condition.

“Now they that are younger than I have me in derision.” These words show that Job’s malady *persisted*. The very ones who had formerly been in awe of him and withdrawn themselves at his presence now boldly ridiculed him and made him a laughing stock.

“... whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.” Job was referring to a very debased element of society, and the progeny were the product of the debased parents—people with *very low standards*.

Job 30:2 Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was perished?

Job 30:3 For want and famine they were solitary; fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate and waste.

Those who mocked him were the derelicts of society, a low element physically, mentally, and morally.

Job 30:4 Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat.

This low element had a meager sustenance, wandering around and eating roots. Today’s equivalent would be the homeless alcoholic who eats the barest minimum of food and just desires more and more drink.

Job 30:5 They were driven forth from among men, (they cried after them as after a thief;)

Job 30:6 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, in caves of the earth, and in the rocks.

Job 30:7 Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.

Job 30:8 They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.

Job 30:9 And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword.

Job 30:10 They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.

Job 30:11 Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.

Previously this low element of society was careful not to interfere with Job in any way, but now that God had loosed the cord of communication and relationship with Job and afflicted him, the “bridle” that was formerly on their mouths was removed and they abused him with unrestrained liberty.

Job 30:12 Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.

Job 30:13 They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.

In trying to demean Job during his illness, they slandered him, spat upon him, poked him with a stick, etc.

Job 30:14 They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.

Job 30:15 Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.

Job felt overwhelmed by the unexplainable providences in this new experience. The cloud of protection that had previously shrouded him in his communal affairs and associations now seemed far away, and he was exposed to unbridled insults and dangers.

Job 30:16 And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.

Job 30:17 My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest.

Job’s illness and pain discomforted him so much that he could not sleep or rest properly.

Job 30:18 By the great force of my disease is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.

In one way his bones were exposed through want of proper nutrition, but in another way he felt bloated and constricted. In time of famine, youngsters and adults can have legs and arms that are thin like sticks and yet have swollen and bloated bellies. Job was abnormal in his appearance. Those who beheld his personage felt God had cursed him.

Job 30:19 He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.

Job 30:20 I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not.

Job 30:21 Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposeth thyself against me.

“Cruel” should be “stern.”

Job 30:22 Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance.

Like tumbleweed in the desert that is blown hither and yon in the wind because of its frailty and lightness, Job had physical and mental problems, and terrors besieged him. Yet he could reason with his three opposers.

Job 30:23 For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.

Job knew that he would eventually die, for everybody dies.

Job 30:24 Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction.

Job 30:25 Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soul grieved for the poor?

Job 30:26 When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness.

Job, with his former blessings, had benefited the widow, the fatherless, the poor, the sick, the afflicted, etc., but now he was getting an opposite experience, which was like light changing to darkness. He was completely bewildered by the experience he was having. Had he known of the allegory between God and Satan in the beginning of the book, he would have understood the permission of evil. He would have realized his sufferings were a contest or test of his fealty and trust in God. The purpose of the contest was to *prove that Job loved God*.

Job 30:27 My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

RSV: "Day of affliction come to meet me."

In his turmoil and confusion of mind, Job was not only continually mentally and physically distressed, but even his vital organs were upset and emotionally affected by his traumatic experience. In his distress he would talk to himself and make comments that would not ordinarily be normal for a man of his position.

Job 30:28 I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, and I cried in the congregation.

He went mourning "without the sun," that is, outside. He stood up and "cried in the congregation." He had distress whether he was home by himself or out in public.

Job 30:29 I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.

As in a ghost town, no one wanted to communicate with him. Even when he was in society, it was like being in the wilderness because of lack of communication and association with others.

Job 30:30 My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat.

Job 30:31 My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

In Chapter 29 Job enumerated all the joys of his previous life. In Chapter 30 he enumerated all of his current sorrowful experiences. In Chapter 31, he will justify his integrity and explain about his purposes in life. It will be a very open and candid explanation. This chapter will be his last lengthy defense.

Job 31:1 I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

In their previous discourses the three comforters implied that Job had committed all kinds of secret sins. Even fornication and adultery were implied.

Job was saying, "When I consecrated to God, I made a vow that I would not look on a maiden from the standpoint of lust." The reason follows.

Job 31:2 For what portion of God is there from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

In other words, "If I made such a vow and then I go ahead and break it, can I expect anything special from God? I have been faithful in these matters."

Job 31:3 Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?

Had Job been unfaithful, he would expect judgment. Earlier he had said that the wicked flourish, but he knew that ultimately the wicked are cut off—if not in the present life, then in the next life. A day of judgment *is coming*.

Job 31:4 Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?

Job 31:5 If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit;

Job 31:6 Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

Job was still addressing the three comforters. "Does not God see all my ways? If I have walked hypocritically, let me be judged justly by Him." Despite their innuendoes, they could not name any specific sins Job had committed; they had no creditable evidence. Therefore, Job wanted God to judge him.

Job 31:7 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;

Job 31:8 Then let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.

Job felt that if he had been unfaithful to God, then the very things which had befallen him should be expected. But he knew he had not willfully sinned.

Job 31:9 If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;

Job 31:10 Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.

"If I have been unfaithful in matters of lust, then let my own wife become a slave and a

concubine to another party.”

Job 31:11 For this is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges.

Job 31:12 For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.

The Apostle Paul and Jesus alluded to many statements in the Book of Job, but not in an obvious way. Some of their thinking about judgment, judges, *gehenna*, etc., came from this book, and these references would be *God's* thinking in the matter.

Job 31:13 If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me;

Job 31:14 What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?

If a problem occurred in his own household with regard to his servants, he did not just brush them aside, which he could have done in his position of wealth and authority. He heard the matter and reasoned on it because he felt they were on a par with him. They were as entitled to their rights as he was to his.

“When God visits judgment, what shall I answer him?” In other words, “If God in subsequent judgment calls attention to some way I have wronged my servants, I will have to answer for the unfaithfulness.”

Job 31:15 Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?

“Did not God, who made me, also make the servants I deal with? Were we not both alike fashioned in the womb?”

Job 31:16 If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

Job 31:17 Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;

Job 31:18 (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;)

Job was saying that to his knowledge, he could not think of any particular instance in which he had not manifested largesse and favor to those who were in positions of want and need. This attitude had been instilled in him from his youth. Very early in life he had recognized the need to consider other people, and in fact, it seemed to be part of his genetic make-up to be considerate and to be solicitous for the welfare of both male and female.

Job 31:19 If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;

Job 31:20 If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of

my sheep;

Job 31:21 If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate:

Job 31:22 Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.

“When I sat in the gate, if I saw an opportunity to help others and did not do so, then let my arm fall from my shoulder blade and be broken from the collar bone.”

Job 31:23 For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.

Job had a healthy respect for the God of judgment and justice. If he had violated these himself, he realized he would receive retribution. Therefore, he would not do the things the three had accused him of doing.

Job 31:24 If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence;

Job 31:25 If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much;

Job really did not have the *love* of money and wealth. Yes, he had possessed them, but they were not his goals in life.

Job 31:26 If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness;

Job 31:27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand:

Job 31:28 This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.

In ancient times, solar and lunar worship was practiced, as well as the worship of Cybele, Diana, and others. Such worshippers were foreign to his thinking because he realized that you cannot worship two Gods. God alone is God! No man can serve two masters!

“My mouth hath kissed my hand” has a religious signification. In worshipping the sun or the moon, most people had a statue or image or other representation that they kissed or genuflected to in trying to communicate with the false idol. Another illustration of sun or moon worship would be like blowing a kiss to a person you love who is departing on a train. As the train gets farther away, you show endearment by kissing your hand and blowing the kiss toward that person. And so those who worshipped the sun or the moon, because they couldn’t touch it, kissed their own hand and blew the kiss heavenward. Job was saying, “When I was out in the sun at noontime or admired the sunrise or the clearness of the night, etc., I did not deviate to the practice of sun or moon worship.”

In Egypt the god of the noontime sun was Ra, and “Ra” was incorporated into all the pharaohs’ names.

Job 31:29 If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when

evil found him:

Job 31:30 Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.

Job did not hate *his personal* enemies. He had no malice in his heart toward them. (Enemies of God were another matter.)

Job 31:31 If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.

Job 31:32 The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveller.

It could not be said that someone outside Job's door was hungry or starving and crying out, "Oh that I had something to eat!" Job made sure he was looking out the window, as it were, to see if there was such a one in want. His door was open to receive the unfortunate.

Job 31:33 If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom:

Job 31:34 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?

For one thing, Job had no fear of disclosing the thoughts of his heart to his fellowman. He did not fear what others might think of him. If he had sinned, he would confess. He would not hide behind a tree as Adam did following his transgression.

Job 31:35 Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book.

Job 31:36 Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me.

"Oh that ... mine adversary had written a book." In other words, if those who were charging Job with wrongdoing would write an indictment with specifics, he would appreciate it. He was so convinced of his innocence that he was willing for an exposure. He felt that an indictment, instead of convicting him, would requite and honor him. Therefore, he would take that indictment and wear it like a crown and rejoice and dance and present it to the true Judge, who would see the falsity of the accusations.

Job 31:37 I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.

Job would go before the Judge with no shame or guilt.

Job 31:38 If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain;

Even the land could be abused by growing crops on it during the seventh or sabbath year. Therefore, the land could figuratively cry out against Job if he had abused it.

Job 31:39 If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life:

Job 31:40 Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.

If Job had offended man, beast, land, etc., he was willing to suffer the consequences, but he rested his case in the confidence that he was not guilty as accused by the three false comforters.

Job 32:1 So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

The three comforters, who had each taken approximately three turns, stopped conversing on the subject of Job's trials because he was thoroughly convinced he had not sinned and there was no way to change his mind.

Job 32:2 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.

Elihu, who had been present listening to the comforters' speeches and Job's remarks, now felt constrained to speak. He was angry that Job "justified himself rather than God," and there is a measure of truth in this statement. Job had spent a lot of time speaking of his own righteousness, but of those who were on the scene, it was *Job* who was having the trial and suffering—and for some time—and had lost all that he had except his wife. Therefore, we must consider his replies from the standpoint of suffering and sickness, because in severe suffering and sickness, one is not as careful in making statements as he or she would be in a healthy state. From this standpoint, Job stood head and shoulders higher than any of the other four, including Elihu—in spite of the eloquence of the latter.

Job 32:3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

Elihu was also angry at the three comforters because their remarks had not been particularly pertinent and yet they had assumed Job was guilty.

Job 32:4 Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he.

The three comforters and Job were all older than Elihu. In other words, Elihu was the youngest.

Job 32:5 When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

Job 32:6 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 show you mine opinion.

"... therefore I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you."

Job 32:7 I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

"I said, 'Let days speak, and many years teach wisdom.'" In other words, all things being equal, a person who is older is more mature in his judgment and thinking than a younger person. It was proper decorum for Elihu to wait.

Job 32:8 But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

“But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand.”

Job 32:9 Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.

“It is not necessarily true that the old are wise and the aged understand what is right.”

Job 32:10 Therefore I said, Harken to me; I also will show mine opinion.

“Therefore, listen to me and let me declare my opinion.”

Job 32:11 Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.

“Behold, I waited for your words, I listened for your wise sayings, while you searched out what to say.”

Job 32:12 Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words:

“I gave you my attention, and, behold, none of you refuted Job’s claims of innocence or answered his words.”

Job 32:13 Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.

“Beware lest you say, ‘We have found wisdom; God may vanquish him, not man.’” Elihu was saying, “Don’t use the excuse ‘Since we can’t convince Job with our arguments, God is the only one who can.’”

Job 32:14 Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

“He has not directed his words against me, and I will not answer him with your speeches.” In other words, “I am not personally involved as you three were. As a bystander listening to all of the comments, I am in a position to rationalize this matter without getting too personally involved with either side of the issue.”

Job 32:15 They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.

“They are discomfited, they answer no more; they have not a word to say.”

Job 32:16 When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more;)

“And shall I wait, because they do not speak, because they stand there, and answer no more?”

Job 32:17 I said, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion.

“I also will give my answer; I also will declare my opinion.”

Job 32:18 For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.

“For I am full of words, the spirit within me constrains me.”

Job 32:19 Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.

“Behold, my heart is like old wine in a new vessel (or new wine in an old vessel); it is ready to burst.”

Job 32:20 I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

“I must speak, that I may find relief; I must open my lips and answer.”

Just as wine ferments or bubbles, so Elihu, in listening to the long, extensive arguments, had thoughts fermenting in him. He wanted to get involved, but due to politeness and decorum, he held back. In the meantime, his words were bubbling and bubbling, and now he *had to speak* to get relief.

Notice the way Elihu’s words are written. His method shows us that *Elihu wrote the Book of Job*. He was there and heard all of the arguments, and he wrote the Book of Job like a historian informing his readers as to what was occurring within him. He *was not uttering these words aloud* to Bildad, Zophar, and Eliphaz. Rather, he was soliloquizing and, as a historian, was relating his mixed feelings in listening to the three and Job.

Job 32:21 Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

“I will not show partiality to any person or use flattery toward any man.”

Job 32:22 For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away.

“For I do not know how to flatter, else would my Maker soon put an end to me.”

Job 33:1 Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

“But now, hear my speech, O Job, and listen to all my words.” Notice the liberty that Elihu, a *young* man, took in addressing Job by name, whereas the three, who were equal to Job in age and were mature individuals, had not taken that liberty. They had accused him but had not used his name. This familiarity, along with Elihu’s lineage (verse 2), indicates that he was a fairly close relative of Job. “... Elihu [was] the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram.” Buz was a nephew of Abraham, and Job was from the land of Uz. “And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor; Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother ...” (Gen. 22:20,21).

Job 33:2 Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

“Behold, I open my mouth; the tongue in my mouth speaks.”

Job 33:3 My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

“My words declare the uprightness of my heart, and what my lips know they speak sincerely.”

Job 33:4 The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

Job 33:5 If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.

“Answer me, if you can; set your words in order before me; then take your stand.” In other words, “When I begin to make my remarks, you will have opportunity for rebuttal. I am trying to be impartial, I want to be fair, and I am honest in heart. The Almighty made me just as He made you, so there is a certain equality between us.”

Notice that Elihu thinks a great deal of himself. As his discourse proceeds, his high opinion of himself will become even more apparent. Job was wiser than Elihu and had more intimate knowledge about God. However, it will be seen that Elihu was far above the other three in certain respects and that he certainly had some inside information, but not of the scope and breadth of Job.

Job 33:6 Behold, I am according to thy wish in God’s stead: I also am formed out of the clay.

“Behold, I am toward God as you are.” Elihu was saying, “At the end of your discourse, you stated how your life was dedicated to the Lord and what you did in your private life with regard to your family, your servants, your vows, etc. I also am consecrated to the Lord like you.”

