



**Archdiocese of St. Louis  
Office of Sacred Worship  
Lectio Divina Bible  
The Book of Job**

The Book of Job can be divided as follows:

- I. Prologue (1:1–2:13)
- II. First Cycle of Speeches (3:1–14:22)
- III. Second Cycle of Speeches (15:1–21:34)
- IV. Third Cycle of Speeches (22:1–27:21)
- V. The Poem on Wisdom (28:1–28)
- VI. Job’s Final Summary of His Cause (29:1–31:37)
- VII. Elihu’s Speeches (32:1–37:24)
- VIII. The Lord and Job Meet (38:1–42:6)
- IX. Epilogue (42:7–17)



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**I. Prologue  
Job, chapter 1**

**Job's Piety.**

In the land of Uz there was a blameless and upright man named Job, a who feared God and avoided evil. Seven sons and three daughters were born to him; and he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-donkeys, and a very large household, so that he was greater than anyone in the East. His sons used to take turns giving feasts, sending invitations to their three sisters to eat and drink with them. And when each feast had run its course, Job would send for them and sanctify them, rising early and offering sacrifices for every one of them. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Job did this habitually.

**The Interview Between the Lord and the Satan.**

One day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, the Satan also came among them. The LORD said to the Satan, "Where have you been?" Then the Satan answered the LORD and said, "Roaming the earth and patrolling it."

The LORD said to the Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him, blameless and upright, fearing God and avoiding evil." The Satan answered the LORD and said, "Is it for nothing that Job is God-fearing? Have you not surrounded him and his family and all that he has with your protection? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock are spread over the land. But now put forth your hand and touch all that he has, and surely he will curse you to your face." The LORD said to the Satan, "Very well, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on him." So the Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

**The First Trial.**



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One day, while his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother, a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys grazing beside them, and the Sabeans carried them off in a raid. They put the servants to the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” He was still speaking when another came and said, “God’s fire has fallen from heaven and struck the sheep and the servants and consumed them; I alone have escaped to tell you.” He was still speaking when another came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three columns, seized the camels, carried them off, and put the servants to the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you.” He was still speaking when another came and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother, and suddenly a great wind came from across the desert and smashed the four corners of the house. It fell upon the young people and they are dead; I alone have escaped to tell you.”

**Job’s Reaction.**

Then Job arose and tore his cloak and cut off his hair. He fell to the ground and worshiped. He said, “Naked I came forth from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I go back there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD!” In all this Job did not sin, nor did he charge God with wrong.



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### **Job, chapter 2**

#### **The Second Interview.**

One day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, the satan also came with them. The LORD said to the satan, "Where have you been?" Then the satan answered the LORD and said, "Roaming the earth and patrolling it." The LORD said to the satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him, blameless and upright, fearing God and avoiding evil. He still holds fast to his innocence although you incited me against him to ruin him for nothing."

The satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. But put forth your hand and touch his bone and his flesh. Then surely he will curse you to your face." And the LORD said to the satan, "He is in your power; only spare his life."

#### **The Second Trial.**

So the satan went forth from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with severe boils from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head.

#### **Job's Reaction.**

He took a potsherd to scrape himself, as he sat among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, "Are you still holding to your innocence? Curse God and die!" But he said to her, "You speak as foolish women do. We accept good things from God; should we not accept evil?" Through all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

#### **Job's Three Friends.**

Now when three of Job's friends heard of all the misfortune that had come upon him, they set out each one from his own place: Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuh, and Zophar from Naamath. They met and journeyed together to give him sympathy and comfort. But when, at a distance, they lifted up their eyes and



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did not recognize him, they began to weep aloud; they tore their cloaks and threw dust into the air over their heads. Then they sat down upon the ground with him seven days and seven nights, but none of them spoke a word to him; for they saw how great was his suffering.



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**II. First Cycle of Speeches  
Job, chapter 3**

**Job's Complaint.**

After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed his day. Job spoke out and said:

Perish the day on which I was born, the night when they said, "The child is a boy!" May that day be darkness: may God above not care for it, may light not shine upon it! May darkness and gloom claim it, clouds settle upon it, blackness of day affright it! May obscurity seize that night; may it not be counted among the days of the year, nor enter into the number of the months! May that night be barren; let no joyful outcry greet it! Let them curse it who curse the Sea, those skilled at disturbing Leviathan! May the stars of its twilight be darkened; may it look for daylight, but have none, nor gaze on the eyes of the dawn,

Because it did not keep shut the doors of the womb to shield my eyes from trouble! Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire? Why did knees receive me, or breasts nurse me? For then I should have lain down and been tranquil; had I slept, I should then have been at rest. With kings and counselors of the earth who rebuilt what were ruins. Or with princes who had gold and filled their houses with silver. Or why was I not buried away like a stillborn child, like babies that have never seen the light? There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest. The captives are at ease together, and hear no overseer's voice. Small and great are there; the servant is free from the master. Why is light given to the toilers, life to the bitter in spirit? They wait for death and it does not come; they search for it more than for hidden treasures. They rejoice in it exultingly, and are glad when they find the grave: A man whose path is hidden from him, one whom God has hemmed in! For to me sighing comes more readily than food; my groans well forth like water. For what I feared overtakes me; what I dreaded comes upon me. I have no peace nor ease; I have no rest, for trouble has come!



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**Job, chapter 4**

**Eliphaz's First Speech.**

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

If someone attempts a word with you, would you mind? How can anyone refrain from speaking? Look, you have instructed many, and made firm their feeble hands. Your words have upheld the stumbler; you have strengthened faltering knees. But now that it comes to you, you are impatient; when it touches you, you are dismayed. Is not your piety a source of confidence, and your integrity of life your hope? Reflect now, what innocent person perishes? Where are the upright destroyed? As I see it, those who plow mischief and sow trouble will reap them. By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his wrath they are consumed. Though the lion roars, though the king of beasts cries out, yet the teeth of the young lions are broken; The old lion perishes for lack of prey, and the cubs of the lioness are scattered. A word was stealthily brought to me, my ear caught a whisper of it. In my thoughts during visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on mortals, Fear came upon me, and shuddering, that terrified me to the bone. Then a spirit passed before me, and the hair of my body stood on end. It paused, but its likeness I could not recognize; a figure was before my eyes, in silence I heard a voice: "Can anyone be more in the right than God? Can mortals be more blameless than their Maker? Look, he puts no trust in his servants, and even with his messengers he finds fault. How much more with those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed more easily than a moth! Morning or evening they may be shattered; unnoticed, they perish forever. The pegs of their tent are plucked up; they die without knowing wisdom."



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**Job, chapter 5**

Call now! Will anyone respond to you? To which of the holy ones will you turn? Surely impatience kills the fool and indignation slays the simpleton. I have seen a fool spreading his roots, but I cursed his household suddenly: May his children be far from safety; may they be crushed at the gate without a rescuer. What they have reaped may the hungry eat up, or God take away by blight, or the thirsty swallow their substance. For not from dust does mischief come, nor from the soil does trouble sprout. Human beings beget mischief as sparks fly upward. In your place, I would appeal to God, and to God I would state my plea. He does things great and unsearchable, things marvelous and innumerable. He gives rain upon the earth and sends water upon the fields; He sets up the lowly on high, and those who mourn are raised to safety. He frustrates the plans of the cunning, so that their hands achieve no success; He catches the wise in their own ruses, and the designs of the crafty are routed. They meet with darkness in the daytime, at noonday they grope as though it were night. But he saves the poor from the sword of their mouth, from the hand of the mighty. Thus the needy have hope, and iniquity closes its mouth. Happy the one whom God reproves! The Almighty's discipline do not reject. For he wounds, but he binds up; he strikes, but his hands give healing. Out of six troubles he will deliver you, and at the seventh no evil shall touch you.

In famine he will deliver you from death, and in war from the power of the sword; From the scourge of the tongue you shall be hidden, and you shall not fear approaching ruin. At ruin and want you shall laugh; the beasts of the earth, do not fear. With the stones of the field shall your covenant be, and the wild beasts shall be at peace with you. And you shall know that your tent is secure; taking stock of your household, you shall miss nothing. You shall know that your descendants are many, and your offspring like the grass of the earth. You shall approach the grave in full vigor, as a shock of grain comes in at its season. See, this we have searched out; so it is! This we have heard, and you should know.