Job had said in his remarks, “Oh that someone could take my case before God. He is so great that I am too timid to speak to Him direct. Yet I do feel justified in my cause that I am indeed righteous. I have not compromised my integrity.” Now Elihu was saying, “According to your wish, I am in God’s stead.”

“I too was formed from a piece of clay.” Some have mistakenly concluded that Elihu was an angel or Jesus in a mysterious form, but he was formed of human clay. Moreover, verse 2 gave his lineage: he was the son of Barachel the Buzite and a Ramite.

Job 33:7 Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

“Behold, no fear of me need terrify you; my pressure will not be heavy upon you.”

Job 33:8 Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying,

“Surely, you have spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the sound of your words.”

Job 33:9 I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.

Job 33:10 Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy,

Job 33:11 He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

“You say, “I am clean, without transgression; I am pure, and there is no iniquity in me. Behold, He finds occasions against me, He counts me as His enemy; He puts my feet in the stocks, and watches all my paths.” Elihu was not accurately presenting Job’s argument. Job did not say that he had not in any sense sinned, for he was born of Adamic stock just like everyone else. He knew that, being born of Adam, he had faults. What he meant was that he could not find any lack of integrity in his life that would merit or explain the experience he was undergoing. But Elihu took Job’s words and gave them an intonation he did not intend. However, some of Job’s statements could be taken two different ways.

Sometimes during suffering and nervous disorders, Christians might say something which does not have the intent in back of it that the hearer might assume. And so some of Job’s statements could be misunderstood, but if his *line of reasoning* were followed, the intention would be plain.

To sum up, Elihu repeated some of Job’s words but put an unintended connotation on them. However, these statements were still not quite right. Had Job been in good health and able to think them out, he would have phrased some things differently. And so, as a general principle, it is good for someone to correct another party, even though that party’s intent was right, *if the meaning can be misunderstood*. Elihu was justified in the sense that a clarification of certain statements Job made was necessary and in order. Job should not be offended.

Job 33:12 Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

“Behold, in this you are not right. I will answer you. God is greater than man.”

Job 33:13 Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

“Why do you contend against Him, saying, ‘He will answer none of my words’?”

Job 33:14 For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

“For God speaks in one way, and in two, though man does not perceive it.”

Job 33:15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

Job 33:16 Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

Job 33:17 That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.

Job 33:18 He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

“In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while they slumber on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and terrifies them with warnings, that He may turn man aside from his deed, and cut off pride from man; He keeps back his soul from the Pit, his life from perishing by the sword.”

Elihu was definitely implying that Job might very well be guilty. He was saying, “Job, you are asking God to speak. He does speak sometimes, but you don’t hear Him. He speaks in various ways. You cannot tell God ‘Answer me now’ as you would another man.” Elihu was right—we cannot tell the great Jehovah to answer us on our own terms. Elihu said that God does answer but in various ways, such as in a dream at night or through sickness. But in both instances—the one who gets the dream and the one who is sick—the person is terrified and warned against the evil deed. The implication was that Job was guilty of wrongdoing and God was answering him through sickness and suffering.

Elihu was trying to steer a middle line, but he did give some credibility to the remarks of the three supposed comforters. He quoted many of their arguments verbatim and presented them as his own thoughts. It takes time to analyze Elihu. The oriental frame of thinking employed is foreign to our thinking.

Elihu said that God warns through dreams at night and the purpose of the warnings is to awaken the party in a terrified state so that he will reform and thus be spared death.

Job 33:19 He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain:

Job 33:20 So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.

“Man is also chastened with pain upon his bed, and with continual strife in his bones; so that his life loathes bread, and his appetite dainty food.”

In other words, “God answers one way, two ways, three ways—here is another way: man is also chastened with pain upon his bed.”

Job 33:21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out.

“His flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen; and his bones which were not seen hitherto stick out.”

Job 33:22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

“His soul draws near the Pit, and his life to those who bring death.”

Job 33:23 If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness:

Job 33:24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.

Job 33:25 His flesh shall be fresher than a child’s: he shall return to the days of his youth:

Job 33:26 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.

“If there be for him an angel, a mediator, one of the thousand, to declare to man what is right for him; and he is gracious to him, and says, ‘Deliver him from going down into the Pit, I have found a ransom; let his flesh become fresh with youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor; then man prays to God, and He accepts him, he comes into God’s presence with joy.”

The previous two suggested warnings against wrongdoing were (1) a dream or vision or (2) sickness. Another method now suggested by Elihu was a mediator, one who would mediate between God and the sinner. Elihu had a lot of information, for he evidently had beliefs similar to those of Job: a belief in a coming Messiah, a belief that redemption through a Savior would take place in the future, and an abiding faith. (The other three had faith too, but in a way that tended toward infidelism, that is, not a revealed God. They had criticized Job: “What do you know more than we know?” Job had told them about the earth being a sphere and hanging upon nothing, and he had talked about the Kingdom of the future. They replied, “Our father is older than your father. Where did you get this information? You are talking through your hat.”)

“I have found a ransom.” Elihu showed there was a possibility of restoration for the one who was so sick his bones protruded. The doctrine of repentance and restoration was clearly taught by Elihu based on the ransom.

Job 33:27 He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not;

Job 33:28 He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

“He recounts to men his salvation, and he sings before men, and says: ‘I sinned, and perverted what was right, and it was not requited to me. He has redeemed my soul from going down into the Pit, and my life shall see the light.’”

But Elihu was not properly representing Job. The implication continued to be that Job had sinned. Job’s transgression was along another line but not the type of sin that would explain his affliction.

What Elihu was saying will be true in the Kingdom. When those who die as sinners (not having really followed God in the present life) are resuscitated from the tomb and told the conditions for obtaining everlasting life, they will rejoice to have a fresh start and to see that it will result in physical, mental, and moral healing. In their joy, they will sing and praise God for their merciful deliverance, recognizing that they were not worthy. These beautiful thoughts are the doctrine of restitution, but they do not explain Job’s affliction.

Job 33:29 Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,

Job 33:30 To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

“Behold, God does all these things, twice, three times, with a man, to bring back his soul

from the Pit, that he may see the light of life.”

Job 33:31 Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.

“Give heed, O Job, listen to me; be silent, and I will speak.”

Job 33:32 If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee.

“If you have anything to say, answer me; speak, for I desire to justify you.”

Job 33:33 If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

“If not, listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.” Elihu had a very high opinion of himself. He was a brilliant man, and some of his ideas were good, but not all. Sometimes knowledge and education can give one too high an opinion of himself.

Job 34:1 Furthermore Elihu answered and said,

Job 34:2 Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

In Chapter 33, Elihu addressed Job more direct. Now he was turning to the three.

Job 34:3 For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

“For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.” In other words, the ear is a symbol of discrimination. Ears can hear and disregard advice, but when one hears and hearkens, he is exercising discrimination.

Job 34:4 Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

“Let us choose what is right; let us determine among ourselves what is good.”

Job 34:5 For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.

Job 34:6 Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.

“For Job has said, ‘I am innocent, and God has taken away my right; in spite of my right I am counted a liar; my wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.’”

Job 34:7 What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?

Job 34:8 Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

“What man is like Job, who drinks up scoffing like water, who goes in company with evildoers and walks with wicked men?”

Job 34:9 For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

“For he has said, ‘It profits a man nothing that he should take delight in God.’” Elihu misconstrued Job’s words by taking them out of context. Job’s line of reasoning was otherwise.

Job 34:10 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.

“Therefore, hear me, you men of understanding, far be it from God that He should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that He should do wrong.” Elihu was still addressing the three.

Job 34:11 For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

“For according to the work of a man He will requite him, and according to his ways He will make it befall him.”

Job 34:12 Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

“Of a truth, God will not do wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice.”

Job 34:13 Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?

“Who gave Him charge over the earth and who laid on Him the whole world?”

Job 34:14 If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

Job 34:15 All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

“If He should take back His spirit to Himself, and gather to Himself His breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.”

God is the Creator; all things were done through His power and breath; all things are sustained either directly or indirectly by Him. Therefore, if He should cut off His spirit, the human race would perish. We are wholly dependent on God’s character and determination for our destiny.

Job 34:16 If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.

“If you have understanding, hear this; listen to what I say.”

Job 34:17 Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Job 34:18 Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly?

Job 34:19 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.

“Shall one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn Him who is righteous and mighty, who says to a king, ‘Worthless one,’ and to nobles, ‘Wicked man’; who shows no partiality to princes, nor regards the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of His hands?”

Job 34:20 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.

“In a moment they die; at midnight the people are shaken and pass away, and the mighty are taken away by no human hand.” Elihu was saying, “Jehovah is greater than we are, more noble, more wise, more loving.” That is the argument used in the beginning of the *First Volume*: there is a beneficent Creator.

Elihu was on the right track with this exalted line of reasoning. We cannot question God in that way. However, don't we sometimes wonder why certain things happen? Why do we pray for help and deliverance and understanding in difficult trials? How can our faith be tested unless we have trials? However, the testing of faith does bring forth questioning. How can faith even develop without questioning? Doubt is involved with the development of faith; it is where we cannot trace God, but we bridge that gap with perseverance of faith. A confrontation begins to develop faith if we are properly exercised. Thus there are questions we can ask God. “Have I done something amiss? Please reveal it to me. Show me where I have erred.” Through Christ we can talk with the Heavenly Father about our troubles and doubts and fears, and in this private manner seek help. Even Jesus asked, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Nevertheless, there should be a measure of decorum and reserve. It is permissible to ask why, but give God the benefit of the doubt when we don't know the answer.

Job 34:21 For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

“For His eyes are upon the ways of a man, and He sees all his steps.”

Job 34:22 There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

“There is no gloom or deep darkness where evildoers may hide themselves.” Actually Job believed and had stated this principle very beautifully. No matter where one is, God can see him, and He can hear the feeblest cry. Elihu had said, “Hear the wisdom I am telling you.” Job already knew these things, but he declined the opportunity to speak when Elihu offered (Job 33:31–33). Job remained silent because he realized he had bemoaned his troubles a little inordinately and hadn't properly balanced the bemoaning by expressing complete confidence in God. He would have changed some of his words had he reflected more, prior to their utterance, and therefore, he felt a little guilty. In fact, several times Elihu will give Job a chance to respond, but Job doesn't. Elihu was certainly trying to be sincere, honest, and fair, but his statements must be analyzed because they didn't square in all details.

Job 34:23 For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God.

“For He has not appointed a time for any man to go before God in judgment.”

Job 34:24 He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

“He shatters the mighty without investigation, and sets others in their place.”

Job 34:25 Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.

“Thus, knowing their works, He overturns them in the night, and they are crushed.”

Job 34:26 He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others;

Job 34:27 Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways:

Job 34:28 So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

“He strikes them for their wickedness in the sight of men, because they turned aside from following him, and had no regard for any of his ways, so that they caused the cry of the poor to come to him, and He heard the cry of the afflicted ...”

Job 34:29 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:

“(When He is quiet, who can condemn? When He hides His face, who can behold Him, whether it be a nation or a man?)” This verse is a parenthetical thought. Verse 28 continues with verse 30.

Job 34:30 That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

“... that a godless man should not reign, that he should not ensnare the people.” In the case of a ruthless king who oppressed his subjects, Elihu said that God would hear their cries for deliverance and relief, and would stop the reign so that the people would not be ensnared. In other words, Elihu said God would chastise such a king, but this is not really true, for many wicked kings have reigned for a long time and died uncorrected. In some respects, Elihu pursued the arguments of the three comforters, who had said that those who do evil suffer for it and those who do righteously are rewarded for it. Therefore, the logical(?) conclusion was that Job was suffering for sins committed. In the long term, in the Kingdom Age, the righteous will prosper and the evildoers will be requited, but not now.

Job had said that the arguments of the three were not valid. In many instances, the wicked did prosper and the righteous did suffer. Job was not blaming God but just explaining the situation as it existed.

Although Elihu agreed somewhat with the reasoning of the three, he did not condemn Job the way they did, for they lost their heads entirely, accusing Job of having immoral relations, of abusing his servants with low wages, of taking bribes, etc. They accused him of everything but had no credible evidence for their statements. Elihu implied Job had sinned, but to his credit, he did not make accusations in specific areas.

Job 34:31 Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more:

Job 34:32 That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

“For has anyone said to God, ‘I have borne chastisement; I will not offend any more; teach me what I do not see; if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more’?”

Job 34:33 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.

“Will he then make requital to suit you three, because you reject it? For you must choose, and not I; therefore declare what you know.”

Job 34:34 Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

Job 34:35 Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.

“Men of understanding will say to me, and the wise man who hears me will say: ‘Job speaks without knowledge, his words are without insight.’” Elihu was still speaking to the three, not to Job.

Job 34:36 My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of his answers for wicked men.

“Would that Job were tried to the end, because he answers like wicked men.”

Job 34:37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God.

“For he adds rebellion to his sin; he claps his hands among us, and multiplies his words against God.” Job will be vindicated in the final analysis, so what Elihu was saying must be taken with a big dose of salt. Elihu didn’t like the way the comforters accused Job of sins in the past, so he was trying to judge Job by his *current* attitude. In some instances, he was misjudging that attitude.

Job 35:1 Elihu spake moreover, and said,

Job 35:2 Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God’s?

Job 35:3 For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin?

“Do you think this to be just? Do you say, ‘It is my right before God,’ that you ask, ‘What advantage have I? How am I better off than if I had sinned?’”

Job 35:4 I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee.

“I will answer you and your friends with you.” Now Elihu would pursue another line of reasoning. Job admitted he could not understand why God did not answer his prayer. How could he understand? He was suffering a fate that might be worthy of someone who had committed grievous sin, but he hadn’t so sinned. His puzzlement was very legitimate—any sane person would want to know why. But the three plus Elihu, who were not in the trial themselves and thus were not emotionally involved, could give cool, dispassionate reasoning. Under certain conditions this would be appropriate, but they were judging the *character of a person*, not the details of a crime. The circumstances

under which Job was making his statements should have been taken into consideration.

Job 35:5 Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou.

“Look at the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds, which are higher than you.”

Job 35:6 If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?

“If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against Him? And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him?”

Job 35:7 If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?

“If you are righteous, what do you give to Him; or what does He receive from your hand?” In other words, “God is so great and so high that what you, Job, do for good or evil doesn’t add or detract from His domain.” This is true from a technical standpoint but not in other ways.

Job 35:8 Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.

“Your wickedness concerns a man like yourself, and your righteousness a son of man.” Elihu was saying, “What you do affects *you*. You are the one who suffers for wrongdoing.” That is true, especially in the long term.

Job 35:9 By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.

“Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out; they call for help because of the arm of the mighty.”

Job 35:10 But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night;

Job 35:11 Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

“But none says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of the air?’”

Job 35:12 There they cry, but none giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

“There they cry out, but He does not answer, because of the pride of evil men.” In other words, there are evidences all around of a Creator, but in all the sorrows and pains that men suffer—and express audibly—they do not ask God for help in prayer. This is true; because of innate pride, man does not get down on his knees and seek divine help.

Job 35:13 Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

“Surely God does not hear an empty cry, nor does the Almighty regard it.” Just crying out

does not bring an answer—they must cry to *God* for help.

Job 35:14 Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him.

“How much less when you say that you do not see Him, that the case is before Him, and you are waiting for Him [waiting for His answer]!”

Job 35:15 But now, because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger; yet he knoweth it not in great extremity:

Job 35:16 Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.

“And now, because His anger does not punish, and He does not greatly heed transgression, Job opens his mouth in empty talk, he multiplies words without knowledge.” Elihu was speaking of Job’s *present* circumstances, and not of his earlier and blessed days. Elihu accused Job of empty talk based on what he had been hearing. This summation of Job’s words was inappropriate. True, Job spoke a lot, but the three also criticized him a lot and he was replying to each in turn—and while he was sick and in pain. Thus there was a reason for Job to speak many words; *Job’s* character was being questioned and judged. He did not have full knowledge, but he was like one out of a billion in character. In fact, *God* certified him as one of the top ten Ancient Worthies (Ezek. 14:14).

Principle: Always keep in mind that it is very easy to criticize and rationalize when you are not the person going through the trial.

Job 36:1 Elihu also proceeded, and said,

Job 36:2 Suffer me a little, and I will show thee that I have yet to speak on God’s behalf.

“Bear with me a little, and I will show you, for I have yet something to say on God’s behalf.”

Job 36:3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

“I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and ascribe righteousness to my Maker.”

Job 36:4 For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.

“For truly my words are not false; one who is perfect in knowledge is with you.” Elihu was saying he was perfect in knowledge but implied that Job wasn’t.

Job 36:5 Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom.

“Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise any; He is mighty in strength of understanding.”

Job 36:6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.

“He does not keep the wicked alive, but gives the afflicted their right.”

Job 36:7 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.

“He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous, but with kings upon the throne He sets them for ever, and they are exalted.”

Job 36:8 And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction;

Job 36:9 Then he showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

“And if they are bound in fetters and caught in the cords of affliction, then He declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly.”

Job 36:10 He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

“He opens their ears to instruction, and commands that they return from iniquity.”

Job 36:11 If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

“If they hearken and serve Him, they complete their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasantness.”

Job 36:12 But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.

“But if they do not hearken, they perish by the sword, and die without knowledge.” In other words, Elihu was saying that if a king is reigning and he does wickedly, God punishes him. In the overall view, that is true, but not necessarily in the present life. Example of judgment in the present life: Nebuchadnezzar was punished for his haughtiness in saying, “Behold all that *I* have done”; he was made to eat grass for seven years. Nebuchadnezzar received punishment in the present life because he was a picture, but that is not the usual case.

Elihu was following some of the arguments of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

Job 36:13 But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.

“The godless in heart cherish anger; they do not cry for help when He binds them.”

Job 36:14 They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

“They die in youth, and their life ends in shame.” Elihu was saying that the godless die at a young age because they are too proud to ask for forgiveness of God. And he said their

lives end in shame. This also is not necessarily true.

Job 36:15 He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.

“He delivers the afflicted by their affliction, and opens their ear by adversity.” Elihu was saying that by their affliction wrongdoers are made to know they did something wrong—but don’t the godly suffer too? And the godly can suffer because they did something *right* that another party didn’t like.

Job 36:16 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.

“He also allured you out of distress into a broad place where there was no cramping, and what was set on your table was full of fatness.”

Job 36:17 But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee.

“But you are full of the judgment on the wicked; judgment and justice seize you, Job.”

Job 36:18 Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.

“Beware lest wrath entice you into scoffing; and let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside.”

Job 36:19 Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.

“Will your cry avail to keep you from distress, or all the force of your strength?”

Job 36:20 Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

“Do not long for the night when people are cut off in their place.”

Job 36:21 Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

“Take heed, do not turn to iniquity, for this you have chosen rather than affliction.” Job was very sorrowful, for he had lost everything, as it were, except the little thread of life. Then he wished that he had not been born and that he could die, but that is understandable. Elihu could talk big and grand and nobly because he was *not the one* going through the affliction.

Job 36:22 Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?

“Behold, God is exalted in His power; who is a teacher like Him?”

Job 36:23 Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?

“Who has prescribed for Him His way, or who can say, ‘Thou hast done wrong’?” Elihu

was saying that Job had said God was punishing him unjustly. Job, in great anguish, could not understand why he was being afflicted when he so loved God. Yet he had said, "Though He slay me, I will trust Him." His good statements, like this one, are forgotten.

When someone is undergoing a severe experience, we should not judge his life by isolated words uttered under extreme pressure. We should judge a person by his or her *heart intention*.

Job 36:24 Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.

"Remember to extol His work, of which men have sung."

Job 36:25 Every man may see it; man may behold it afar off.

"All men have looked on it; man beholds it from afar."

Job 36:26 Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.

"Behold, God is great, and we know Him not; the number of His years is unsearchable."

Job 36:27 For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof:

Job 36:28 Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.

"For He draws up the drops of water, He distils His mist in rain which the skies pour down, and drop upon man abundantly."

Job 36:29 Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle?

"Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of His pavilion?"

Job 36:30 Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.

"Behold, He scatters His lightning about Him, and covers the roots of the sea."

Job 36:31 For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance.

"For by these He judges peoples; He gives food in abundance."

Job 36:32 With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt.

"He covers His hands with the lightning, and commands it to strike the mark."

Elihu was saying in the last few verses that God can throw lightning bolts wherever He wants like a dart, and He can suck up the water of the sea through evaporation. Consider the Hudson River, which starts as a stream and ends with a great volume of water pouring constantly into the Atlantic Ocean. That volume of water is made possible by rain falling and draining into it. And the rain is produced by the evaporation process,

which goes on continually, silently, and invisibly. This process whereby the water is gathered up into clouds is tremendous.

Elihu was speaking here with the tongue of an angel, as it were. He had great capability, but some of his analyses were faulty.

Job 36:33 The noise thereof showeth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.

“Its crashing declares concerning Him, who is jealous with anger against iniquity.”

Job 37:1 At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place.

“At this also my heart trembles, and leaps out of its place.” Sometimes when a thunderstorm came up, Elihu’s heart leaped because of the majesty and power manifested in that storm.

Job 37:2 Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth.

“Hearken to the thunder of His voice and the rumbling that comes from His mouth.” At times the thunder will rumble for a while and then crash.

Job 37:3 He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth.

“Under the whole heaven He lets it go, and His lightning to the corners of the earth.”

Job 37:4 After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

“After it His voice roars”; that is, after lightning flashes, the thunder is heard, for from man’s perspective sound travels a little more slowly than the light.

“He thunders with His majestic voice and He does not restrain the lightnings when His voice is heard.”

Job 37:5 God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

“God thunders wondrously with His voice; He does great things which we cannot comprehend.”

Job 37:6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.

“For to the snow He says, ‘Fall on the earth’; and to the shower and the rain, ‘Be strong.’”

Job 37:7 He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work.

“He seals up the hand of every man, that all men may know His work.” When the God of nature speaks in a mighty rain or a sirocco or a monsoon, etc., man stops. Man may have

been laboring, but when God speaks with majesty, the labor stops and man is put in his place.

Job 37:8 Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.

“Then the beasts go into their lairs, and remain in their dens.”

Job 37:9 Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north.

“From its chamber comes the whirlwind, and cold from the scattering winds.”

Job 37:10 By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

“By the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen fast.”

Job 37:11 Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth his bright cloud:

“He loads the thick cloud with moisture; the clouds scatter His lightning.”

Verses 8–11 contain several thoughts. What God does affects both animals and man; for example, some animals go into hibernation in the winter months. What seems little in His sight is so *powerful* that animals and man react and find they are constrained to do certain things.

Job 37:12 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.

“They turn round and round by His guidance, to accomplish all that He commands them on the face of the habitable world.”

Job 37:13 He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.

“Whether for correction, or for His land, or for love, He causes it to happen.” In other words, storms happen for several reasons; three are given here: (1) for correction, (2) to benefit the land, and (3) for love.

Job 37:14 Harken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.

“Hear this, O Job; stop and consider the wondrous works of God.”

Job 37:15 Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

“Do you know how God lays His command upon them, and causes the lightning of His cloud to shine?”

Job 37:16 Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

Job 37:17 How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?

“Do you know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge, you whose garments are hot when the earth is still because of the south wind?” When it rains, clothing gets wet. When the earth is still and hot because of a south wind, clothing feels too hot. The dry, hot wind creeps in and brings everything to a standstill because animals and man feel exhausted. This is especially true in certain areas of the earth.

Job 37:18 Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten lookingglass?

“Can you, like Him, spread out the skies, hard as a molten mirror?” The “molten mirror” refers to a cloudless day in the desert when the sun is so blinding in its brightness that the eyes must be shielded.

Job 37:19 Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

“Teach us what we shall say to Him; we cannot draw up our case because of darkness.”

Job 37:20 Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.

“Shall it be told Him that I would speak? Did a man ever wish that he would be swallowed up?” Elihu was referring back to Job’s lamentation “I wish I were dead.” He was saying, “Look at all the great things God does. Your wishing to die is foolish talk.” Maybe Job was talking foolishly under that circumstance, but his sufferings must be taken into consideration.

Job 37:21 And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

“And now men cannot look on the light when it is bright in the skies [in the desert], when the wind has passed and cleared them.”

Job 37:22 Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty.

“Out of the north comes golden splendor; God is clothed with awesome majesty.”

Job 37:23 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.

“The Almighty—we cannot find Him; He is great in power and justice, and abundant righteousness He will not violate.”

Job 37:24 Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

“Therefore men fear Him; He does not regard any who are wise in their own conceit.”

This verse completes the words of Elihu, and we see that he was not quite as impartial as he had purported to be. He was a young man and he attributed some inaccuracies to Job. Although Elihu wrote this portion of the Book of Job, his honesty and sincerity of heart were one thing, and his ability to discriminate and judge was another. In honesty of heart,

he recorded for future generations to see—unabridged and without alteration, as it were—his own arguments as well as those of the three supposed comforters. But the facts went towards Job, as we shall see, for *God did intervene and answer Job*. And God's answer came after Elihu had told Job, "You are presumptuous to think that God will answer you."

Also, remember the allegory in the beginning of the book where Satan had said to God, "No wonder Job serves you when he receives so many temporal benefits. It pays him to give you that reverence. Take away his benefits and possessions and then see what he does." This was a contest between God and the Adversary. The point is: Originally, as with Job, Elihu did not know about this allegory. Otherwise, Elihu would not have talked the way he did. Instead the allegory of the contest between God and Satan is the *explanation of why Job suffered*. That introduction to the book explains that Job was *innocent* of the charges hurled against him. Job's testing was permitted to show *his faithfulness* and *God's wisdom* in honoring Job with wisdom, wealth, etc. The allegory was revealed later, and may have been personally revealed to Elihu to humble him. One thing for sure, Elihu was present when God answered Job, and this helped him to come to his senses.

Now, whom do the three comforters and Elihu represent? The three were reprimanded, whereas Elihu was just brushed aside and ignored. On the other hand, Job was answered, honored, and vindicated. Elihu definitely wrongly accused Job of things he hadn't done.

Job 38:1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

The Lord now began to answer Job.

First, it is very unusual for *God Himself* to speak in great detail to a member of the human family. Jesus, of course, had direct communion with Him in prayer. Moses would be the other exception; God gave him instructions on how to build the Tabernacle with its measurements, etc., and on the rituals, ceremonies, and moral obligations of the Law. Moses recorded God's statements to him and repeated them to the children of Israel, but the emotional impact of God's conversation was largely absent in the recording due to the nature of the communion, which was in the form of instruction. In the Lord's response to Job, however, we are given other perspectives with regard to God's thinking on certain subjects, and these perspectives are extremely important to us. The uniqueness of the experience should cause us to go over and over God's words in this book.

God's answering Job "out of the whirlwind" calls attention to how He communicated with the prophet Ezekiel. In the first chapter, a cloud came from the north and then Ezekiel was given a pictorial vision of Jehovah with the living cherubim. Here in the Book of Job, God spoke out of a *power* picture, out of a whirlwind. The whirlwind added to the majesty of God's voice, and the cloud enshrouded Him, giving the impression that He was actually in that cloud. The cloud was like His garment or cloak, and out of its midst He spoke.

A mixture of the King James and the Revised Standard Version, plus some words for clarification, will be used to narrate the Lord's response.

Job 38:2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

We know that God was directing His words to Job because of verse 1, but it seems that the

words were uttered to particularly benefit Elihu, even though he was not named. Elihu also had a multitude of words; he continually spoke for six chapters. When he paused, Job remained silent and did not interrupt him. This was a different reaction than with the three comforters, for after each of them spoke (and several times), Job offered a rebuttal. Therefore, verse 2 applies to all of them but especially to Elihu.

While Elihu was giving his long discourse to Job, he noticed a storm gathering in the distance. As the storm approached, he described the majesty of God as seen in that storm. The lightning and thunder caused his heart to tremble. In other words, the storm was actually *a living experience* at the time. Sequence: the storm came, there was silence, the Lord answered Job out of the cloud.

Job 38:3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

“Stand up, pay attention, and listen to my charges concerning you.”

Earlier Job had stated that he wished he could have an audience with God, but such an audience seemed unlikely because of God’s majesty and Job being a human being—and especially in view of His silence toward Job. Therefore, the very fact that this communication took place is significant.

The Lord began His response by referring to planet earth (verses 4–7).

Job 38:4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

God was putting Job in his place. Job was limited in time, place, and circumstance, so there were many things of which he was unaware.

Job 38:5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

“Who determined or thought out architecturally the measurements of planet earth?” Of course Job knew God had created the earth, and he had even stated this fact in one of his discourses. Nevertheless, God wanted to state things in His own way and format, despite any repetition. In fact, some of what He said even echoed certain remarks made by the three comforters. (Of the five, Job was the most eloquent and intelligent.)

“Who stretched the line upon the earth?” Not only did God theoretically envision the earth and how it should be made, but He performed it exactly as planned.

Job 38:6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

“Where are the foundation bases of the earth fastened or sunk?” Earlier Job had properly said that God “hangeeth the earth on nothing” (Job 26:7). But even though the earth hung upon nothing, it was more secure than if all the concrete of the world were poured in a pit to make a foundation. It was more secure than any manmade structure could ever be. Therefore, the earth had *invisible* “foundations.”