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**Job, chapter 6**

**Job's First Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

Ah, could my anguish but be measured and my calamity laid with it in the scales, They would now outweigh the sands of the sea! Because of this I speak without restraint. For the arrows of the Almighty are in me, and my spirit drinks in their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me. Does the wild donkey bray when it has grass? Does the ox low over its fodder? Can anything insipid be eaten without salt? Is there flavor in the white of an egg? I refuse to touch them; they are like loathsome food to me. Oh, that I might have my request, and that God would grant what I long for: Even that God would decide to crush me, that he would put forth his hand and cut me off! Then I should still have consolation and could exult through unremitting pain, because I have not transgressed the commands of the Holy One. What strength have I that I should endure, and what is my limit that I should be patient? Have I the strength of stones, or is my flesh of bronze? Have I no helper, and has my good sense deserted me? A friend owes kindness to one in despair, though he has forsaken the fear of the Almighty.

My companions are undependable as a wadi, as watercourses that run dry in the wadies; Though they may be black with ice, and with snow heaped upon them, Yet once they flow, they cease to be; in the heat, they disappear from their place. Caravans wander from their routes; they go into the wasteland and perish. The caravans of Tema search, the companies of Sheba have hopes; They are disappointed, though they were confident; they come there and are frustrated. It is thus that you have now become for me; you see a terrifying thing and are afraid. Have I said, "Give me something, make a bribe on my behalf from your possessions"? Or "Deliver me from the hand of the enemy, redeem me from oppressors"? Teach me, and I will be silent; make me understand how I have erred. How painful honest words can be; yet how unconvincing is your argument! Do you consider your words as proof, but the sayings of a desperate man as



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wind? You would even cast lots for the orphan, and would barter over your friend! Come, now, give me your attention; surely I will not lie to your face. Think it over; let there be no injustice. Think it over; I still am right. Is there insincerity on my tongue, or cannot my taste discern falsehood?



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**Job, chapter 7**

Is not life on earth a drudgery, its days like those of a hireling? Like a slave who longs for the shade, a hireling who waits for wages, So I have been assigned months of futility, and troubled nights have been counted off for me. When I lie down I say, "When shall I arise?" then the night drags on; I am filled with restlessness until the dawn. My flesh is clothed with worms and scabs; my skin cracks and festers; My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; they come to an end without hope. Remember that my life is like the wind; my eye will not see happiness again. The eye that now sees me shall no more behold me; when your eye is on me, I shall be gone. As a cloud dissolves and vanishes, so whoever goes down to Sheol shall not come up. They shall not return home again; their place shall know them no more. My own utterance I will not restrain; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

Am I the Sea, or the dragon, that you place a watch over me? When I say, "My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint," Then you frighten me with dreams and terrify me with visions, So that I should prefer strangulation and death rather than my existence. I waste away: I will not live forever; let me alone, for my days are but a breath. What are human beings, that you make much of them, or pay them any heed? You observe them every morning and try them at every moment! How long before you look away from me, and let me alone till I swallow my spit? If I sin, what do I do to you, O watcher of mortals? Why have you made me your target? Why should I be a burden for you? Why do you not pardon my offense, or take away my guilt? For soon I shall lie down in the dust; and should you seek me I shall be gone.



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**Job, chapter 8**

**Bildad's First Speech.**

Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

How long will you utter such things? The words from your mouth are a mighty wind! Does God pervert judgment, does the Almighty pervert justice? If your children have sinned against him and he has left them in the grip of their guilt, Still, if you yourself have recourse to God and make supplication to the Almighty, should you be blameless and upright, surely now he will rouse himself for you and restore your rightful home. Though your beginning was small, your future will flourish indeed.

Inquire of the former generations, pay attention to the experience of their ancestors—As we are but of yesterday and have no knowledge, because our days on earth are but a shadow—Will they not teach you and tell you and utter their words of understanding? Can the papyrus grow up without mire? Can the reed grass flourish without water? While it is yet green and uncut, it withers quicker than any grass. So is the end of everyone who forgets God, and so shall the hope of the godless perish. His confidence is but a gossamer thread, his trust is a spider's house. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall cling to it, but it shall not endure. He thrives in full sun, and over his garden his shoots go forth; About a heap of stones his roots are entwined; among the rocks he takes hold. Yet if one tears him from his place, it will disown him: "I have never seen you!" There he lies rotting beside the road, and out of the soil another sprouts. Behold, God will not cast away the upright; neither will he take the hand of the wicked. Once more will he fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with rejoicing. Those who hate you shall be clothed with shame, and the tent of the wicked shall be no more.



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**Job, chapter 9**

**Job's Second Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

I know well that it is so; but how can anyone be in the right before God? Should one wish to contend with him, he could not answer him once in a thousand times. God is wise in heart and mighty in strength; who has withstood him and remained whole? He removes the mountains before they know it; he overturns them in his anger. He shakes the earth out of its place, and the pillars beneath it tremble. He commands the sun, and it does not rise; he seals up the stars. He alone stretches out the heavens and treads upon the back of the sea. He made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south; He does things great and unsearchable, things marvelous and innumerable. Should he come near me, I do not see him; should he pass by, I am not aware of him; Should he seize me forcibly, who can resist? Who can say to him, "What are you doing?" He is God and he does not relent; the helpers of Rahab bow beneath him. How then could I give him any answer, or choose out arguments against him! Even though I were right, I could not answer, but should rather beg for what was due me. If I appealed to him and he answered me, I could not believe that he would listen to me; With a storm he might overwhelm me, and multiply my wounds for nothing; He would not allow me to draw breath, but might fill me with bitter griefs. If it be a question of strength, he is mighty; or of judgment, who will call him to account? Though I were right, my own mouth might condemn me; were I innocent, it might put me in the wrong. I am innocent, but I cannot know it; I despise my life. It is all one! therefore I say: Both the innocent and the wicked he destroys.

When the scourge slays suddenly, he scoffs at the despair of the innocent. The earth is given into the hands of the wicked; he covers the faces of its judges. If it is not he, who then is it? My days are swifter than a runner, they flee away; they see no happiness; They shoot by like skiffs of reed, like an eagle swooping upon its prey. If I say: I will forget my complaining, I will lay aside my sadness and be of good cheer, Then I am



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in dread of all my pains; I know that you will not hold me innocent. It is I who will be accounted guilty; why then should I strive in vain? If I should wash myself with soap and cleanse my hands with lye, Yet you would plunge me in the ditch, so that my garments would abhor me. For he is not a man like myself, that I should answer him, that we should come together in judgment. Would that there were an arbiter between us, who could lay his hand upon us both and withdraw his rod from me, So that his terrors did not frighten me; that I might speak without being afraid of him. Since this is not the case with me.



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**Job, chapter 10**

I loathe my life. I will give myself up to complaint; I will speak from the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God: Do not put me in the wrong! Let me know why you oppose me. Is it a pleasure for you to oppress, to spurn the work of your hands, and shine on the plan of the wicked? Have you eyes of flesh? Do you see as mortals see? Are your days like the days of a mortal, and are your years like a human lifetime, That you seek for guilt in me and search after my sins, Even though you know that I am not wicked, and that none can deliver me out of your hand? Your hands have formed me and fashioned me; will you then turn and destroy me? Oh, remember that you fashioned me from clay! Will you then bring me down to dust again? Did you not pour me out like milk, and thicken me like cheese? With skin and flesh you clothed me, with bones and sinews knit me together. Life and love you granted me, and your providence has preserved my spirit. Yet these things you have hidden in your heart; I know they are your purpose: If I should sin, you would keep a watch on me, and from my guilt you would not absolve me. If I should be wicked, alas for me! even if righteous, I dare not hold up my head, sated with shame, drenched in affliction!

Should it lift up, you hunt me like a lion: repeatedly you show your wondrous power against me, You renew your attack upon me and multiply your harassment of me; in waves your troops come against me. Why then did you bring me forth from the womb? I should have died and no eye have seen me. I should be as though I had never lived; I should have been taken from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Stop! Let me alone, that I may recover a little Before I go whence I shall not return, to the land of darkness and of gloom, The dark, disordered land where darkness is the only light.



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**Job, chapter 11**

**Zophar's First Speech.**

And Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

Should not many words be answered, or must the garrulous man necessarily be right? Shall your babblings keep others silent, and shall you deride and no one give rebuke? Shall you say: "My teaching is pure, and I am clean in your sight"? But oh, that God would speak, and open his lips against you, And tell you the secrets of wisdom, for good sense has two sides; So you might learn that God overlooks some of your sinfulness. Can you find out the depths of God? or find out the perfection of the Almighty? It is higher than the heavens; what can you do? It is deeper than Sheol; what can you know? It is longer than the earth in measure, and broader than the sea. If he should seize and imprison or call to judgment, who then could turn him back? For he knows the worthless and sees iniquity; will he then ignore it? An empty head will gain understanding, when a colt of a wild jackass is born human. If you set your heart aright and stretch out your hands toward him, If iniquity is in your hand, remove it, and do not let injustice dwell in your tent, Surely then you may lift up your face in innocence; you may stand firm and unafraid. For then you shall forget your misery, like water that has ebbed away you shall regard it. Then your life shall be brighter than the noonday; its gloom shall become like the morning, And you shall be secure, because there is hope; you shall look round you and lie down in safety; you shall lie down and no one will disturb you. Many shall entreat your favor, but the wicked, looking on, shall be consumed with envy. Escape shall be cut off from them, their only hope their last breath.