The thought of foundation bases being sunk reminds us of the Great Pyramid, for in geometric form, it is a symbol of the earth expressed mathematically. Nevertheless, the *invisible* part of the earth was the main part of this argument. We gain tremendous information from what God said to Job. Later the philosophical approach will be taken.

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The “morning stars” would be the Logos and Lucifer. All of the angels shouted for joy at the unique creation of a physical universe, out of which God paid particular attention to the earth, small as it was. It was *here* that God made man. They were very much interested in this new physical creation with the formation of continents, the seas, green trees, etc.

Job 38:8 Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

Verses 8–11 describe how God formed the seas and oceans. Previously the earth was without form and water covered it entirely. No solid land appeared until the Creative Days when order was being established.

Job 38:9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,

The analogy of an infant is used. The newly created earth was like a little infant in God’s hands, and the swaddling band or wrapping was the water above the earth. This verse helps to substantiate the Vailian Theory.

Job 38:10 And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors,

“... and set bounds and limitations for it”; that is, limitations were set for the oceans. Each ocean had a prescribed boundary: the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean, etc.

Job 38:11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

“And said, Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?” Those who live near the shore with a pounding surf realize the great power of water. Especially during a storm, the water crashes against rocks, but even then, the water goes just so far and no farther. Thus not only can the power of the water be seen but also the power of the decree “thus far and no farther.”

Job was much like Solomon in observing nature (physical things) as well as moral laws.

Job 38:12 Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place;

Verses 12–15 give another aspect of the earth: light and darkness peculiar to planet earth. Daylight and darkness alternate.

“Have you commanded the dawning of the morning in your lifetime?” God was putting Job in his place. Not only did He ask, “Where were you when the earth was founded?” but “Where were you when the sun was established in its course?” A strategy was

involved here.

“Have you ... caused the dayspring on high to know its place?” In other words, who determines that the sun comes up the same place each day (relatively speaking)? God was saying, “You were not even here when this was ordered, and you cannot change this.” It is inevitable that the sunrise comes.

Job 38:13 That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

“That it might take hold of the end of the earth’s night bed cover?” In other words, when the sun comes up in the morning, the night blanket is lifted up at its corners and certain peculiar things occur. This is highly poetic and figurative language. When God takes hold of the night blanket, the wicked are shaken out of it. In past ages, without modern conveniences, evil men were especially active at night. God was saying that in the past, the thieves and wicked ones would operate at night. As soon as daylight came, when daylight ruled, the wicked would go back into their holes, as it were. The darkness hated the light. (Of course this is a general statement, for wickedness occurs in the daytime too.) Just as at nighttime the nocturnal animals come out and do their feeding and then recede in the daylight, so the wicked operate similarly.

Job 38:14 It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment.

“The earth is changed like clay under the seal, so that things now stand forth like one arrayed in a garment.” When the seal is down in the clay, the image is covered—this is like at nighttime. But as soon as it is lifted, you see all the impressions; the form and sense and order are seen in the design of that seal. And so when the night blanket is lifted up, that which before was blurred in darkness and without form or shape is now glorious and beautiful before you. The mountains and the plains and the rivers can all be seen. A beautiful picture is before you like a seal. When the seal is down, man cannot see under it, but when the seal is lifted, man can see the beauty of nature.

Job 38:15 And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.

“From the wicked, their light is withheld, and their uplifted arm is broken.” To the wicked, darkness is light. When the wicked are deprived of darkness, they are being deprived of their “light.” When nighttime is removed, the power and success of the nefarious deeds of the wicked are stopped. Their wicked deeds are stopped by daylight; thus the uplifted arm of the wicked is put down by daylight. It is just the opposite with the righteous. To the righteous, light is truth and joy.

Next, starting with verse 16, God talked to Job about the height, the breadth, and the depth of earth’s domain.

Job 38:16 Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

“Have you entered into the springs of the sea? or have you walked through the recesses of the deep?” That is, “Do you know much about the ocean floor? Do you know how deep it is, etc.?” Of course in some places the ocean is nine miles deep. There are underwater

sources in the seabed; water is being supplied to the oceans from underwater springs. "Do you know much about these underwater springs in the ocean?" In Job's day it was beyond man's capability to know such things. Scuba divers can go down only about 30 feet.

Job 38:17 Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

"Have the gates of death been revealed to you? or have you seen the doors of the shadow of death?" In other words, "Do you know the mechanics of death? have you gone to the doors of death and seen them?" Again this language is high imagery, but this is God's language and we want to know His thinking, which differs from our customary thinking. The philosophy as to why He was doing this becomes more and more important because this is how God answered Job, who did not understand the reason for his affliction and suffering. God is on an elevated plane and does not stoop down to our level on certain things. He must answer in His own sedate, sublime manner.

Job 38:18 Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

In olden times, one might go on a long journey, but when he got to his destination, what lay ahead looked just as far away. Today we know the earth is 25,000 miles in circumference, but back there man was limited to just the Middle East.

"Declare if you know." God was challenging Job. There was a motivation behind this challenge.

Job 38:19 Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof,

"Where is the way to the dwelling of light? where is the place of darkness?" In other words, "Where is the home or dwelling of light?" Even today, not too much is known about the phenomena of light. It is still a mystery, like electricity. Much is known about mechanics, but much remains to be known.

Job 38:20 That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

"That you should travel to its territory and discern the path thereof [the path leading to that destination]?" In other words, "Where is the dwelling of light that you can now travel to that place?" We know the sun is 92+ million miles away, but the fact that it is ever burning and never seems to be consumed is a mystery.

Job 38:21 Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?

Now God used sarcasm toward Job. "You know because you were born then? and the number of your days is great?" Remember, the three comforters and Elihu were listening.

Job 38:22 Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

Job 38:23 Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

“Have you entered into the treasures of the snow? have you seen the treasures of hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble and the day of battle and war?”

God was not asking, “Have you looked under a microscope and seen the intricate variety of patterns?” Rather, the questions pertained to where snow and hail come from, where they are formulated, etc., but there is also a suggestion of a symbolic nature. The symbolic aspect will not be covered at this time, however, because these discourses are concentrating on Job’s affliction.

“*Treasures of the snow*” indicate Noah’s Ark is buried in snow. Possibly the Ark will be discovered as we near the Time of Trouble. As we get to those days, certain things will be revealed.

The “hail” will particularly be revealed in God’s judgment against Gog when Gog and Magog go down against Israel. Thus the “day of battle and war” for which the hail has been reserved is the deliverance of the Holy Remnant out of Jacob’s Trouble.

Therefore, the treasures (“storehouses”—RSV) of snow and hail are oriented to the end of the age.

Job 38:24 By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

Verses 24–30 have to do with the source of light and of rain.

“What is the way to the place where light is distributed, or where is the east wind scattered upon the face of the earth?” Previously God had said, “You do not know much about the *source* of light and darkness.” Now He added, “You do not even know the destination?” The pathway to the dwelling is one thing, but now the question was, “How far does this light go? Where does it go to?” Today, through science, we know that half the earth is illuminated with sunlight at any given time, and half is under darkness, but back there such a definition could not have been given. “Where are the defining marks? Where do both light and darkness end at one time?” One who was up in the sky (God) in Job’s day could have looked down and seen the definition. Man down here was very limited as to the breadth and scope of the earth as well as to the extremities of light and darkness.

Job 38:25 Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

“Who has cleft a channel for torrential rain, or a way for thunder’s lightning?” When lightning goes forth, it follows a path, but the intricacy of that path is not well understood. For one thing, it can be very irregular or very direct depending upon the type of storm. There is a purpose in lightning of which man is not too knowledgeable. There is a science to weather, but weather is so fickle that man does not know it is a science.

“Who determines the pathway of lightning, what are the mathematics of lightning, etc.? What about the rain down here? It follows wadis or ravines and thus goes in certain areas and paths.” One who was in the heavens (God) could see the whole pathway down and where it leads. There was a strategy in calling attention to these happenings in nature.

Job 38:26 To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man;

In other words, God has purposed that even the most arid places on earth will, in due time, receive rain. There is an appointed time for rain. The suggestion is that in spite of the irregularity of light and its mathematics, in spite of this seeming waste of water that rushes like an express train down wadis and disappears in the desert, yet there is an underlying purpose. Even though the water goes on desert wasteland, it has a purpose. For example, there are great reservoirs of water deep underneath the desert (such as Sinai).

Job 38:27 To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

“To *satisfy* the desert and the wasteland.” This verse proves there is a purpose to rain falling on the desert.

“To cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?” It is now known that when water goes forth in the wadis, beautiful flowers grow and bloom for a short time.

Job 38:28 Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

Job 38:29 Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

“Out of whose womb is ice? who gendereth the hoary frost of heaven?” In other words, God was using a mother and father relationship in regard to nature. “Who is the father of rain?” The implication is that God is *both* the Father and the Mother. He is in back of the rain, ice, etc.

Job 38:30 The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.

Job 38:31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

The Lord introduced the subject of the constellations and the heavens.

We know that God’s throne is in the Pleiades, but here the Pleiades are mentioned from the standpoint of Job’s incapability of power and imagination of mind and control. The Pleiades are the celestial throne of the physical universe and the seat of divine authority; all universes circumnavigate the Pleiades, even though the movement is very slow from our perspective. No one can curb the “sweet influences” of the Pleiades, the ultimate purposes of the God of Love, not only with regard to planet earth but also with regard to the other universes and other beings in the future. *All* come from that one source, and no one can curb those “sweet influences.”

The same is true of the “bands of Orion.” Some heavenly constellations remain “fixed”; they may move, but they move as a panorama or picture and they are coordinated together. Orion is a giant hunter in chains, as it were. “Can you loose that imagery in the sky?” (The gospel is in the stars, but that is another subject, which is usually not discussed

because it can lead to speculation. Nevertheless, the constellations and stars were made as “signs” and “wonders,” to be revealed ultimately, in due time.)

Job 38:32 Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Mazzaroth is the 12 signs of the zodiac, and it is known that they change. A complete cycle, called the precession of the equinoxes, takes 25,000 years. Thus the movement of the constellations comprising the zodiac is extremely slow. God was asking, “Can you thwart the movement of the constellations, which I have preordained?”

Arcturus is a giant fixed star of the first magnitude in the constellation Boötes.

Job 38:33 Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

“Do you know the ordinances of heaven? can you set their dominion from the earth?” In other words, “You are on earth. What can you say or do?” The heavenly bodies are so far off that man stands in awe and looks at what the God of the universe has done. Man has no influence or power over them.

Job 38:34 Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

God started far, far away in the heavens with Pleiades, Orion, Mazzaroth, and Arcturus. Now He was saying, “From down on earth, can you even lift up your voice to the clouds in *earth's* atmosphere?” God started with examples way in the distance and came closer and closer to earth.

Job 38:35 Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

“Can you send a message or a thought to the lightnings so that they will come to you and say, ‘Here we are. What do you want us to do?’ Do you have any control over lightnings?” As with the clouds, the lightning is in earth’s atmosphere, closer to man.

Job 38:36 Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

The “inward parts” would be the inner parts of the *clouds*. There is a purpose or strategy with the clouds: they take up water, go to certain destinations, and drop the water. They follow a path, just as trade winds do. Today trade winds can be mapped so that we can see the customary wind flow of the earth, which would influence rain and other things.

Job 38:37 Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven,

“Who can number the droplets by wisdom?” “Can you number the droplets in a cloud?” “Can you either hold up or tilt the water skins that are on high?” “Not only can you not call the clouds to come over here and dump their water on you, but you can’t even tilt the cloud to start with.” (The clouds are likened to a water skin.)

Job 38:38 When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

In time of drought, the ground gets rock hard. In other words, “You cannot even tilt the cloud wine skins and make it rain when the dust of the earth hardens like rock and clods cleave together.” (Of course today clouds are seeded with iodide crystals to try to cause showers, but this is minimally effective and very costly.)

Job 38:39 Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions,

Job 38:40 When they couch in their dens, and abide in the covert to lie in wait?

“Can you hunt the prey for lions, or satisfy the hunger of young lions, when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in the covert?”

Job 38:41 Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

This verse provides an unusual ending to Chapter 38. “Who provides food for the raven when its young ones cry unto God and wander about for lack of food?” This verse shows that the God of nature has an *immense multitude* of projects, and they *all* have a purpose. In spite of Job or anyone else, God has a *reason* for doing things, even though they are very, very perplexing to understand. God has a MUCH higher level of thoughts and plans than man. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:9).

Notice: In His discourse, God did not give Job one iota of information as to why he was suffering. He didn’t answer that question at all in His entire discourse, but He did inferentially, slowly, lead him in this intellectual fashion to realize that the Great Being, who had done all these marvelous things, probably had a sensible reason if Job could only understand it. “Therefore, Job, who are you—you who are so limited in comprehension by time and space—to even doubt that there is a reason?” God was leading Job to think that his sufferings had a reason, but He did not tell him what that reason was. However, God did finally, *after Job’s sufferings were over*, reveal the information contained in the first chapter about the confrontation with Satan. In allegory God had asked, “Do you see my righteous servant Job down here?” Satan replied, “Yes, but look what you are doing for him. Let me remove his blessings and then he will curse you.” The Great God of the universe purposely did not stoop down to Job’s level and give this information until afterwards. Man should not get too chummy or familiar with the great Jehovah. To do so would be dangerous. “*Hallowed by thy name!*” Not in His discourse but in His *own* time and way God did reveal information to Job. Therefore, Job did get an answer—but much later.

Now God paused, as it were, before His discourse resumed in the next chapter.

Job 39:1 Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?

“Do you know when the mountain goats bring forth?” God’s questioning of Job went from the farthest heavens (Pleiades) to earth’s atmosphere (clouds) to right here on terra firma (wild goats, hinds, etc., in verses 1–4).

“Do you observe the calving of the hinds?”

Job 39:2 Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

“Can you number the months of pregnancy and birth that they fulfill? or do you know the time when they bring forth?”

Job 39:3 They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

“They [the wild goats and the hinds] bow themselves in labor and bring forth their young ones, and they cast out their sorrows [give birth relatively easily].” In the wild the calf just drops out, as it were, whereas domestic animals (horses, cows, etc.) have to be carefully watched lest birth complications develop. This suggests that God has His own methods and that Divine Providence is watching over this universe, even though very perplexing things seemingly happen.

Job 39:4 Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

“When the young ones grow up in the wild, they do not return to their mothers.” For example, a young wild goat becomes part of the pack; the relationship between the newborn and the mother is lost, for they are both part of the herd.

Job 39:5 Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

Verses 5–8 pertain to the wild ass. “Who has left the wild ass free? or loosed the bonds of the swift ass?”

Job 39:6 Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings.

“To whom have I given the steppe [the plateau for grazing] for his home?” The wild animals do not want to get too familiar with man. In ancient times, generally speaking, man resided in valleys with the rivers and verdure and more shelter from the wind, but the wild animals dwell higher and in more remote conditions.

God was also saying that the wild ass by nature has a different temperament so that it is unimaginable to tame them.

“To whom have I given ... the salt land for his dwelling place?” For example, much of the Borax in our supermarkets comes from Death Valley. Also, a horse would not last long in the extreme heat conditions, so 20-mule teams were used in Death Valley because mules could survive the tremendous heat. Moreover, by instinct the mules can find the least blade of grass.

Job 39:7 He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.

“He scorneth the tumult of the city, and neither does He regard the crying of the drive.” Trying to harness a wild ass would cause complete disorder, for wildness is ingrained in

them. And there is a reason for this! *All* animals and insects will have a pictorial lesson for man in the distant future. After the Millennial Age is complete, in the countless ages beyond the Millennium, God's Wisdom will be seen in *all* of these creatures, for *God* created them with their idiosyncrasies and odd or unique behavior. Some even look quite disgusting when they are seen under a magnifying glass, but if the symbolic imagery were seen, every little component part would have a lesson. There are reasons for the great variety, but the explanation is reserved for the future.

Job 39:8 The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

"The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searches for every green thing."

Job 39:9 Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

Verses 9–12 pertain to the wild ox. (The "unicorn" is the wild ox; a one-horned animal is not indicated here.) "Is the wild ox willing to serve you? Can you get the wild ox to serve you? Will he spend the night at your crib?"

Job 39:10 Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

"Can you bind him in the furrow with ropes, or will he harrow the valleys after you?"

Job 39:11 Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

"Will you depend on him because his strength is great, and will you leave to him your labor?" The thought is "Can you capitalize on the potential strength of this animal and make it plow for you?"

Job 39:12 Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?

"Do you have faith in him that he will return, and bring home your grain and gather it into your barn?"

Job 39:13 Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

Next to be considered were the peacock and the ostrich in verses 13–18.

"Gavest thou goodly wings unto the peacocks? or ... unto the ostrich?" Peacocks spread their plumage in a semicircle with a beautiful array of colors. Here was a contradiction: The peacock appears to be a useful bird because its gorgeous display delights the beholder with beauty and pleasure. On the other hand, the gangly ostrich appears ungainly, and its wings, feathers, and pinions do not seem to be of much value. After all, the ostrich has such a heavy body that its wings could never lift it off the ground, so one might ask, "Why does the ostrich have useless wings?" True, the wings are useless for flying above the ground, but they do have a function. Therefore, God was suggesting that there *was a reason* for the wings of both birds.

Job 39:14 Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust,

Job 39:15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

The female ostrich lays her eggs together and arranges them for the new progeny to come forth and then ignores them. But she does have a purpose or strategy. When the young come forth from the centralized eggs, they feed on the outer eggs. This enables them to survive out in the open barren land exposed to the elements. Gaining sufficient strength from feeding on the outer eggs, the little ones go forth on their own.

In the future, the wondrous lessons illustrated by all of God's creatures will be revealed to the world.

Job 39:16 She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear;

In other words, the female ostrich is without fear with regard to what will happen to her eggs.

Job 39:17 Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

Notice, *God* deprived her of wisdom, not Satan. God, the Creator of the ostrich, purposely did this. He has a reason for everything. "Neither hath He imparted to her understanding." The element of understanding and memory is absent in the ostrich and other similar birds.

Job 39:18 What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.

With regard to the peculiar wings of the ostrich, "When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider." These wings, which cannot lift the bird into flight, help her accelerate so rapidly that a man on a horse cannot catch her, and she seems to laugh at the rider as if it is a game. Although a horse is swift, it is no match for the ostrich.

In all of these examples, God was implying to Job, "Although you do not understand something, *there is a reason.*" Without directly answering Job as to the reason for his suffering, God gave him small bits of information about the heavens, animals, birds, etc. With the ostrich, God said, "The wings of the female ostrich really are beneficial when she lifts herself up and runs to escape."

Job 39:19 Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

Verses 19–25 pertain to the horse. "Have you given the horse his strength? have you clothed his neck with thunder?" Of course Job did not have any horses (just camels, sheep, etc.), so the reference was probably to horses used for warfare. The horse, being somewhat dexterous and flexible in motion, is a better animal for warfare than other animals.

How is the horse's neck "clothed with *thunder*?" The horse has a long and very powerful

neck. (In fact, people can even ride the neck.) When a horse is angry or obstreperous, its neck is alarming to look at. Not only is the neck powerful, but a horse is emotional. When it is agitated, its neck vibrates, shaking the mane. Also, the sound, the neighing, of an angry horse is very powerful—like “thunder,” as it were.

Job 39:20 Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible.

Grasshoppers are easily agitated as a person walks through a field. God was asking, “Is the horse afraid as the timid grasshopper?” From a side view, a grasshopper resembles a horse in some respects.

“The glory of its nostrils is terrible.” An angry horse can open its nostrils to look dreadful. However, a short man who knows how can control a large horse, for the horse’s eyes magnify a person to a size much greater than he actually is. Thus a horse thinks he is meeting his match. Nevertheless, if a horse thinks it can intimidate a person, it will. A horse can smell if a person is afraid.

God was asking, “Can you make a horse afraid?” A war-horse, realizing its master wants it to go fearlessly into battle, is only too happy to perform.

Job 39:21 He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.

In fact, the horse, opposite the enemy and ready for battle, paws the ground impatiently. The horse “rejoiceth in his own strength.” When the charge takes place, the horse with its rider is eager to comply, even though mortal combat is involved.

Job 39:22 He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

A sword would mean nothing to the horse. Today in fact, gifted riders in Spain use their knees to steer a horse in connection with bullfighting or to show their dexterity. The horse will run directly at the bull, and at the last minute, the rider will guide the horse with his knee to just miss the bull’s horns. The obedience of the well-trained horse is with absolute fearlessness because of the rider. The horse will not deviate one iota unless the rider gives him the signal.

Job 39:23 The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

When a quiver, spear, or shield rattles against the horse, it tends to magnify the horse’s enthusiasm, rather than strike fear in him. The sound and clatter of clanging weapons excite the horse.

Job 39:24 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.

The horse swallows the ground with fierceness and rage, and cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet. The horse is trained to know that the sound of a trumpet or bugle means to *charge*. Therefore, once the signal is given, even the rider cannot stop the horse, who has been impatient to run.

Job 39:25 He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

When the trumpet sounds the charge, the horse is so happy, saying, as it were, "At last! Aha!" The horse loses *all fear of danger*.

These qualities are bred into the war-horse.

Job 39:26 Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?

Verses 26–30 concern the hawk and the eagle.

"Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?" In traveling in ancient times, people had to cross certain barriers. Sometimes by going through the arid desert to get from one town to another, a person could save several hundred miles, but there were risks and dangers. Animals and human beings could meet with tragedy in the desert (from losing their sense of direction, running out of water, etc.). Meanwhile, hawks and buzzards fly and wheel around in the sky toward the "south" (toward the desert), for they can sense when one is near death. Stretching "wings toward the south" pertains to the sensitivity of the buzzard family to potential carrion.

Job 39:27 Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?

The eagle habitually flies higher than any other bird; the heights of the air and mountain ranges are its realm.

Job 39:28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

The eagle dwells on pinnacles and crags in the rock.

Job 39:29 From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.

Job 39:30 Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she.

Verse 30 is very informative in regard to Matthew 24:28. In the present life the Lord's people feed on the dead humanity of Christ. The philosophy of the death of Christ is now available to them; now the *reason* can be understood, whereas Christians of past ages proceeded on just plain faith.

Notice, eagles do not prefer carrion that has been dead long enough to stink. While the animal is weakened or freshly dead, the eagle pounces on its prey. For the young eaglets to "suck up blood" means the animal could not have been dead long or the blood would have clotted. Thus the difference between an eagle and a vulture is apparent, for the vulture likes carrion dead for some time.

As the next two chapters are considered, continuing with God's response to Job and the technique used in communicating with him, we will understand how God's reasoning affected Job. Job was an extremely strong character, but we will see how God approached him and broke him down and softened him with words. Job had true integrity, but it was

off-balance and egocentric. Job will become malleable in God's hands and, as a result of this experience, become even more mature in character.

Job 40:1 Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,

The Lord now brought His response down to a more personal level.

Job 40:2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

"Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He that casts aspersions on God, let him answer it." A pause would follow in which God waited for Job to reply.

Job 40:3 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

Job would now briefly answer the Lord.

Job 40:4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

Here we see Job's reaction. "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I lay my hand upon my mouth."

Job 40:5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

"I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further." This was Job's reply to the question directed to him by God in verse 2, when He described Job as a faultfinder. Don't forget, God requires *perfect* obedience, normally speaking. Therefore, when God found fault with Job, it was on a certain technical level, for He had to keep His office on a dignified stratum. When Job's circumstances and the duress he was under are taken into consideration, he behaved admirably as an imperfect human being. Nevertheless, God's standard being *perfect*, it did cast aspersion or reflection upon God's character when Job questioned why he was experiencing this evil.

Having heard God's testimony in the previous two chapters, Job was breathless. He held his hand on his mouth in astonishment and perplexity as to what he could now say. He did not admit that he had done some peculiar wrong for which he was culpable for the disease and sufferings that afflicted him, but he admitted that he was "vile"; that is, he admitted that as an imperfect human being, he was but of clay.

Job spoke "once" after each of the supposed comforters criticized him and offered advice. But he also replied after a second round of criticism and advice. Therefore, Job spoke "twice" after each of the second series of discourses when he again offered rebuttal and defended his integrity. Thus the "once" and the "twice" refer to the two series of replies that Job had previously uttered in his defense.

"I will proceed no further." Job had no further comment to make after hearing God's words, but the words had not yet produced the effect God intended. Job had been humbled in the sense that he now admitted he should not have questioned God, for he was defenseless as a clay human being.

Job 40:6 Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

God, still speaking out of the whirlwind, now began to soften up Job in another manner. His voice continued to emanate from this turbulent cloud, which represented His omnipotent strength and power.

Job 40:7 Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

God expected Job to give an answer when He finished what He was about to say. "You stand before me and give me an answer."

Job 40:8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

"Wilt thou also disannul my judgment?" Remember, Job had a serious affliction and he was questioning why this calamity had befallen him. In the continuing posture he had assumed in earlier chapters, he questioned the necessity for his experience since he hadn't done anything to justify it. But God now criticized him for even questioning that. Job should have just reasoned, "God is permitting this affliction. I do not know why, but I have to trust that in His judgment and wisdom, this is the best thing for me. I should not question God's providence in this matter." However, to reason this way under extreme suffering is easier said than done. We can sit at a table and theoretically discuss how Job should have done this or that, but what would we have done under similar circumstances? The point is, theoretically God requires *absolute obedience* and *faith*.

"Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?" In other words, Job was very insistent that he hadn't done anything especially wrong to merit his experiences, but he was so self-centered in his thinking that he forgot to always give God a creditable response in faith for each of his experiences.

Job 40:9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

Job 40:10 Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

Sarcasm was used: "Job, deck yourself now with majesty and excellency. Array yourself with glory and with beauty!"

Job 40:11 Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.

"Take my position. Put yourself in my place. Let's hear the thunder of your voice."

"Cast abroad the rage of your wrath." When God thunders with power, when a blast comes forth from His nostrils, man trembles.

"Behold everyone who is proud, and abase him." "From the position of authority that you have, Job, let's see what you can do to control or abase the proud people in the earth." No matter how strong an individual is mentally, morally, or physically, what can he do to deter the powers of evil? He is no match at all. God wanted Job to feel his impotence and

inability to stop evil.

Job 40:12 Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

Of course Job could not abase all of the proud and tread down the wicked, and he knew it.

Job 40:13 Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.

“Hide them in the dust together” would mean “Put them in the grave, bury them, so that they can no longer do their nefarious deeds.”

“Bind their faces in secret.” It was the burial custom to wrap the face. Not only was a person (and his proud demeanor) laid *unseen* beneath the surface of the earth (abased in the grave), but the face was covered with a cloth.

Job 40:14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

“If you can do these things, Job, then I will give you a little more credit.”

Job 40:15 Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

Verses 15–24 switch to thoughts on the “behemoth.” “Just as I made you as a human being, so I made the behemoth, which eats grass like an ox.”

Job 40:16 Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.

“The strength of the behemoth is in his loins, and his power is in the muscles of his belly.”

Job 40:17 He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

“He makes his tail stiff like a cedar, and the sinews of his thighs are knit together.”

Job 40:18 His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron.

“His bones are as tubes of bronze; his limbs are like bars of iron.”

Job 40:19 He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

“Of the works of God, the behemoth is unique; He that made him can make the sword to approach him.” In other words, God, who made the creature, can cause it to respond to His wish. God has complete authority over this beast.

Prior to this part of the discourse, God spoke about wild animals and their characteristic behavior, but now He was discussing creatures of a higher level of ferocity, a higher level of untameability. This is one factor that helps determine what the behemoth is.

Job 40:20 Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.

Job 40:21 He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

Job 40:22 The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.

“For his shade the lotus trees cover him; willows of the brook surround him.”

Job 40:23 Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

“Behold, if the river is turbulent, the behemoth is not frightened; he is confident though Jordan rush against his mouth.”

Job 40:24 He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares.

“Can one capture him with his eyes? Can one pierce his nose through with snares?”

What is the “behemoth”? Various Bible translators are in a quandary as to how to identify this particular animal. Some say it is the elephant; others, the hippopotamus. However, neither of these two conclusions answers all of the conditions described. Perhaps the behemoth is the rhinoceros—for several reasons. This creature’s habitat is both dry land and water; it is at home both places. But there is no suggestion that it has great agility for swimming. Rather, it delights in swampy, muddy areas and also goes into the fields. There other animals cavort and play, without fear, around this ferocious beast. The behemoth eats grass. Because it is not carnivorous, other animals do not fear it. The literal Hebrew indicates the behemoth can devour much water. Also, it is confident in turbulent water, as are the elephant, the hippopotamus, and the rhinoceros because of their bulk, weight, and strength. The suggestion seems to be that this animal cannot be tamed, which fits the rhinoceros, whereas the elephant can be tamed and trained. One would not want to train a hippo because of its unwieldy condition and greater need for water. In fact, the rhinoceros resents the presence of a human being when its liberty might in any way be threatened, and some hunters liken the rhino to an army tank. Its powerful horn can pierce through steel, so extra precautions have to be taken with a rhino in captivity. The hippopotamus is more acclimated to water than dry land—it does not go under the lotus trees—whereas the behemoth is equally at home on land and in water. To eat grass like the ox means that the behemoth consumes most of its food on dry land.