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**Job, chapter 12**

**Job's Third Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

No doubt you are the people with whom wisdom shall die! But I have intelligence as well as you; I do not fall short of you; for who does not know such things as these? I have become the sport of my neighbors: "The one whom God answers when he calls upon him, The just, the perfect man," is a laughingstock;

The undisturbed esteem my downfall a disgrace such as awaits unsteady feet; Yet the tents of robbers are prosperous, and those who provoke God are secure, whom God has in his power. But now ask the beasts to teach you, the birds of the air to tell you; Or speak to the earth to instruct you, and the fish of the sea to inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of God has done this? In his hand is the soul of every living thing, and the life breath of all mortal flesh. Does not the ear judge words as the mouth tastes food? So with old age is wisdom, and with length of days understanding. With him are wisdom and might; his are counsel and understanding. If he knocks a thing down, there is no rebuilding; if he imprisons, there is no release. He holds back the waters and there is drought; he sends them forth and they overwhelm the land. With him are strength and prudence; the misled and the misleaders are his. He sends counselors away barefoot, makes fools of judges. He loosens the belt of kings, ties a waistcloth on their loins. He sends priests away barefoot, leads the powerful astray. He silences the trusted adviser, takes discretion from the elders. He pours shame on nobles, the waistband of the strong he loosens. He uncovers deep things from the darkness, brings the gloom into the light. He makes nations great and destroys them, spreads peoples abroad and abandons them. He takes understanding from the leaders of the land, makes them wander in a pathless desert. They grope in the darkness without light; he makes them wander like drunkards.



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**Job, chapter 13**

All this my eye has seen; my ear has heard and perceived it. What you know, I also know; I do not fall short of you. But I would speak with the Almighty; I want to argue with God. But you gloss over falsehoods, you are worthless physicians, every one of you! Oh, that you would be altogether silent; that for you would be wisdom! Hear now my argument and listen to the accusations from my lips. Is it for God that you speak falsehood? Is it for him that you utter deceit? Is it for him that you show partiality? Do you make accusations on behalf of God? Will it be well when he shall search you out? Can you deceive him as you do a mere human being? He will openly rebuke you if in secret you show partiality. Surely his majesty will frighten you and dread of him fall upon you. Your reminders are ashy maxims, your fabrications mounds of clay.

Be silent! Let me alone that I may speak, no matter what happens to me. I will carry my flesh between my teeth, and take my life in my hand. Slay me though he might, I will wait for him; I will defend my conduct before him. This shall be my salvation: no impious man can come into his presence. Pay close attention to my speech, give my statement a hearing. Behold, I have prepared my case, I know that I am in the right. If anyone can make a case against me, then I shall be silent and expire. Two things only do not use against me, then from your presence I need not hide: Withdraw your hand far from me, do not let the terror of you frighten me. Then call me, and I will respond; or let me speak first, and answer me. What are my faults and my sins? My misdeed, my sin make known to me! Why do you hide your face and consider me your enemy? Will you harass a wind-driven leaf or pursue a withered straw? For you draw up bitter indictments against me, and punish in me the faults of my youth. You put my feet in the stocks; you watch all my paths and trace out all my footsteps, Though I wear out like a leather bottle, like a garment the moth has consumed.



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**Job, chapter 14**

Man born of woman is short-lived and full of trouble, Like a flower that springs up and fades, swift as a shadow that does not abide. Upon such a one will you set your eyes, bringing me into judgment before you? Can anyone make the unclean clean? No one can. Since his days are determined—you know the number of his months; you have fixed the limit which he cannot pass—Look away from him and let him be, while, like a hireling, he completes his day. For a tree there is hope; if it is cut down, it will sprout again, its tender shoots will not cease. Even though its root grow old in the earth and its stump die in the dust, Yet at the first whiff of water it sprouts and puts forth branches like a young plant. But when a man dies, all vigor leaves him; when a mortal expires, where then is he? As when the waters of a lake fail, or a stream shrivels and dries up, So mortals lie down, never to rise. Until the heavens are no more, they shall not awake, nor be roused out of their sleep. Oh, that you would hide me in Sheol, shelter me till your wrath is past, fix a time to remember me! If a man were to die, and live again, all the days of my drudgery I would wait for my relief to come. You would call, and I would answer you; you would long for the work of your hands. Surely then you would count my steps, and not keep watch for sin in me. My misdeeds would be sealed up in a pouch, and you would cover over my guilt. Mountains fall and crumble, rocks move from their place, And water wears away stone, and floods wash away the soil of the land—so you destroy the hope of mortals! You prevail once for all against them and they pass on; you dismiss them with changed appearance. If their children are honored, they are not aware of it; or if disgraced, they do not know about them. Only for themselves, their pain; only for themselves, their mourning.



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**III. Second Cycle of Speeches  
Job, chapter 15**

**Second Speech of Eliphaz.**

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

Does a wise man answer with windy opinions, or puff himself up with the east wind? Does he argue in speech that does not avail, and in words that are to no profit? You in fact do away with piety, you lessen devotion toward God, because your wickedness instructs your mouth, and you choose to speak like the crafty. Your own mouth condemns you, not I; your own lips refute you. Were you the first to be born? Were you brought forth before the hills? Do you listen in on God's council and restrict wisdom to yourself? What do you know that we do not know, or understand that we do not? There are gray-haired old men among us, more advanced in years than your father. Are the consolations of God not enough for you, and speech that deals gently with you? Why does your heart carry you away, and why do your eyes flash, So that you turn your anger against God and let such words escape your mouth! How can any mortal be blameless, anyone born of woman be righteous? If in his holy ones God places no confidence, and if the heavens are not without blame in his sight, How much less so is the abominable and corrupt: people who drink in iniquity like water! I will show you, if you listen to me; what I have seen I will tell—What the wise relate and have not contradicted since the days of their ancestors, To whom alone the land was given, when no foreigner moved among them: The wicked is in torment all his days, and limited years are in store for the ruthless; The sound of terrors is in his ears; when all is prosperous, a spoiler comes upon him. He despairs of escaping the darkness, and looks ever for the sword; A wanderer, food for vultures, he knows destruction is imminent. A day of darkness fills him with dread; distress and anguish overpower him, like a king expecting an attack. Because he has stretched out his hand against God and arrogantly challenged the Almighty, Rushing defiantly against him, with the stout bosses of his shields. Although he has covered his face with his crassness, padded his loins with blubber, He shall dwell in ruined cities, in houses that are deserted,



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crumbling into rubble. He shall not be rich, his possessions shall not endure; his property shall not spread over the land. A flame shall sear his early growth, and with the wind his blossoms shall disappear. Let him not trust in his height, misled, even though his height be like the palm tree. He shall wither before his time, his branches no longer green. He shall be like a vine that sheds its grapes unripened, like an olive tree casting off its blossom. For the breed of the impious shall be sterile, and fire shall consume the tents of extortioners. They conceive malice, bring forth deceit, give birth to fraud.



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**Job, chapter 16**

**Job's Fourth Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

I have heard this sort of thing many times. Troublesome comforters, all of you! Is there no end to windy words? What sickness makes you rattle on? I also could talk as you do, were you in my place. I could declaim over you, or wag my head at you; I could strengthen you with talk, with mere chatter give relief. If I speak, my pain is not relieved; if I stop speaking, nothing changes. But now he has exhausted me; you have stunned all my companions. You have shriveled me up; it is a witness, my gauntness rises up to testify against me; His wrath tears and assails me, he gnashes his teeth against me; My enemy looks daggers at me. They gape at me with their mouths; They strike me on the cheek with insults; they are all enlisted against me. God has given me over to the impious; into the hands of the wicked he has cast me. I was in peace, but he dislodged me, seized me by the neck, dashed me to pieces. He has set me up for a target; his arrows strike me from all directions. He pierces my sides without mercy, pours out my gall upon the ground. He pierces me, thrust upon thrust, rushes at me like a warrior. I have sewn sackcloth on my skin, laid my horn low in the dust. My face is inflamed with weeping, darkness covers my eyes, Although my hands are free from violence, and my prayer sincere. O earth, do not cover my blood, nor let my outcry come to rest! Even now my witness is in heaven, my advocate is on high. My friends it is who wrong me; before God my eyes shed tears, That justice may be done for a mortal with God: as for a man with his neighbor. For my years are numbered, and I go the road of no return.