Certain wealthy people in this country who realize that the rhinoceros is facing extinction have transported some of these animals into the Southwestern part of our country. The rhinoceros likes to lie in the shade, but there are no lotus trees in this country. The mesquite tree, a variety of the mimosa tree, is used instead, and the rhino delights to get in the shade of this tree after its appetite has been satisfied.

The comparison of the tail of the rhino to a cedar tree does not mean that the tail is long but that when the animal gets mad, the anger is reflected in the tail, which rises up like a little tree with a tuft of hair at the top. Thus, when an angry rhino runs, it looks as if a little cedar tree is sticking up in back of him.

That the limbs of the rhino are hard and strong is apparent to anyone who has seen the animal or pictures of it. Even though the rhino appears to be very cumbersome, the

strength of its limbs is obvious.

When rhinos are brought into captivity, great care must be taken in fencing them in because of their fear of captivity. Also, the fenced-in area must be large enough to hold a sufficient food supply for their enormous appetites.

In any event, whether the behemoth is the hippo, the elephant, or the rhino, the thought is of the ponderous size of the animal and that the Creator, who made it, can control the behemoth so that it is like a little plaything. What especially makes the rhino seem to fit the description of the behemoth here in Job is the ferocity, the ill or short temper, and the untameability.

Job 41:1 Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?

The *entire* chapter—all of Chapter 41—deals with the creature called “leviathan.” This is unusual, for in earlier chapters only portions pertained to a particular bird, animal, etc. Where “leviathan” is used elsewhere in the Old Testament, it can be applied to a whale or some other beast of mammoth proportions. However, here in the Book of Job, “leviathan” is not the whale, as will be shown by subsequent details. Also, leviathan is closer to mankind than a whale would be; its nasty traits have been observed by man down through the ages, whereas only in recent years has man understood much about the whale.

“Leviathan” has the thought of monstrous size. RSV: “Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook? or press down his tongue with a cord?” This is irony—the answer is NO!

The reference would be to a crocodile, which is far more ferocious and larger than an alligator. A crocodile is a very mean creature that can eat flesh (not grass like an ox). Although the crocodile can eat other things too, it is carnivorous.

Job 41:2 Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

“Can you put a hook in his nose? or pierce his jaw with a barb?” In other words, a crocodile would snap a fishing line like a thread, and it would be impossible to pull him out of the water (like a fish) with a hook-like barb in his mouth.

Job 41:3 Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?

Remember, these questions are addressed to Job. “Will this mean creature make many supplications to you? Will he speak soft words to you?” A person would not want to be anywhere near a crocodile because of the ferocity and probability of attack. The demeanor of that creature cannot be changed.

This chapter has an allegorical structure, as will be seen.

Job 41:4 Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

“Will the crocodile make a covenant with you?” A covenant can be made with an elephant, for example, by training it to help the farmer in India, to perform in a circus, etc.

On the other hand, man wants to stay far away from the long nose of the crocodile.

“Will you take him for your servant forever?” There are times when the crocodile is relatively docile, but he is completely unreliable. Even other creatures do not want to play around the crocodile.

Job 41:5 Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

“Will you play with him as with a bird?” “Will you play with the crocodile as if he were a harmless creature?” The implication is that God can do all of these things; He could make a harmless pet out of the crocodile and control the actions if He so desired. The questions reveal or show the Creator’s *capability*.

“Will you put him on a leash for your maidens?” “For curiosity’s sake, will you put crocodiles on leashes and let young women walk them like pet dogs?” The sarcasm continues. Unlike Pleiades and some examples used earlier, leviathan is a creature down here that man can see.

Job 41:6 Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?

“Shall traders auction over him?” No. Alligator skin is sold for shoes, belts, etc., but not crocodile skin. The way to differentiate between baby crocodiles and baby alligators is the curvature of their jaw/mouth—is it on the top or on the bottom? The same distinction is made between poisonous and nonpoisonous snakes.

“Will you divide him up among the merchants?”

Job 41:7 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?

“Can you fill his skin with harpoons? or his head with fish spears?” In Job’s day the instruments for spearing fish and animals were completely inadequate to penetrate the hide of the crocodile.

Job 41:8 Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.

“Lay your hand upon him, think upon that battle, and you will do it no more!” The Lord was being sarcastic. “Now if you think you can go up to a crocodile and grab him, you will never forget that day and you will do it no more—if you survive.”

Job 41:9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?

“Behold, the hope of overcoming [or conquering] him is in vain [as far as making him a docile creature]; shall not one be dismayed even at the sight of him?” The crocodile has a very mean face. The way the eyes are set in the top of the face make him look vicious even when immobile.

Job 41:10 None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?

God was saying, “If you are afraid of the crocodile, then what about me, the *Creator* of this

creature?" "You have the nerve to think about your righteousness and then begin to question, in any sense, *my* righteousness?" It is odd how some people can have such nerve before a high authority and yet fear a lower authority. Many did and said things to Jesus that they would not have done to earthly authorities.

Job 41:11 Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

"Who hath preceded me, that I should repay him?" "You respect your father because he brought you forth. But who preceded me?" No one, for God is from everlasting to everlasting.

"Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." All of the creatures, both domestic and wild, are God's—plus the minerals, flowers, herbage, etc.

Job 41:12 I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.

Now God returned to the crocodile. The Lord had momentarily digressed to try to reason with Job. "When you consider these creatures, how can you question, even a little, my integrity? You are so concerned about *your* integrity—what about *mine*?" God was softening up Job.

"I will not keep silent concerning his limbs, or his mighty strength, or his well-proportioned frame." Mechanically speaking, tremendous strength is compacted into the crocodile. There is no flabbiness, no surplus skin, etc. In water the crocodile is very dexterous.

Job 41:13 Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him with his double bridle?

"Who can strip off his outer garment?" "Who can take off the skin of a crocodile?" The crocodile's skin is so well bound to his frame that removal would be impractical.

"Who can penetrate his double coat of mail?" The crocodile is like a soldier or warrior with a coat of mail knit to his body. A natural defense is girt about the crocodile.

Job 41:14 Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth are terrible round about.

"Who can open the doors of his face?" When a crocodile clamps down his jaws with ferocity and power, who would think of opening them?

"His teeth are terrible round about." His teeth strike terror in the beholder.

Job 41:15 His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal.

"His scales are his pride, and they are shut together as a close seal." The plates (of armor) on the back of the crocodile overlap so that there is no seam. Thus there is no point of weakness for the hunter to attack.

Job 41:16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.

Job 41:17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be

sundered.

The plates cannot be separated to expose an area for penetration.

Job 41:18 By his sneezings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.

Job 41:19 Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.

“His sneezings flash forth light, and his eyes are like the eyelids of morning. Out of his mouth ... sparks of fire leap forth.” Whenever the crocodile coughs or sneezes in the water, a spray comes out. If the sun is shining, the mist can appear to be steam and fire—especially to one who fears the creature. Sparks of fire are *imagined* to leap out.

Many animated pictures or cartoons of ferocious beasts (such as a bull) show a stream of air with a bulbous cloud at the end indicating anger. A whale will forcefully emit a geyser spout when it surfaces.

When not attacking a victim, the crocodile looks like a serenely floating log with eyes (perhaps 7/8 of the creature is submerged). The eyes are likened to the “eyelids of morning.” Just as the orb of the sun rises above the horizon, so the arches over the eyes are seen above the surface of the water. The creature seems to be so docile—until it attacks *with ferocity*.

Job 41:20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron.

“Out of his nostrils goes smoke, as out of a boiling pot or caldron.” When a crocodile captures prey in the water, he rolls over or circles, churning up the water with such powerful muscles. The water is compared to a boiling pot.

Job 41:21 His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

Job 41:22 In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.

“In his neck abideth strength, and terror dances before him.” When the crocodile attacks a victim, the effects of the motion are apparent in the thrashing of water in the outer perimeter of his activity.

Job 41:23 The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

“The folds of his flesh cleave together, firmly cast upon him and immovable.”

Job 41:24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.

“His heart is hard as stone; yea, as hard as the nether millstone.” In other words, the crocodile is like a cold-blooded killer, showing no trace of compassion or contrition. Even though the crocodile seems to be docile, his heart is hard and cannot be tenderized.

NOTE: This chapter is really giving us a picture of *Satan*, the archenemy of God. Someday all the detail in this chapter will be explained as spiritually applicable to Satan.

Job 41:25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.

“When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; by reason of the crashing, they are beside themselves.” One who witnesses a crocodile clamping down on his prey hears the terrific sound of the jaws coming together. The sight and sound cause the beholder to tremble and shudder and to subconsciously put himself in the victim’s place.

Job 41:26 The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.

“Though the sword reaches him, it cannot hold: the spear, the dart, or the javelin.” In other words, the weapon is prone to bounce off the tough armor plating.

Job 41:27 He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.

Even *metal* weapons wielded or hurled by humans cannot penetrate the tough hide. The crocodile is not fearful and will not back down. If anything, the crocodile wanders toward the hunter.

Job 41:28 The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.

Nor do arrows or sling stones frighten the crocodile.

Job 41:29 Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.

“Clubs are counted as stubble; he laughs at the rattle of a spear.”

Job 41:30 Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.

“His underparts are like sharp potsherds.” A potsherd is very brittle and hard. Even the underparts, which are not coated with the double mail of the back, cannot be penetrated. (Incidentally, the alligator is softer underneath.)

“He spreads himself like a threshing sledge on the mire.” A human being who tries to go through mud is slowed down because the mud is like glue. But the crocodile has such strength in his limbs that he can churn through mud like water.

Job 41:31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

If the powerful crocodile goes into the circular motion, he causes the surrounding water to form a vortex. He has a rolling motion, a threshing motion, and a circular motion. Verse 31 describes the circular motion.

The vortex looks like the swirling effect of ointment.

Job 41:32 He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.

“Behind him he leaves a shining wake; one would think the deep to be hoary.” When the

crocodile slithers into the water or travels in a straight direction, so many little bubbles are formed behind him that the water looks white.

Job 41:33 Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.

A crocodile is without fear. An elephant is frightened by a mouse because it is afraid the mouse will run up its nose. The rhinoceros is alert and tries to avoid confrontations, especially with humans, but if forced into a confrontation, the rhinoceros is so ferocious that it has been known to overturn a Jeep.

Job 41:34 He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.

“He beholdeth all high things; he is king over all the sons of pride.” This verse is another proof the chapter is talking about Satan, the great dragon. The analogy is another reason why we can say that all animals, birds, insects, etc., were created for symbolic lessons. God created the crocodile to portray Satan because He could see the characteristics of Satan long before they became manifest. The only One who can control the crocodile is God, who created the creature, and the same with Satan. Even Michael had to go to Gabriel’s aid when Satan tried to withhold him from answering Daniel’s prayer for 21 days. When created, Lucifer was not only bedecked with beauty, power, and prowess but also strength of being. Evidently, that innate physical strength was not impaired by his fall.

Satan is the king of pride. Apparently, when God said that the crocodile was “king over all the sons of pride,” Job realized that the Lord had finished talking. In Job 40:7 God had told Job to answer when the discourse was finished.

Remember, NOT ONE shred of evidence had been given to Job as to why he was suffering. God did not stoop to say, “I did this because it was a contest with the Adversary to prove how obedient you are to my will.” As stated earlier, Job represents The Christ. While Jesus was very knowledgeable, the body members of Christ down through the age were not. In the days of the apostles, the Church had a great deal of information and reaffirmation, but when they fell asleep and the Bible was clothed in sackcloth and ashes, resulting in a famine in the land for the Word of the Lord, the permission of evil was lost sight of. One proof is the text “How long, O Lord ... dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?” (Rev. 6:10). The Book of Revelation shows that many Christians were puzzled about the injustices done. In fact, many grew weary because of the long period of suffering and travail. Just as Job did not understand the reason for his sufferings, so the bulk of the Job class likewise have not understood. In prior days faithful Christians would die for a few pages of the Bible, and they traveled long distances for meetings. Those who were faithful to what was available were rewarded accordingly. Today we have abundant information, but it is questionable as to how many of us will make our calling and election sure. Therefore, we do not see an incongruity with regard to Job’s not being fully enlightened and his losing sight of the perspective that the permission of evil upon God’s people has been a trial and a testing of their faith. Those who exercised faith and obeyed God without this understanding are treasured by Him. The Gospel Age is a calling and battle of *faith*.

Job 42:1 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

Job 42:2 I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

“I know that thou can do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted.”

Job 42:3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

“Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge? Lord, when you first addressed me, you made this statement out of the cloud, ‘Who is this that darkeneth counsel [that hideth counsel] without knowledge?’” (Job 38:2) This recall by Job shows that the ancients *retained* what they heard. Following a *long* rebuttal by Job, even the next of the three comforters would select points and comment on them. The ancients were good listeners—but that does not mean they listened with a proper heart attitude.

Paraphrase: “You asked this question ‘Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?’ The implication was that you did. Therefore, have I uttered that which I did not understand.”

Job 42:4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

“Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak. I will petition thee; do thou declare unto me.” (The word “demand” was not used in a harsh sense; the inflection was important.)

Job 42:5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

Job 42:6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear.” In other words, “All that I know about thee, O Lord, is based upon what I have been taught in the past and the little that I observe in nature. But now my eye seeth thee.”

All Job could actually see was the whirlwind cloud and he heard God’s voice, but now he could discern a dimension that he had never understood before. What was that dimension? Before in his affliction, it was “I”: “I am righteous,” “I have maintained my integrity,” etc. Therefore, the Lord took Job on an excursion and showed him various creatures He had created and how He even fed the little ravens out in the wilderness as they cried for food. God taught Job that He cares for His creatures, and those who observe and meditate on nature can see that care. God said that even the water that gushes through wadis and evaporates and seems to be a great waste is needed by the desert. The desert is crying for that water whether or not Job could see any appreciable difference. God cares for the rain, the wild ass, the hinds on the rocks who easily give birth, etc., etc. If one truly observes God’s tender mercies, as David did, he sees that they are spread over all of His works. “The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works” (Psa. 145:9). For example, the flowers (their color, fragrance, texture) and food (variety, flavor, color) bespeak His care and consideration.

Because he could observe the mechanics of nature, Job probably understood them better than any other person in his day, but if the aspect of God’s *personal interest* on behalf of His creatures was manifested in His work, how much more it would be manifested for a God-fearing man who had prayed daily for his family. The reason for his sufferings would be revealed in due time—if not in the present life, then in the next life. Job could now see

that the reasons for his trials were in God's hands. "Now my eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself." "I despise myself to have questioned as I did during the period of my bereavement, and I repent in dust and ashes."