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**Job, chapter 17**

My spirit is broken, my days finished, my burial at hand. Surely mockers surround me, at their provocation, my eyes grow dim. Put up a pledge for me with you: who is there to give surety for me? You darken their minds to knowledge; therefore, you will not exalt them. For a share of property he informs on friends, while the eyes of his children grow dim. I am made a byword of the people; I am one at whom people spit. My eyes are blind with anguish, and my whole frame is like a shadow. The upright are astonished at this, the innocent aroused against the wicked. The righteous holds to his way, the one with clean hands increases in strength. But turn now, and come on again; I do not find a wise man among you! My days pass by, my plans are at an end, the yearning of my heart. They would change the night into day; where there is darkness they talk of approaching light. If my only hope is dwelling in Sheol, and spreading my couch in darkness, If I am to say to the pit, "You are my father," and to the worm "my mother," "my sister," Where then is my hope, my happiness, who can see it? Will they descend with me into Sheol? Shall we go down together into the dust?



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**Job, chapter 18**

**Bildad's Second Speech.**

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

When will you put an end to words? Reflect, and then we can have discussion. Why are we accounted like beasts, equal to them in your sight? You who tear yourself in your anger—shall the earth be neglected on your account or the rock be moved out of its place? Truly, the light of the wicked is extinguished; the flame of his fire casts no light. In his tent light is darkness; the lamp above him goes out. His vigorous steps are hemmed in, his own counsel casts him down. A net catches him by the feet, he wanders into a pitfall. A trap seizes him by the heel, a snare lays hold of him. A noose is hidden for him on the ground, a netting for him on the path. On every side terrors frighten him; they harry him at each step. His strength is famished, disaster is ready at his side, His skin is eaten to the limbs, the firstborn of Death eats his limbs. He is plucked from the security of his tent; and marched off to the king of terrors. Fire lodges in his tent, over his abode brimstone is scattered. Below, his roots dry up, and above, his branches wither. His memory perishes from the earth, and he has no name in the countryside. He is driven from light into darkness, and banished from the world. He has neither offshoot nor offspring among his people, no survivor where once he dwelt. Those who come after shall be appalled at his fate; those who went before are seized with horror. So is it then with the dwelling of the impious; such is the place of the one who does not know God!



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**Job, chapter 19**

**Job's Fifth Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

How long will you afflict my spirit, grind me down with words? These ten times you have humiliated me, have assailed me without shame! Even if it were true that I am at fault, my fault would remain with me; If truly you exalt yourselves at my expense, and use my shame as an argument against me, Know then that it is God who has dealt unfairly with me, and compassed me round with his net. If I cry out "Violence!" I am not answered. I shout for help, but there is no justice. He has barred my way and I cannot pass; veiled my path in darkness; He has stripped me of my glory, taken the diadem from my brow. He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; he has uprooted my hope like a tree. He has kindled his wrath against me; he counts me one of his enemies. His troops advance as one; they build up their road to attack me, encamp around my tent. My family has withdrawn from me, my friends are wholly estranged. My relatives and companions neglect me, my guests have forgotten me. Even my maidservants consider me a stranger; I am a foreigner in their sight. I call my servant, but he gives no answer, though I plead aloud with him. My breath is abhorrent to my wife; I am loathsome to my very children. Even young children despise me; when I appear, they speak against me. All my intimate friends hold me in horror; those whom I loved have turned against me! My bones cling to my skin, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. Pity me, pity me, you my friends, for the hand of God has struck me! Why do you pursue me like God, and prey insatiably upon me? Oh, would that my words were written down! Would that they were inscribed in a record: That with an iron chisel and with lead they were cut in the rock forever! As for me, I know that my vindicator lives, and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust. This will happen when my skin has been stripped off, and from my flesh I will see God: I will see for myself, my own eyes, not another's, will behold him: my inmost being is consumed with longing. But you who say, "How shall we persecute him, seeing that the root of the matter is found in him?"



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Be afraid of the sword for yourselves, for your anger is a crime deserving the sword; that you may know that there is a judgment.



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**Job, chapter 20**

**Zophar's Second Speech.**

Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

So now my thoughts provide an answer for me, because of the feelings within me. A rebuke that puts me to shame I hear, and from my understanding a spirit gives me a reply. Do you not know this: from of old, since human beings were placed upon the earth, The triumph of the wicked is short and the joy of the impious but for a moment? Though his pride mount up to the heavens and his head reach to the clouds, Yet he perishes forever like the dung he uses for fuel, and onlookers say, "Where is he?" Like a dream he takes flight and cannot be found; he fades away like a vision of the night. The eye which saw him does so no more; nor shall his dwelling again behold him. His sons will restore to the poor, and his hands will yield up his riches. Though his bones are full of youthful vigor, it shall lie with him in the dust. Though wickedness is sweet in his mouth, and he hides it under his tongue, Though he retains it and will not let it go but keeps it still within his mouth, Yet in his stomach the food shall turn; it shall be venom of asps inside him. The riches he swallowed he shall vomit up; God shall make his belly disgorge them. The poison of asps he shall drink in; the viper's fangs shall slay him. He shall see no streams of oil, no torrents of honey or milk. He shall give back his gains, never used; like his profit from trade, never enjoyed. Because he has oppressed and neglected the poor, and stolen a house he did not build; For he has known no quiet in his greed, in his treasure he cannot save himself. None of his survivors will consume it, therefore his prosperity shall not endure. When he has more than enough, distress shall be his, every sort of trouble shall come upon him. When he has filled his belly, God shall send against him the fury of his wrath and rain down his missiles upon him.

Should he escape an iron weapon, a bronze bow shall pierce him through; The dart shall come out of his back, a shining point out of his gall-bladder: terrors fall upon him. Complete darkness is in store for his treasured ones; a fire unfanned shall consume him; any survivor in his tent shall be destroyed. The heavens



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shall reveal his guilt, and the earth rise up against him. The flood shall sweep away his house, torrents in the day of God's anger. This is the portion of the wicked, the heritage appointed him by God.



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**Job, chapter 21**

**Job's Sixth Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

At least listen to my words, and let that be the consolation you offer. Bear with me while I speak; and after I have spoken, you can mock! Is my complaint toward any human being? Why should I not be impatient? Look at me and be appalled, put your hands over your mouths. When I think of it, I am dismayed, and shuddering seizes my flesh. Why do the wicked keep on living, grow old, become mighty in power? Their progeny is secure in their sight; their offspring are before their eyes. Their homes are safe, without fear, and the rod of God is not upon them. Their bulls breed without fail; their cows calve and do not miscarry. They let their young run free like sheep, their children skip about. They sing along with drum and lyre, and make merry to the sound of the pipe. They live out their days in prosperity, and tranquilly go down to Sheol. Yet they say to God, "Depart from us, for we have no desire to know your ways! What is the Almighty that we should serve him? And what do we gain by praying to him?" Their happiness is not in their own hands. The designs of the wicked are far from me! How often is the lamp of the wicked put out? How often does destruction come upon them, the portion God allots in his anger?

Let them be like straw before the wind, like chaff the storm carries away! "God is storing up the man's misery for his children"—let him requite the man himself so that he knows it! Let his own eyes behold his calamity, and the wrath of the Almighty let him drink! For what interest has he in his family after him, when the number of his months is finished? Can anyone teach God knowledge, seeing that he judges those on high? One dies in his full vigor, wholly at ease and content; His figure is full and nourished, his bones are moist with marrow. Another dies with a bitter spirit, never having tasted happiness. Alike they lie down in the dust, and worms cover them both. See, I know your thoughts, and the arguments you plot against me. For you say, "Where is the house of the great, and where the dwelling place of the wicked?" Have you not asked



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the wayfarers and do you not acknowledge the witness they give? On the day of calamity the evil man is spared, on the day that wrath is released. Who will charge him to his face about his conduct, and for what he has done who will repay him? He is carried to the grave and at his tomb they keep watch. Sweet to him are the clods of the valley. All humankind will follow after him, and countless others before him. How empty the consolation you offer me! Your arguments remain a fraud.



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**IV. Third Cycle of Speeches  
Job, chapter 22**

**Eliphaz's Third Speech.**

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

Can a man be profitable to God? Can a wise man be profitable to him? Does it please the Almighty that you are just? Does he gain if your ways are perfect? Is it because of your piety that he reproves you—that he enters into judgment with you? Is not your wickedness great, your iniquity endless? You keep your relatives' goods in pledge unjustly, leave them stripped naked of their clothing. To the thirsty you give no water to drink, and from the hungry you withhold bread; As if the land belonged to the powerful, and only the privileged could dwell in it! You sent widows away empty-handed, and the resources of orphans are destroyed. Therefore, snares are round about you, sudden terror makes you panic, Or darkness—you cannot see! A deluge of waters covers you. Does not God, in the heights of the heavens, behold the top of the stars, high though they are? Yet you say, "What does God know? Can he judge through the thick darkness? Clouds hide him so that he cannot see as he walks around the circuit of the heavens!" Do you indeed keep to the ancient way trodden by the worthless? They were snatched before their time; their foundations a river swept away. They said to God, "Let us alone!" and, "What can the Almighty do to us?" Yet he had filled their houses with good things. The designs of the wicked are far from me! The just look on and are glad, and the innocent deride them: "Truly our enemies are destroyed, and what was left to them, fire has consumed!" Settle with him and have peace. That way good shall come to you: Receive instruction from his mouth, and place his words in your heart. If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored; if you put iniquity far from your tent, And treat raw gold as dust, the fine gold of Ophir as pebbles in the wadi, Then the Almighty himself shall be your gold and your sparkling silver. For then you shall delight in the Almighty, you shall lift up your face toward God. Entreat him and he will hear you, and your vows you shall fulfill. What you decide



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shall succeed for you, and upon your ways light shall shine. For when they are brought low, you will say, “It is pride!” But downcast eyes he saves. He will deliver whoever is innocent; you shall be delivered if your hands are clean.



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**Job, chapter 23**

**Job's Seventh Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

Today especially my complaint is bitter, his hand is heavy upon me in my groanings. Would that I knew how to find him, that I might come to his dwelling! I would set out my case before him, fill my mouth with arguments; I would learn the words he would answer me, understand what he would say to me. Would he contend against me with his great power? No, he himself would heed me! There an upright man might argue with him, and I would once and for all be delivered from my judge. But if I go east, he is not there; or west, I cannot perceive him; The north enfolds him, and I cannot catch sight of him; The south hides him, and I cannot see him. Yet he knows my way; if he tested me, I should come forth like gold. My foot has always walked in his steps; I have kept his way and not turned aside. From the commands of his lips I have not departed; the words of his mouth I have treasured in my heart. But once he decides, who can contradict him? What he desires, that he does. For he will carry out what is appointed for me, and many such things he has in store. Therefore, I am terrified before him; when I take thought, I dread him. For it is God who has made my heart faint, the Almighty who has terrified me. Yes, would that I had vanished in darkness, hidden by the thick gloom before me.



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**Job, chapter 24**

Why are times not set by the Almighty, and why do his friends not see his days? People remove landmarks; they steal herds and pasture them. The donkeys of orphans they drive away; they take the widow's ox for a pledge. They force the needy off the road; all the poor of the land are driven into hiding. Like wild donkeys in the wilderness, they go forth to their task of seeking prey; the steppe provides food for their young;

They harvest fodder in the field, and glean in the vineyard of the wicked. They pass the night naked, without clothing; they have no covering against the cold; They are drenched with rain from the mountains, and for want of shelter they cling to the rock. Orphans are snatched from the breast, infants of the needy are taken in pledge. They go about naked, without clothing, and famished, they carry the sheaves. Between the rows they press out the oil; they tread the wine presses, yet are thirsty. In the city the dying groan, and the souls of the wounded cry out. Yet God does not treat it as a disgrace! They are rebels against the light: they do not recognize its ways; they do not stay in its paths. When there is no light the murderer rises, to kill the poor and needy; in the night he acts like a thief. The eye of the adulterer watches for the twilight; he says, "No eye will see me." He puts a mask over his face; in the dark he breaks into houses; By day they shut themselves in; they do not know the light. Indeed, for all of them morning is deep darkness; then they recognize the terrors of deep darkness. He is swift on the surface of the water: their portion in the land is accursed, they do not turn aside by way of the vineyards.

Drought and heat snatch away the snow waters, Sheol, those who have sinned. May the womb forget him, may the worm find him sweet, may he no longer be remembered; And may wickedness be broken like a tree. May his companion be barren, unable to give birth, may his widow not prosper! He sustains the mighty by his strength, to him who rises without assurance of his life he gives safety and support, and his eyes are on their ways. They are exalted for a while, and then are no more; laid low, like everyone else they are gathered



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up; like ears of grain they shrivel. If this be not so, who can make me a liar, and reduce my words to nothing?



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**Job, chapter 25**

**Bildad's Third Speech.**

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

Dominion and dread are his who brings about harmony in his heavens. Is there any numbering of his troops? Yet on which of them does his light not rise? How can anyone be in the right against God, or how can any born of woman be innocent? Even the moon is not bright and the stars are not clean in his eyes. How much less a human being, who is but a worm, a mortal, who is only a maggot?



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**Job, chapter 26**

**Job's Reply.**

Then Job answered and said:

What help you give to the powerless, what strength to the feeble arm! How you give counsel to one without wisdom; how profuse is the advice you offer! With whose help have you uttered those words, whose breath comes forth from you? The shades beneath writhe in terror, the waters, and their inhabitants. Naked before him is Sheol, and Abaddon has no covering. He stretches out Zaphon over the void, and suspends the earth over nothing at all; He binds up the waters in his clouds, yet the cloud is not split by their weight;

He holds back the appearance of the full moon by spreading his clouds before it. He has marked out a circle on the surface of the deep as the boundary of light and darkness. The pillars of the heavens tremble and are stunned at his thunderous rebuke; By his power he stilled Sea, by his skill he crushed Rahab; By his wind the heavens were made clear, his hand pierced the fleeing serpent. Lo, these are but the outlines of his ways, and what a whisper of a word we hear of him: Who can comprehend the thunder of his power?



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**Job, chapter 27**

**Job's Reply.**

Job took up his theme again and said:

As God lives, who takes away my right, the Almighty, who has made my life bitter, So long as I still have life breath in me, the breath of God in my nostrils, My lips shall not speak falsehood, nor my tongue utter deceit! Far be it from me to account you right; till I die I will not renounce my innocence. My justice I maintain and I will not relinquish it; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days. Let my enemy be as the wicked and my adversary as the unjust! For what hope has the impious when he is cut off, when God requires his life? Will God then listen to his cry when distress comes upon him, If he delights in the Almighty and calls upon God constantly? I will teach you what is in God's hand, and the way of the Almighty I will not conceal. Look, you yourselves have all seen it; why do you spend yourselves in empty words! This is the portion of the wicked with God, the heritage oppressors receive from the Almighty: Though his children be many, the sword awaits them. His descendants shall want for bread. His survivors shall be buried in death; their widows shall not weep. Though he heap up silver like dust and store away mounds of clothing, What he has stored the righteous shall wear, and the innocent shall divide the silver. He builds his house as of cobwebs, or like a booth put up by a watchman. He lies down a rich man, one last time; he opens his eyes—nothing is there. Terrors flood over him like water, at night the tempest carries him off. The east wind seizes him and he is gone; it sweeps him from his place; It hurls itself at him without pity, as he tries to flee from its power. It claps its hands at him, and whistles at him from its place.



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**V. The Poem on Wisdom  
Job, chapter 28**

**Where Is Wisdom to be Found?**

There is indeed a mine for silver, and a place for refining gold. Iron is taken from the earth, and copper smelted out of stone. He sets a boundary for the darkness; the farthest confines he explores. He breaks open a shaft far from habitation, unknown to human feet; suspended, far from people, they sway. The earth, though out of it comes forth bread, is in fiery upheaval underneath. Its stones are the source of lapis lazuli, and there is gold in its dust. The path no bird of prey knows, nor has the hawk's eye seen it. The proud beasts have not trodden it, nor has the lion gone that way. He sets his hand to the flinty rock, and overturns the mountains at their root. He splits channels in the rocks; his eyes behold all that is precious. He dams up the sources of the streams, and brings hidden things to light. As for wisdom—where can she be found? Where is the place of understanding? Mortals do not know her path, nor is she to be found in the land of the living. The Deep says, "She is not in me"; and the Sea says, "She is not with me." Solid gold cannot purchase her, nor can her price be paid with silver. She cannot be bought with gold of Ophir, with precious onyx or lapis lazuli, Gold or crystal cannot equal her, nor can golden vessels be exchanged for her. Neither coral nor crystal should be thought of; the value of wisdom surpasses pearls. Ethiopian topaz does not equal her, nor can she be weighed out for pure gold. As for wisdom, where does she come from? Where is the place of understanding? She is hidden from the eyes of every living thing; even from the birds of the air she is concealed. Abaddon and Death say, "Only by rumor have we heard of her." But God understands the way to her; it is he who knows her place. For he beholds the ends of the earth and sees all that is under the heavens. When he weighed out the wind, and measured out the waters; When he made a rule for the rain and a path for the thunderbolts, Then he saw wisdom and appraised her, established her, and searched her out. And to mortals he said: See: the fear of the Lord is wisdom; and avoiding evil is understanding.