That is all God wanted from Job: for him to repent, to ask for forgiveness. God wanted repentance not for something Job had done to merit punishment, but for his attitude during his suffering, even though it was a period of great anguish. We question, "Could we have done as well as Job?" Each of us is self-centered, and Job truly suffered. Actually Job is to be commended, but since God is a *perfect* God and Christ's righteousness was not covering Job, he had to repent before God could bless him fully. If we as Christians do something wrong, God will take note of it and attention will somehow be called to that wrongdoing. Fortunately, the robe of Christ's righteousness does make a difference.

What did Job repent of? He did not repent for any ethical infractions that occurred prior to his illness, but for his careless talk in connection with his sufferings. The purpose of God's discourse to Job was to lift him out of his self-centered righteousness, to get a broader perspective of God's care for him and for all creatures. We must guard against getting too self-centered about our own individual importance—even though Job was probably the most important person in his day.

Consider the matter this way: God called Abraham and he was the important personage. Next came Isaac, then Jacob, and finally Joseph. But after Joseph, a gap occurred until Moses. Probably Job lived during that gap of time—after Joseph and before Moses. Their lives may overlap, but a child is not reckoned in the same capacity as an adult. In the adult phases of their lives, these personages overlapped to a certain extent. Order: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses. Job was not too distant a relative of Abraham.

As a result of God's discourse to Job, Job's outlook on life was broadened, greatly enriched. In spite of his original integrity, Job now had a mellowing of heart. And for God to even speak to Job was a great HONOR. Job had said, "If I could only confront God, but I can't. Who can confront this MIGHTY GOD?" But eventually God did talk to Job. God completely ignored the three comforters and Elihu, even though they heard His words. The experience was unique to Job—it happened for his benefit.

Job 42:7 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.

Job 42:8 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.

Job 42:9 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 42:10 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.

Job 42:11 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.

Job 42:12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

Job 42:13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

Job despised himself and repented in dust and ashes (verse 6); his heart attitude was depressed at his former self-righteous disposition. It was commendable that the afflictions and trials had not come upon Job because of any ethical infractions he had committed and yet he was not perfect. If there was any fault to find with Job from a technical standpoint, it was that while he was under duress from the illness itself, he at times spoke above and beyond what he probably otherwise would have said. God's discourse to him had the effect of making him see that he was a little too self-centered with regard to his own righteousness. By God showing His capabilities, wisdom, power, etc., as manifested in all of His created works, Job could see things in a much broader perspective, and he had a new outlook with regard to his own relative smallness and unimportance. Even though God never explained the permission of evil, Job was satisfied.

Job's condition healed when he prayed for the three comforters (see verse 10). It was as if God was looking to forgive Job, and Job actually repented. The principle is "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others their trespasses against us." The three had really trespassed against Job. When he forgave them, God was ready and eager to reinstate Job completely. God "turned the captivity of Job"; that is, He removed the illness and began a restoration work when Job prayed for his friends. Moreover, God gave Job twice as many personal possessions as he had had previously. (The family members were not doubled; he had seven sons and three daughters before his affliction, and seven sons and three daughters were born to him after his affliction—see verse 13.) The numerics of the restoration of his flocks are even listed (verse 12).

In verse 11, all his brothers and sisters and others "comforted him [Job] over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him." Actually the *Adversary* had been instrumental in afflicting him with the illness (Job 2:4,5), but the Lord had permitted the calamity to come upon Job. (Incidentally, the word "evil" in this context does not have a moral connotation; it refers to Job's illness.) In the final analysis, Job was vindicated and so was God in His trust and confidence in Job.

Verse 11 continues: "Every man [in connection with the celebration] also gave him [Job] a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold." The money and gold earrings were an evidence of their wanting to have Job's good graces. Remember that during his affliction they had all forsaken him. Now Job was reinstated, and these gifts were a token of their recognition that they had been wrong and had misunderstood Job's experiences.

JOB

Job represents The Christ and their experiences—the permission of evil that comes upon God's people during the Gospel Age. The word "Job" means "hated"; that is, his name, which was given to him prior to his affliction, was a reference to the experiences that

would come upon him. It is as though he was born for the suffering circumstance. This reminds us of Isaiah 18:2, which is a prophecy of a “nation scattered and peeled” whose experiences are “terrible.” The Book of Job is a prophecy of the experiences that God’s people have during the Gospel Age.

Job was a descendant of Aram, a son of Shem, and he dwelled in the land of Uz. (The expression “the wizard of Oz” actually refers to Job.)

God had given quite an appraisal of Job in Job 1:1. “That man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed [shunned, despised] evil.” Job 2:3 said of Job, “There is none like him in the earth.” What a striking statement! This appraisal makes the time slot of his life important. The commendation would have been made at the time his testing was about to begin. Job’s birth probably occurred prior to Jacob’s death, but his testing was a number of years later. His life fills a gap between Joseph and Moses. The height of Job’s nobility of character as a man probably occurred after Joseph’s death but before Moses came on the scene. Sequence of God’s dealing with individuals: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses. Job 1:8 also mentioned Job’s upright character: “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?” These references describe Job immediately before his sufferings, so there is no question as to what God thought of him at that time.

Because of his uprightness and stability of character, Job cannot represent the human race. Nor can he picture the Jewish nation. He beautifully pictures the sufferings of The Christ. As mentioned earlier, even some of Jesus’ words are reflected in the Book of Job.

THREE COMFORTERS

Whom do the three comforters (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) represent? The fact they were called his three friends and companions (Job 2:11; 35:4) means that prior to Job’s suffering, the three had had some kind of rapport with him, even though superficial. Therefore, in antitype there would be a degree of spiritual kinship between Job and the three comforters.

Definitions

Eliphaz = God of gold, the golden God.

Bildad = lover of Baal; ie, Bel (Baal) has love.

Zophar = a chirper.

Temanite = right hand.

Shua = a depression.

Naama = pleasantness.

Eliphaz is related to Judah and hence refers to the Judaizing influence in the professed Church. In other words, he pictures those Jews who, being attracted to the cause of Christ, ostensibly became Christians, but they had different motivations in connection with that attraction. During the first two centuries, the *Judaizing Christians* were a troublesome factor in the Church and they had to be contended against. We know that Eliphaz was the oldest of the three comforters because in each round of speaking, Eliphaz was given the first opportunity. Moreover, God’s rebuke to the three was addressed to him (Job 42:7). Eliphaz was a grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:4).

The relationship of the three comforters to Job pertains to the nominal people of God. “Israel” means “people of God,” and when the promises of God were extended in the Gospel Age, they were first extended to the Jew. Therefore, in the first century, the great

bulk of people who were converted to Christianity were Jews. Eliphaz, being the oldest and first to speak, corresponds to these early Judaizing Christians, who tried to yoke the Christian to the Law.

Eliphaz is defined as the “God of gold,” and the Jewish nation had the *golden* calf. The Israelites were confident of their relationship with God because it was long-standing; for many centuries, God had dealt with them in a unique fashion. This confidence was not warranted because of their lack of obedience.

Bildad, meaning “lover of Baal,” represents those of nominal Christianity who were polarized with the views of *Catholicism*, which next appeared on the scene, developing from the 300’s to the 500’s. The Roman Catholic Church was a thorn in the flesh to God’s true people.

Zophar, as “the chirper,” would picture *Protestantism*. Many in the bird family do imitations, such as the parrot and the parakeet, and even birds in the field can take up refrains from humans to make known their presence. The chirping is like a refrain, an echoing—ie, an *image* of the beast, a false prophet. Protestantism seems to have a more pleasant, sweeter gospel than the stern Catholicism of the past, and Naama means “pleasantness.” Nevertheless, Protestantism has deflected and has been a problem to God’s true people down through the age.

Thus three ostensible peoples of God—Judaizing Christians, Catholicism, and Protestantism—have troubled the Christ class throughout the Gospel Age. Just as Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar spoke in that order, so Judaizing Christianity, Catholicism, and Protestantism came on the scene in that order.

ELIHU

To understand Elihu, we must review Job 32:2. When he first appeared in the Book of Job, his wrath was kindled against Job because Job justified himself rather than God. “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.” (The fact that Elihu was “of the kindred of Ram” indicates he was a fairly close relative of Job.) Elihu was also angry with the three comforters because they had no justifiable rebuttal for Job’s reasoning and yet they condemned him. “Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job” (Job 32:3).

Definitions

Barachel = God has blessed. Buzite = contempt.

Almost all commentators believe Elihu was a very favorable character. A review of some of his statements will prove otherwise.

“Great men [in reputation, such as Job] are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will show mine opinion” (Job 32:9,10). Elihu was building himself up. His reasoning was wrong, for at least *some* of the aged understand judgment. All things being equal, if a person is right with God, age (and experience) are beneficial. Moreover, the word “always” is supplied and should be omitted, for it slants Elihu’s argument. Elihu said, “Great men are not wise.” Elihu was

thus criticizing Job and the three others, all of whom were much older than he. It was as if Elihu were saying: "As the youngest, I have been listening on the sidelines very respectfully and didn't interrupt because I was waiting for words of wisdom to come forth. But the words did not come, and in my frustration I must speak and tell you my wonderful opinion!"

"Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away" (Job 32:21,22). Elihu again built himself up by saying, "I am not going to give you smooth talk. I will not flatter you with introductions. I will just speak honestly and uprightly according to the purity of my heart." "My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly" (Job 33:3). Elihu certainly had a high opinion of himself.

Now let us consider the "great wisdom" that Elihu had. "Behold, [Job,] I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay" (Job 33:6). Job had wished for an intercessor to plead his cause. Elihu was saying, "God has providentially put me here in His stead, as you wished. Now I will plead your cause."

In Job 33:14–18 are more of Elihu's words: "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword." Elihu was saying, "Job, all kinds of calamities have happened to you, and you just don't seem to be getting the point. God uses different methods to try to impart wisdom to those He wants to instruct. He gives them a vision or a dream to bring them to their senses." (Job's dreams had scared him; they were like nightmares.) Elihu was saying that Job was getting instruction in the nightmares but was too proud to admit it. "Dreams are designed to make man repent and admit fault. Without such instruction, man will die (go to the pit) from disease, calamity, etc."

Elihu used another technique in Job 33:19–22. "He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen [now] stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers." Job had had not only dreams (nightmares) but these experiences too. And again Elihu was telling Job, "You are not getting the point. First you had dreams. Now your flesh is consuming away and your bones are sticking out, but still you insist you are innocent and upright." (Remember, Elihu had proclaimed his own innocence in verse 9.)

In Job 33:23–26, Elihu said that if there was a messenger to testify to Job's uprightness, then God would deliver him from the pit because he had found a ransom. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth: 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." Elihu was saying, "If you are innocent (as you claim), you should have a witness, a testimony,

something to back you up. There should be a messenger from God who can give concrete evidence that your statements of innocence have validity." But, of course, there was no one to take Job's case, no intercessor to support his claim of righteousness.

Thus Elihu suggested three means of "helping" Job: a dream, sickness or disease, intercessor. Because Elihu used the word "ransom," some consider him in a favorable light and fail to recognize his reasoning as faulty.

In Job 33:25 Elihu had said that if a person was upright, his flesh would be like a child's. "But look at you, Job. You are a mess!" Elihu was viewing Job externally as man looketh on the outer part. ("Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart"—1 Sam. 16:7.)

In Job 33:27,28 Elihu used a fourth technique, saying a way out would be to confess sin. "He [God] looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. In other words, "Job, you didn't get the lesson with the first three techniques, so here is another method. If you confess your sin, then God will bring back your soul from the pit."

In Job 33:29,30 Elihu summed up. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." In other words, "These four methods that I have enumerated—dreams, sickness, an advocate, and confession of guilt—are all methods God uses to save man.

Incidentally, Elihu used too much familiarity. None of the three comforters addressed Job by name. Only inferentially had they criticized him with their statements and rebuttals, but Elihu was very palsy-walsy, using Job's name frequently, and he always assumed the higher attitude himself—that he was the superior in appraising Job.

Notice Job 33:31–33. "Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak. [I have more to say. You have heard only part of my argument.] If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee. [I would like to justify you, but I cannot find any way to do that. Can you offer any new information along this line to state your case more positively?] If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom." *What nerve Elihu had!* And this is an important point that will not be recognized until the Kingdom.

Continuing into the next chapter, Elihu said, "Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge. For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat. Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good" (Job 34:2–4). Elihu was saying, "Let's think and reason this out. You are mature individuals with experience. Listen to my argument. Let's pool our sympathies together and you will see my point." In other words, "If you use discrimination in thought and words, you will get the point and see that I am right."

Elihu continued (Job 34:5,6): "For Job hath said, 'I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment. Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.'" Elihu was stating Job's case, what Job had professed (although not in the best light). Essentially Job had said, "I am righteous. My sufferings are not because of what

I have done. I am righteous but can't be vindicated. Should I say I have done something wrong when I haven't? Should I lie against my right? My wound is incurable without my having transgressed."

Now comes Elihu's comment (Job 34:7): "What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?" He had just stated Job's attitude, and now he was saying, "Look at the man! He still doesn't get the point. He scorns words no matter how they are presented. You three comforters tried, and now I am trying, but he refuses to confess."

"He ... goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men" (Job 34:8). Elihu was plainly *condemning* Job.

"For he [Job] hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God" (Job 34:9). Technically, Job said something similar but not with this thought. Elihu took Job's statements and gave them an added twist that was not Job's intent.

"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" (Job 34:10).

"For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways" (Job 34:11). Elihu was saying that God judges a man according to whether he is good or bad. Presumably if a man is good, God rewards him, and if a man is bad, God will punish him. Elihu was implying that all Job's sufferings were a punishment for sin. "Don't you get the point yet, Job? God judges a man according to his ways." In the *ultimate* future, God will punish the wicked, but not necessarily in the present age or time. Elihu erred in trying to apply future conditions to the present.

"Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed. He striketh them as wicked men in the *open* sight of others; Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways" (Job 34:25–27). Elihu was saying, "God punishes those who do wrong, and it is done in a way that is conspicuous to everyone else—except you, Job. The three can see that and I can see that, but you, Job, refuse to see that."

"That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared" (Job 34:30). In other words, "God watches those who are in authority—judges, kings, nobles, etc. If they do undue harm to their subjects, God interferes. He demotes or promotes according to deeds. Job, you have been a leader; you have been recognized as a respected authority. But now your sufferings are a demotion, and you had better heed what God is doing or you will go down to the pit to be destroyed."

Elihu continued in Job 34:31–33. "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: That which I see not, teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more. 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." Elihu was saying he wanted Job to confess, to say, "Yes, I have borne chastisement, for I have done something wrong." "Job, if you can't understand, at least admit you have sinned, and God will tell you what the particular problem is."

In Job 34:34–37, Elihu said, "Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man

hearken unto me. [Elihu had a very high opinion of himself.] Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom. My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of his answers for wicked men. For he addeth rebellion *unto his sin* [Elihu had judged Job], he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God."

"Elihu spake moreover, and said,... I will answer thee, Job, and thy companions with thee" (Job 35:1,4). Elihu was claiming to be superior to Job and the three comforters: "Now I will tell you what is right."

Elihu gave his appraisal of Job: "Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge" (Job 35:16).

"Elihu also proceeded, and said, Suffer me a little, and I will show thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker. For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee" (Job 36:1-4). Elihu was saying that *he himself* was "perfect in knowledge." Contrary to scholarship and for many reasons, Elihu should *not be commended*. He repeatedly incriminated himself.

Elihu continued in Job 36:5-18. "Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom." (Earlier Elihu had said he was getting this wisdom from afar.) God "preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor." Elihu did not understand the permission of evil. "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. But if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction; then he showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded [their authority]. He also openeth their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity." Elihu was saying that Job's affliction and demotion were God's method of opening his ear to instruction and that they were a command for Job to return from his iniquity. "If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge. But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them." Elihu was saying that because Job was not crying, "I have sinned," he was a hypocrite. "They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean." Elihu was using other illustrations, but the comparison was clear. "He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression. Even so would he have removed thee, Job, 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. But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee. Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." Elihu was saying Job was getting deeper and deeper into his sin because of his obstinacy. "Job, if you continue to be stubborn, you will become incorrigible."

In Job 37:14-17 Elihu said, "Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?" Notice Elihu's superior attitude. "Dost thou, Job, know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge? How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?" Elihu, whose reasoning was *much inferior* to Job's, was instructing Job.

The foregoing verses cited from Elihu's discourse are sufficient to show clearly his superior judgment of himself.

Some of Elihu's criticism of Job was valid (in the sense that Job did complain and wish that he would die, etc.), but it was not at all valid in the overall sense. The slant and judgment Elihu gave were completely inordinate. *Some* of Elihu's statements were *utterly false*.

Elihu was immature and had a high opinion of himself. Although younger than Job and the three, he took the stance of maturity, and in the final analysis, his youth represents *immaturity*. His familiarity with Job (his manner of address) showed a lack of proper respect. He did not hold Job in esteem.

Who does Elihu represent? The Great Company. The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins is *God's* view of the consecrated. In the present life, *the Great Company feel that they are the wise ones* and that those who will ultimately prove to be of the Little Flock are the foolish ones, the ones with the wrong slant and an improper spirit. Here, then, is a paradox. The foolish virgins think they are superior to the wise ones. Only when the Church is complete and the age concludes will the foolish virgins realize the truth of the matter.

IMPORTANT: Elihu is the author of the Book of Job. By writing the book, he demonstrated his repentance, for the book shows his foolishness. When the book is really understood, he will suffer humiliation, but his honesty is there. Basically, he was honest, but his judgment was warped. At heart, the Great Company are virgins and they mean well, but they have a superior feeling. God will judge *true humility*—those He will honor and those He will grant less honor.

"Elihu" means God Jehovah, God Himself. In other words, this is a truly consecrated class. They are not castigated by God direct because they are in the family, whereas the three comforters are nominal. The Great Company are a closer class, but their immaturity should eventually be very self-apparent. Elihu showed his repentance by honestly revealing his boastful statements.

Job 42:14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.

Back to Chapter 42. *After Job's sufferings were reversed*, he was blessed with seven sons and three daughters. Verse 14 tells the names of the three daughters and the order of their birth. This is noteworthy because the sons' names are not given. The names are all significant.

Before Job was afflicted, he was commended in that there was no man in the earth like him—and this would be true, too, after his calamities ceased and his blessings returned. Consider again the words of Job 42:7, "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 [spoken that which is right]*." God had criticized Job from the standpoint of *perfection: a perfect God and an imperfect subject*. Yet in spite of criticizing Job for unwise words uttered during his affliction, God knew that Job, although born of imperfection, was *righteous in his heart*

God said to Eliphaz, “Job spoke that which was right concerning me, but you and your two companions *did not!*”

Although Elihu was not mentioned by name, this statement undercut him too. Both before and after Job’s trial, God repeatedly called him “*my servant.*” And God stated again (verse 8) that Job had spoken correctly: “... ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.” In other words, from God’s standpoint, whoever they are, those of the Little Flock class—though not perfect by any means—are far superior to the Great Company class. There is a wide gulf between the two classes.

There is another point to consider. God has great mercy for those who do not measure up to the standard of the Little Flock. When we consecrated, we were smitten with God’s love for the world ... that in spite of the world being in sin and iniquity, He will provide a way of escape. The thought is not that the standards of truth are compromised but that God gives the Great Company an opportunity of being retrieved, rescued, etc. In whatever age, God appreciates those who give their hearts to Him. Although there is a wide difference between those who will get immortality and those who just get everlasting life, yet the Great Company class is far superior to the world of mankind. The “seven sons” of Job represent the world of mankind, who will get an inheritance. The “three daughters,” who were fairer than any of the other women, will ultimately receive other rewards.

In the Song of Solomon, the Great Company class are shown in bed and making excuses for not getting up immediately to answer the Bridegroom’s knock. When they do arise and go to the door, it is too late—Jesus has gone. They go out into the street asking, “Where is my beloved?” At first the daughters of Jerusalem in the street smite the Great Company, but then they are influenced by the Great Company’s praise and enthusiasm for Jesus and say, “Let us know a little more about your beloved, O fairest among maidens.” In other words, at that time, when the Little Flock is off the scene, the Great Company will be addressed as having something above and beyond what the world of mankind has.

Moreover, in the Old Testament, a red heifer (female) pictures the Ancient Worthies. Although an exceptionally faithful class, they will not receive the reward of the Little Flock, and hence the heifer is not in the same category as a male animal. In the final analysis, it will be known which individuals comprise the Little Flock, the sin offering. Although we cannot now discern who are Little Flock and who are Great Company, we can see God’s love and compassion in that the other three classes are above the world of mankind: Ancient Worthies, Great Company, and “Great Company” of prior ages. In God’s mercy, not in their own self-righteousness, the Great Company will be honored for taking a stand for God or Jesus above and beyond that of the world. Therefore, just as Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar were interpreted from a successive standpoint, so Job’s three daughters (Jemima, Kezia, and Kerenhappuch) picture, respectively, the end-of-the-age sequence of the Great Company, the Ancient Worthies, and the comparable “Great Company” class of former ages. The “three daughters” will receive an inheritance with their brethren.

The Great Company will be a spiritual class, but during the Kingdom and the age of restitution, they will spend a lot of time down here. Scriptures pertaining to Ezekiel’s Temple allude to this. Because they were not sufficiently zealous to be of the Bride class, the Great Company will be with the world in the Kingdom as go-betweens or

liaisons or messengers between mankind and the Little Flock. Of course the Great Company will not have jurisdictional authority, but they will have privileges. Nathanael was told by Jesus that he would see angels ascending and descending before the Son of Man. The “angels” would be the Great Company class. The Pastor called them a police force. During the Kingdom, their efforts will be greatly concentrated down here in a visual manner; they will be seen and communicated with. They will carry orders and instructions from above to the earth, and take up from the earth to heaven questions that need answers and judicial decisions. Out of Zion (heaven) will go forth the Law, and the pronouncement of that Law from Jerusalem.

Sequence

1. *Jemima* = dawning, morning = Great Company, part of the Church of the Firstborn. They will be brought to perfection before any of the earthly classes. The mortgage of the ransom has to be released before it can be applied on behalf of the world of mankind.
2. *Kezia* = aroma, fragrance (based on cassia, a specialized form of cinnamon) = Ancient Worthies.
3. *Keren-happuch* = beautiful eyes (horns of antimony) = Great Company of prior ages.

Job 42:15 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.

The three daughters were the most beautiful women in the land.

Job 42:16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

The poor wording aside, the thought seems to be that Job lived a total of 140 years.

Job 42:17 So Job died, being old and full of days.

SEQUEL TO ABOVE STUDIES ON THE BOOK OF JOB

The purpose of the sequel will be to prove that Job can represent The Christ. It has already been shown that Job pictures the Church, but to a certain extent Jesus is included too. Although Job had imperfections, he was justified in God’s sight, and the experiences that came upon him were the result of a contest or confrontation between Satan and our Lord.

Before Jesus came down here at the First Advent, he was instructed as to his mission and he knew he would receive testings. However, he did not know all the details in advance, even though he had considerable understanding about God’s plan and his dying as a ransom for all. Psalm 22 proves Jesus did not foreknow the details of his experiences and sufferings. This Psalm represents the final experiences of our Lord, particularly on the Cross. “My God, my God, *why* hast thou forsaken me? *why* art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?” (Psa. 22:1). Jesus uttered these words on the Cross, and it shows he did not fully anticipate God’s withdrawing His favor. Jesus asked, “Why?” Also, in the Garden of Gethsemane, his

soul was “exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” which was an *extreme* condition; probably this feeling of intense grief was not foreknown to Jesus either (Matt. 26:38).

Psalm 69 is prophetic of the experiences of The Christ. True, David was writing out of his own emotions and experiences, but the parts of his experiences that are recorded are those with a prophetic aspect. “O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee” (Psa. 69:5). Certainly this verse would not apply to Jesus, yet the Psalm as a whole applies to The Christ, head and body members. However, not every experience is the same for both Jesus and the Church. Verse 5 treats the sin aspect of the Church, but verse 9 would apply to Jesus. “For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up ...” (Psa. 69:9). Verse 9 is quoted in the New Testament when Jesus chased out the money changers. Verse 21 would also apply to Jesus: “They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” These three verses illustrate that the Psalm as a whole applies to The Christ.

Psalm 109:21–29 is similar, especially verse 25 (in italic). “But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name’s sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me. For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness. *I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.* Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy: That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it. Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice. Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.” Verse 25 pertains to Jesus when he was on the Cross and others wagged their heads at him.

In Leviticus 9:8 Aaron offered a sin offering “for himself.” “Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was *for himself.*” Jesus did not need a sin offering, but the body members did.

Leviticus 16:6 is even more pertinent: “And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is *for himself*, and make an atonement *for himself, and for his house.*” When Aaron, who represents Jesus, began the sin offering service, he offered a bullock, and that bullock pictured *himself*. The goat was offered later. The bullock for the *sin* offering represents *Jesus* and his house. Because of God’s plan and the thought of the sin offering and the unity of the body of Christ, we say this sin offering is for the *body members*, but the way the account is stated, that bullock represented Aaron (the head), although we make the distinction that Jesus was without sin, based on other Scriptures.

With regard to Satan being involved with the persecution of Job, it is interesting to observe that Satan is the tool the Lord has used for testing *all down the line*. Many have not fully realized this point. For instance, consider the head. At the very beginning of our Lord’s ministry, Satan tempted him. Incidentally, Jesus probably did not know in advance that he would be so tested, and the testing came as a surprise. At the conclusion of Jesus’ ministry, Satan was very instrumental in the persecution and suffering. Luke 22 tells how Satan entered into the picture; for example, verse 3 tells that Judas was involved with Satan. “Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.” Judas represents a Second Death class.

John 13:27 verifies Judas' involvement with Satan: "And after the sop Satan entered into him [Judas]. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly." In Luke 22:31,32 we find that Satan would test Peter. In the same context, at the Memorial, Satan was near both Judas and Peter. Our Lord predicted, "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." In John 14:30, at the conclusion of the Memorial supper and before going to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Thus Jesus was tested, Judas was tested, and Peter (representing the Church) was tested. Based on the scapegoat picture, the Great Company will also be tested. And at the end of the Millennial Age, even the world of mankind will be tested by Satan in the little season. Therefore, Satan tests Jesus, the Church, the Great Company, the Second Death class of the Gospel Age, and the world of mankind. Job 1:6 informs us that Satan was involved in the testing of Job.

There is another picture in Zechariah 3. "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him [Joshua]" (Zech. 3:1). In verses 2-7 the angel of the LORD (a representative of Jehovah) said unto Satan, "The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? [This refers to Jerusalem at the end of the age.] Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him [Joshua]. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. And the angel of the LORD protested [exhorted, enjoined] unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." This Joshua was the high priest and Zerubbabel was the governor. Both offices represent The Christ, one from a priestly standpoint and one from a governing standpoint. Joshua, the high priest, was clothed with filthy garments, but Jesus, the head of the Church, was perfect and did not have filthy garments. Therefore, Joshua pictures *The Christ*, for the body members have the filthy garments. In the Bible many Scriptures are addressed to The Christ, some of which are applicable to the head, some to the body, and some to both head and body. Many Psalms picture The Christ, and are especially recorded to have instructional benefit to both head and body.

The *Second Volume* taught us that wherever in Scripture the Church is prefigured as a man, it always represents The Christ. Therefore, Job, a man, cannot represent just the Church. Elijah pictures the Church in the flesh, but the head of the Elijah class was Jesus. The head had already risen, but the body members living at the time were 1,260 years in the wilderness. In other experiences of the Church that are pictured in the Bible, the head is included. Consider: Jesus' ministry was 1,260 days long. He also fasted for 40 days without food; so did Elijah. Both Elijah and Jesus had "1,260" and "40" experiences. Therefore, the Elijah class represents The Christ in the flesh. And David represents The Christ in the flesh, even though the head has had his testing and is beyond the veil; the body members are still here fighting the warfare.

Some may say, "There are exceptions where a man can represent the Church," but

this is not true in symbology. For instance, Benjamin sometimes pictures the Church; but when we think of Benjamin, we automatically think of Joseph; it is Joseph and Benjamin. We are not thinking of one person but of the *relationship* of Benjamin to Joseph. Where there are *two* individuals, that is another matter.

Consider John the Baptist. Jesus is represented in John the Baptist as the head, but he is beyond the veil. The body members are still in the flesh. Jesus was on the scene at the *beginning* of the age, but for the body members John the Baptist is particularly a picture of the feet members at the *end* of the age. The head and the body are both in that picture. The Church here in the flesh is decreasing while the Church beyond the veil is increasing.

There is no problem in having Job picture The Christ, even though 90 percent or more of the experiences narrated apply forcefully to just the body members and their imperfections. Despite the imperfections, Job was considered to be upright. Although the sin of the body members has to be considered as a part of the picture, nevertheless, the *corporate whole* has to be taken into account. The body members cannot be extracted and made a man. In pictures of the Church, men always represent some relationship between the body members and Jesus, the head. When Aaron went into the Most Holy the first time to present the blood, it represented only the head. The second time he took the blood into the Most Holy, it represented The Christ. Therefore, Aaron pictures both head and body.

In summary, a *portion* of a Psalm or a picture (such as Job) can involve just the head and another *portion* can represent just the body members. But both applications are in a context where they are *together* as The Christ.