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**VI. Job's Final Summary of His Cause  
Job, chapter 29**

Job took up his theme again and said:

Oh, that I were as in the months past, as in the days when God watched over me: While he kept his lamp shining above my head, and by his light I walked through darkness; As I was in my flourishing days, when God sheltered my tent; When the Almighty was still with me, and my children were round about me; When my footsteps were bathed in cream, and the rock flowed with streams of oil. Whenever I went out to the gate of the city and took my seat in the square, The young men saw me and withdrew, and the elders rose up and stood; Officials refrained from speaking and covered their mouths with their hands; The voice of the princes was silenced, and their tongues stuck to the roofs of their mouths. The ear that heard blessed me; the eye that saw acclaimed me. For I rescued the poor who cried out for help, the orphans, and the unassisted; The blessing of those in extremity came upon me, and the heart of the widow I made joyful. I wore my righteousness like a garment; justice was my robe and my turban. I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame was I. I was a father to the poor; the complaint of the stranger I pursued, And I broke the jaws of the wicked man; from his teeth I forced the prey. I said: "In my own nest I shall grow old; I shall multiply years like the phoenix. My root is spread out to the waters; the dew rests by night on my branches. My glory is fresh within me, and my bow is renewed in my hand!" For me they listened and waited; they were silent for my counsel. Once I spoke, they said no more, but received my pronouncement drop by drop. They waited for me as for the rain; they drank in my words like the spring rains. When I smiled on them they could not believe it; they would not let the light of my face be dimmed. I decided their course and sat at their head, I lived like a king among the troops, like one who comforts mourners.



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**Job, chapter 30**

But now they hold me in derision who are younger than I, Whose fathers I should have disdained to rank with the dogs of my flock. Such strength as they had meant nothing to me; their vigor had perished. In want and emaciating hunger they fled to the parched lands: to the desolate wasteland by night. They plucked saltwort and shrubs; the roots of the broom plant were their food. They were banished from the community, with an outcry like that against a thief—To dwell on the slopes of the wadies, in caves of sand and stone; Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they huddled together. Irresponsible, of no account, they were driven out of the land. Yet now they sing of me in mockery; I have become a byword among them. They abhor me, they stand aloof, they do not hesitate to spit in my face! Because he has loosened my bowstring and afflicted me, they have thrown off restraint in my presence. On my right the young rabble rise up; they trip my feet, they build their approaches for my ruin. They tear up my path, they promote my ruin, no helper is there against them. As through a wide breach they advance; amid the uproar they come on in waves; terrors roll over me. My dignity is driven off like the wind, and my well-being vanishes like a cloud. And now my life ebbs away from me, days of affliction have taken hold of me. At night he pierces my bones, my sinews have no rest. With great difficulty I change my clothes, the collar of my tunic fits around my waist. He has cast me into the mire; I have become like dust and ashes. I cry to you, but you do not answer me; I stand, but you take no notice. You have turned into my tormentor, and with your strong hand you attack me. You raise me up and drive me before the wind; I am tossed about by the tempest. Indeed, I know that you will return me to death to the house destined for everyone alive. Yet should not a hand be held out to help a wretched person in distress? Did I not weep for the hardships of others; was not my soul grieved for the poor? Yet when I looked for good, evil came; when I expected light, darkness came. My inward parts seethe and will not be stilled; days of affliction have overtaken me. I go about in gloom, without the sun; I rise in the assembly and cry for help. I have become a brother to jackals, a companion to ostriches. My blackened skin falls away from me; my very frame is scorched by the heat. My lyre is tuned to mourning, and my reed pipe to sounds of weeping.



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**Job, chapter 31**

I made a covenant with my eyes not to gaze upon a virgin. What portion comes from God above, what heritage from the Almighty on high? Is it not calamity for the unrighteous, and woe for evildoers? Does he not see my ways, and number all my steps? If I have walked in falsehood and my foot has hastened to deceit, Let God weigh me in the scales of justice; thus will he know my innocence! If my steps have turned out of the way, and my heart has followed my eyes, or any stain clings to my hands, Then may I sow, but another eat, and may my produce be rooted up! If my heart has been enticed toward a woman, and I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door; Then may my wife grind for another, and may others kneel over her! For that would be heinous, a crime to be condemned, A fire that would consume down to Abaddon till it uprooted all my crops. Had I refused justice to my manservant or to my maidservant, when they had a complaint against me, What then should I do when God rises up? What could I answer when he demands an account? Did not he who made me in the belly make him? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? If I have denied anything that the poor desired, or allowed the eyes of the widow to languish While I ate my portion alone, with no share in it for the fatherless, Though like a father he has reared me from my youth, guiding me even from my mother's womb—If I have seen a wanderer without clothing, or a poor man without covering, Whose limbs have not blessed me when warmed with the fleece of my sheep; If I have raised my hand against the innocent because I saw that I had supporters at the gate—Then may my arm fall from the shoulder, my forearm be broken at the elbow! For I dread calamity from God, and his majesty will overpower me. Had I put my trust in gold or called fine gold my security; Or had I rejoiced that my wealth was great, or that my hand had acquired abundance—Had I looked upon the light as it shone, or the moon in the splendor of its progress, And had my heart been secretly enticed to blow them a kiss with my hand, This too would be a crime for condemnation, for I should have denied God above. Had I rejoiced at the destruction of my enemy or exulted when evil came upon him, Even though I had not allowed my mouth to sin by invoking a curse against his life—Had not the men of my tent exclaimed, "Who has not been filled with his meat!" No stranger lodged in the street, for I opened my door to wayfarers—Had I, all too human,



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hidden my sins and buried my guilt in my bosom Because I feared the great multitude and the scorn of the clans terrified me—then I should have remained silent, and not come out of doors! Oh, that I had one to hear my case: here is my signature: let the Almighty answer me! Let my accuser write out his indictment! Surely, I should wear it on my shoulder or put it on me like a diadem; Of all my steps I should give him an account; like a prince I should present myself before him. If my land has cried out against me till its furrows wept together; If I have eaten its strength without payment and grieved the hearts of its tenants; Then let the thorns grow instead of wheat and stinkweed instead of barley! The words of Job are ended.



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**VII. Elihu's Speeches  
Job, chapter 32**

Then the three men ceased to answer Job, because in his own eyes he was in the right. But the anger of Elihu, son of Barachel the Buzite, of the clan of Ram, was kindled. He was angry with Job for considering himself rather than God to be in the right. He was angry also with the three friends because they had not found a good answer and had not condemned Job. But since these men were older than he, Elihu bided his time before addressing Job. When, however, Elihu saw that there was no reply in the mouths of the three men, his wrath was inflamed. So Elihu, son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said:

I am young and you are very old; therefore, I held back and was afraid to declare to you my knowledge. I thought, days should speak, and many years teach wisdom! But there is a spirit in human beings, the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding. It is not those of many days who are wise, nor the aged who understand the right. Therefore, I say, listen to me; I also will declare my knowledge! Behold, I have waited for your words, have given ear to your arguments, as you searched out what to say. Yes, I followed you attentively: And look, none of you has convicted Job, not one could refute his statements. So do not say, "We have met wisdom; God can vanquish him but no mortal!" For had he addressed his words to me, I would not then have answered him with your words. They are dismayed, they make no more reply; words fail them. Must I wait? Now that they speak no more, and have ceased to make reply, I too will speak my part; I also will declare my knowledge! For I am full of words; the spirit within me compels me. My belly is like unopened wine, like wineskins ready to burst. Let me speak and obtain relief; let me open my lips, and reply. I would not be partial to anyone, nor give flattering titles to any. For I know nothing of flattery; if I did, my Maker would soon take me away.



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**Job, chapter 33**

Therefore, O Job, hear my discourse; listen to all my words. Behold, now I open my mouth; my tongue and voice form words. I will state directly what is in my mind, my lips shall speak knowledge clearly; For the spirit of God made me, the breath of the Almighty keeps me alive. If you are able, refute me; draw up your arguments and take your stand. Look, I am like you before God, I too was pinched from clay. Therefore, fear of me should not dismay you, nor should I weigh heavily upon you. But you have said in my hearing, as I listened to the sound of your words: "I am clean, without transgression; I am innocent, there is no guilt in me. Yet he invents pretexts against me and counts me as an enemy. He puts my feet in the stocks, watches all my paths!" In this you are not just, let me tell you; for God is greater than mortals. Why, then, do you make complaint against him that he gives no reply to their words? For God does speak, once, even twice, though you do not see it: In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon mortals as they slumber in their beds. It is then he opens their ears and with a warning, terrifies them, By turning mortals from acting and keeping pride away from a man, He holds his soul from the pit, his life from passing to the grave. Or he is chastened on a bed of pain, suffering continually in his bones, So that to his appetite food is repulsive, his throat rejects the choicest nourishment. His flesh is wasted, it cannot be seen; bones, once invisible, appear; His soul draws near to the pit, his life to the place of the dead. If then there be a divine messenger, a mediator, one out of a thousand, to show him what is right, He will take pity on him and say, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found him a ransom." Then his flesh shall become soft as a boy's; he shall be again as in the days of his youth. He shall pray and God will favor him; he shall see God's face with rejoicing; for he restores a person's righteousness. He shall sing before all and say, "I sinned and did wrong, yet I was not punished accordingly. He delivered me from passing to the pit, and my life sees light." See, all these things God does, two, even three times, for a man, Bringing back his soul from the pit to the light, in the light of the living. Be attentive, Job, listen to me! Be silent and I will speak. If you have anything to say, then answer me. Speak out! I should like to see you justified. If not, then you listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.



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**Job, chapter 34**

Then Elihu answered and said: Hear my discourse, you that are wise; you that have knowledge, listen to me! For the ear tests words, as the palate tastes food. Let us choose what is right; let us determine among ourselves what is good. For Job has said, "I am innocent, but God has taken away what is my right. I declare the judgment on me to be a lie; my arrow-wound is incurable, sinless though I am." What man is like Job? He drinks in blasphemies like water, Keeps company with evildoers and goes along with the wicked, When he says, "There is no profit in pleasing God." Therefore, you that have understanding, hear me: far be it from God to do wickedness; far from the Almighty to do wrong!

Rather, he requites mortals for their conduct, and brings home to them their way of life. Surely, God cannot act wickedly, the Almighty cannot pervert justice. Who gave him charge over the earth, or who set all the world in its place? If he were to set his mind to it, gather to himself his spirit and breath, All flesh would perish together, and mortals return to dust. Now you—understand, hear this! Listen to the words I speak! Can an enemy of justice be in control, will you condemn the supreme Just One, Who says to a king, "You are worthless!" and to nobles, "You are wicked!" Who neither favors the person of princes, nor respects the rich more than the poor? For they are all the work of his hands; in a moment they die, even at midnight. People are shaken, and pass away, the powerful are removed without lifting a hand; For his eyes are upon our ways, and all our steps he sees. There is no darkness so dense that evildoers can hide in it. For no one has God set a time to come before him in judgment. Without inquiry he shatters the mighty, and appoints others in their place, Thus he discerns their works; overnight they are crushed. Where the wicked are, he strikes them, in a place where all can see, Because they turned away from him and did not understand his ways at all: And made the cry of the poor reach him, so that he heard the cry of the afflicted.

If he is silent, who then can condemn? If he hides his face, who then can behold him, whether nation or individual? Let an impious man not rule, nor those who ensnare their people. Should anyone say to God, "I



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accept my punishment; I will offend no more; What I cannot see, teach me: if I have done wrong, I will do so no more.” Would you then say that God must punish, when you are disdainful? It is you who must choose, not I; speak, therefore, what you know. Those who understand will say to me, all the wise who hear my views: “Job speaks without knowledge, his words make no sense. Let Job be tested to the limit, since his answers are those of the impious; For he is adding rebellion to his sin by brushing off our arguments and addressing many words to God.”



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**Job, chapter 35**

Then Elihu answered and said:

Do you think it right to say, "I am in the right, not God"? When you ask what it profits you, "What advantage do I have from not sinning?" I have words for a reply to you and your friends as well. Look up to the skies and see; behold the heavens high above you. If you sin, what do you do to God? Even if your offenses are many, how do you affect him? If you are righteous, what do you give him, or what does he receive from your hand? Your wickedness affects only someone like yourself, and your justice, only a fellow human being. In great oppression people cry out; they call for help because of the power of the great, No one says, "Where is God, my Maker, who gives songs in the night, Teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens?" Though thus they cry out, he does not answer because of the pride of the wicked. But it is idle to say God does not hear or that the Almighty does not take notice. Even though you say, "You take no notice of it," the case is before him; with trembling wait upon him. But now that you have done otherwise, God's anger punishes, nor does he show much concern over a life. Yet Job to no purpose opens his mouth, multiplying words without knowledge.



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**Job, chapter 36**

Elihu continued and said:

Wait a little and I will instruct you, for there are still words to be said for God. I will assemble arguments from afar, and for my maker I will establish what is right. For indeed, my words are not a lie; one perfect in knowledge is before you. Look, God is great, not disdainful; his strength of purpose is great. He does not preserve the life of the wicked. He establishes the right of the poor; he does not divert his eyes from the just. But he seats them upon thrones with kings, exalted forever. If they are bound with fetters, held fast by bonds of affliction, He lets them know what they have done, and how arrogant are their sins. He opens their ears to correction and tells them to turn back from evil. If they listen and serve him, they spend their days in prosperity, their years in happiness. But if they do not listen, they pass to the grave, they perish for lack of knowledge. The impious in heart lay up anger; they do not cry for help when he binds them; They will die young—their life among the reprobate. But he saves the afflicted through their affliction, and opens their ears through oppression. He entices you from distress, to a broad place without constraint; what rests on your table is rich food. Though you are full of the judgment of the wicked, judgment and justice will be maintained. Let not anger at abundance entice you, nor great bribery lead you astray. Will your wealth equip you against distress, or all your exertions of strength? Do not long for the night, when peoples vanish in their place. Be careful; do not turn to evil; for this you have preferred to affliction. Look, God is exalted in his power. What teacher is there like him? Who prescribes for him his way? Who says, "You have done wrong"? Remember, you should extol his work, which people have praised in song. All humankind beholds it; everyone views it from afar. See, God is great beyond our knowledge, the number of his years past searching out. He holds in check the waterdrops that filter in rain from his flood, Till the clouds flow with them and they rain down on all humankind. Can anyone understand the spreading clouds, the thunderings from his tent? Look, he spreads his light over it, it covers the roots of the sea. For by these he judges the



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nations, and gives food in abundance. In his hands he holds the lightning, and he commands it to strike the mark. His thunder announces him and incites the fury of the storm.



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**Job, chapter 37**

At this my heart trembles and leaps out of its place. Listen to his angry voice and the rumble that comes forth from his mouth! Everywhere under the heavens he sends it, with his light, to the ends of the earth. Again his voice roars, his majestic voice thunders; he does not restrain them when his voice is heard. God thunders forth marvels with his voice; he does great things beyond our knowing. He says to the snow, "Fall to the earth"; likewise to his heavy, drenching rain. He shuts up all humankind indoors, so that all people may know his work. The wild beasts take to cover and remain quiet in their dens. Out of its chamber the tempest comes forth; from the north winds, the cold. With his breath God brings the frost, and the broad waters congeal. The clouds too are laden with moisture, the storm-cloud scatters its light. He it is who changes their rounds, according to his plans, to do all that he commands them across the inhabited world.

Whether for punishment or mercy, he makes it happen. Listen to this, Job! Stand and consider the marvels of God! Do you know how God lays his command upon them, and makes the light shine forth from his clouds? Do you know how the clouds are banked, the marvels of him who is perfect in knowledge? You, who swelter in your clothes when calm lies over the land from the south, Can you with him spread out the firmament of the skies, hard as a molten mirror? Teach us then what we shall say to him; we cannot, for the darkness, make our plea. Will he be told about it when I speak? Can anyone talk when he is being destroyed? Rather, it is as the light that cannot be seen while it is obscured by the clouds, till the wind comes by and sweeps them away. From Zaphon the golden splendor comes, surrounding God's awesome majesty! The Almighty! We cannot find him, preeminent in power and judgment, abundant in justice, who never oppresses. Therefore, people fear him; none can see him, however wise their hearts.



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**VIII. The Lord and Job Meet  
Job, chapter 38**

Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm and said:

Who is this who darkens counsel with words of ignorance? Gird up your loins now, like a man; I will question you, and you tell me the answers! Where were you when I founded the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its size? Surely you know? Who stretched out the measuring line for it? Into what were its pedestals sunk, and who laid its cornerstone, While the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Who shut within doors the sea, when it burst forth from the womb, When I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling bands? When I set limits for it and fastened the bar of its door, And said: Thus far shall you come but no farther, and here shall your proud waves stop? Have you ever in your lifetime commanded the morning and shown the dawn its place For taking hold of the ends of the earth, till the wicked are shaken from it? The earth is changed as clay by the seal, and dyed like a garment; But from the wicked their light is withheld, and the arm of pride is shattered. Have you entered into the sources of the sea, or walked about on the bottom of the deep? Have the gates of death been shown to you, or have you seen the gates of darkness? Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth? Tell me, if you know it all. What is the way to the dwelling of light, and darkness—where is its place? That you may take it to its territory and know the paths to its home? You know, because you were born then, and the number of your days is great! Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, and seen the storehouses of the hail Which I have reserved for times of distress, for a day of war and battle? What is the way to the parting of the winds, where the east wind spreads over the earth? Who has laid out a channel for the downpour and a path for the thunderstorm To bring rain to uninhabited land, the unpeopled wilderness; To drench the desolate wasteland till the desert blooms with verdure? Has the rain a father? Who has begotten the drops of dew? Out of whose womb comes the ice, and who gives the hoarfrost its birth in the skies, When the waters lie covered as though with stone that holds captive the surface of the deep? Have you tied cords to the



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Pleiades, or loosened the bonds of Orion? Can you bring forth the Mazzaroth in their season, or guide the Bear with her children? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens; can you put into effect their plan on the earth?

Can you raise your voice to the clouds, for them to cover you with a deluge of waters? Can you send forth the lightnings on their way, so that they say to you, "Here we are"? Who gives wisdom to the ibis, and gives the rooster understanding? Who counts the clouds with wisdom? Who tilts the water jars of heaven So that the dust of earth is fused into a mass and its clods stick together? Do you hunt the prey for the lion or appease the hunger of young lions, While they crouch in their dens, or lie in ambush in the thicket? Who provides nourishment for the raven when its young cry out to God, wandering about without food?



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**Job, chapter 39**

Do you know when mountain goats are born, or watch for the birth pangs of deer, Number the months that they must fulfill, or know when they give birth, When they crouch down and drop their young, when they deliver their progeny? Their offspring thrive and grow in the open, they leave and do not return. Who has given the wild donkey his freedom, and who has loosed the wild ass from bonds? I have made the wilderness his home and the salt flats his dwelling. He scoffs at the uproar of the city, hears no shouts of a driver. He ranges the mountains for pasture, and seeks out every patch of green. Will the wild ox consent to serve you, or pass the nights at your manger? Will you bind the wild ox with a rope in the furrow, and will he plow the valleys after you? Will you depend on him for his great strength and leave to him the fruits of your toil? Can you rely on him to bring in your grain and gather in the yield of your threshing floor? The wings of the ostrich flap away; her plumage is lacking in feathers. When she abandons her eggs on the ground and lets them warm in the sand, She forgets that a foot may crush them, that the wild beasts may trample them; She cruelly disowns her young and her labor is useless; she has no fear. For God has withheld wisdom from her and given her no share in understanding. Yet when she spreads her wings high, she laughs at a horse and rider. Do you give the horse his strength, and clothe his neck with a mane? Do you make him quiver like a locust, while his thunderous snorting spreads terror? He paws the valley, he rejoices in his strength, and charges into battle. He laughs at fear and cannot be terrified; he does not retreat from the sword. Around him rattles the quiver, flashes the spear and the javelin. Frenzied and trembling he devours the ground; he does not hold back at the sound of the trumpet; at the trumpet's call he cries, "Aha!" Even from afar he scents the battle, the roar of the officers and the shouting. Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars, that he spreads his wings toward the south? Does the eagle fly up at your command to build his nest up high? On a cliff he dwells and spends the night, on the spur of cliff or fortress. From there he watches for his food; his eyes behold it afar off. His young ones greedily drink blood; where the slain are, there is he.



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**Job, chapter 40**

The LORD then answered Job and said: Will one who argues with the Almighty be corrected? Let him who would instruct God give answer! Then Job answered the LORD and said: Look, I am of little account; what can I answer you? I put my hand over my mouth. I have spoken once, I will not reply; twice, but I will do so no more. Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm and said: Gird up your loins now, like a man. I will question you, and you tell me the answers! Would you refuse to acknowledge my right? Would you condemn me that you may be justified? Have you an arm like that of God, or can you thunder with a voice like his? Adorn yourself with grandeur and majesty, and clothe yourself with glory and splendor. Let loose the fury of your wrath; look at everyone who is proud and bring them down. Look at everyone who is proud, and humble them. Tear down the wicked in their place, bury them in the dust together; in the hidden world imprison them. Then will I too praise you, for your own right hand can save you. Look at Behemoth, whom I made along with you, who feeds on grass like an ox. See the strength in his loins, the power in the sinews of his belly. He carries his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are like cables. His bones are like tubes of bronze; his limbs are like iron rods. He is the first of God's ways, only his maker can approach him with a sword. For the mountains bring him produce, and all wild animals make sport there. Under lotus trees he lies, in coverts of the reedy swamp. The lotus trees cover him with their shade; all about him are the poplars in the wadi. If the river grows violent, he is not disturbed; he is tranquil though the Jordan surges about his mouth. Who can capture him by his eyes, or pierce his nose with a trap? Can you lead Leviathan about with a hook, or tie down his tongue with a rope? Can you put a ring into his nose, or pierce through his cheek with a gaff? Will he then plead with you, time after time, or address you with tender words? Will he make a covenant with you that you may have him as a slave forever? Can you play with him, as with a bird? Can you tie him up for your little girls? Will the traders bargain for him? Will the merchants divide him up? Can you fill his hide with barbs, or his head with fish spears? Once you but lay a hand upon him, no need to recall any other conflict!



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**Job, chapter 41**

Whoever might vainly hope to do so need only see him to be overthrown. No one is fierce enough to arouse him; who then dares stand before me? Whoever has assailed me, I will pay back—Everything under the heavens is mine. I need hardly mention his limbs, his strength, and the fitness of his equipment. Who can strip off his outer garment, or penetrate his double armor? Who can force open the doors of his face, close to his terrible teeth? Rows of scales are on his back, tightly sealed together; They are fitted so close to each other that no air can come between them; So joined to one another that they hold fast and cannot be parted. When he sneezes, light flashes forth; his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn. Out of his mouth go forth torches; sparks of fire leap forth. From his nostrils comes smoke as from a seething pot or bowl. His breath sets coals afire; a flame comes from his mouth. Strength abides in his neck, and power leaps before him. The folds of his flesh stick together, it is cast over him and immovable. His heart is cast as hard as stone; cast as the lower millstone. When he rises up, the gods are afraid; when he crashes down, they fall back. Should a sword reach him, it will not avail; nor will spear, dart, or javelin. He regards iron as chaff, and bronze as rotten wood. No arrow will put him to flight; slingstones used against him are but straw. Clubs he regards as straw; he laughs at the crash of the spear. Under him are sharp pottery fragments, spreading a threshing sledge upon the mire. He makes the depths boil like a pot; he makes the sea like a perfume bottle. Behind him he leaves a shining path; you would think the deep had white hair. Upon the earth there is none like him, he was made fearless. He looks over all who are haughty, he is king over all proud beasts.



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**Job, chapter 42**

Then Job answered the LORD and said: I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be hindered. "Who is this who obscures counsel with ignorance?" I have spoken but did not understand; things too marvelous for me, which I did not know. "Listen, and I will speak; I will question you, and you tell me the answers." By hearsay I had heard of you, but now my eye has seen you. Therefore, I disown what I have said, and repent in dust and ashes.

**IX. Epilogue**

**Job's Restoration.**

And after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My anger blazes against you and your two friends! You have not spoken rightly concerning me, as has my servant Job. So now take seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves, and let my servant Job pray for you. To him I will show favor, and not punish your folly, for you have not spoken rightly concerning me, as has my servant Job." Then Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went and did as the LORD had commanded them. The LORD showed favor to Job.

The LORD also restored the prosperity of Job, after he had prayed for his friends; the LORD even gave to Job twice as much as he had before. Then all his brothers and sisters came to him, and all his former acquaintances, and they dined with him in his house. They consoled and comforted him for all the evil the LORD had brought upon him, and each one gave him a piece of money and a gold ring. Thus the LORD blessed the later days of Job more than his earlier ones. Now he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters: the first daughter he called Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch.



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In all the land no other women were as beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; and he saw his children, his grandchildren, and even his great-grandchildren. Then Job died, old and full of years.