EDIFIED EDITION

Job

A modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures

42	1,070	Old	18
chapters	verses	Testament	book of 66

Contents

Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 3
Chapter 4
Chapter 5
Chapter 6
Chapter 7
Chapter 8
Chapter 9
Chapter 10
Chapter 11
Chapter 12
Chapter 13
Chapter 14
Chapter 15
Chapter 16
Chapter 17
Chapter 18
Chapter 19
Chapter 20
Chapter 21
Chapter 22
Chapter 23
Chapter 24
Chapter 25
Chapter 26
Chapter 27
Chapter 28
Chapter 29
Chapter 30
Chapter 31
Chapter 32
Chapter 33
Chapter 34
Chapter 35
Chapter 36
Chapter 37
Chapter 38
Chapter 39
Chapter 40
Chapter 41
Chapter 42

Edified Edition (EDE): a modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, in everyday British English. www.edifiededition.com

Numbered notes follow each chapter.

© 2026 Edified Edition. Made 8 November 2026.

Chapter 1

Job 1 introduces Job of Uz, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil, the greatest man of the East, with seven sons, three daughters and great flocks and herds. He offers burnt offerings for his children in case they have sinned. When the sons of God present themselves before the LORD, the Accuser comes among them. The LORD points to His servant Job, but the Accuser answers that Job fears God only because God has blessed him; take it all away, and he will curse God to His face. The LORD allows him to touch all that Job has, but not Job himself. In one day messengers report that raiders have taken his animals and killed his servants, that fire has fallen on his sheep, and that a great wind has killed all his children. Job tears his robe, shaves his head and worships, saying that the LORD gave and the LORD has taken. In all this Job does not sin or charge God with wrong.

1 In the land of Uz[1] lived a man called Job,
blameless and upright, who feared God and
turned away from evil.

2 He had seven sons and three daughters.

3 He owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand
camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five
hundred female donkeys, and he had a great many
servants. He was the greatest man among all the
people of the East.

4 His sons used to hold feasts in their homes, each
on his own day, and they would invite their three
sisters to eat and drink with them.

5 When the days of feasting had run their course,
Job would send for them and purify them. Early in
the morning he would offer a burnt offering for
each of them, for he thought, “Perhaps my
children have sinned and cursed[2] God in their
hearts.” This was Job’s regular custom.

6 One day the sons of God[3] came to present
themselves before the LORD, and the Accuser[4]
also came among them.

7 The LORD said to the Accuser, “Where have you
come from?” The Accuser answered the LORD,
“From roaming through the earth and walking
back and forth on it.”

8 The LORD said to the Accuser, “Have you
considered My servant Job? There is no one like
him on earth, a blameless and upright man who
fears God and turns away from evil.”

9 The Accuser answered the LORD, “Does Job fear
God for nothing?

10 Have You not put a hedge around him, his
household and all that he has? You have blessed
the work of his hands, and his possessions have
spread throughout the land.

11 But now reach out Your hand and strike all that
he owns, and he will curse You to Your face.”

12 The LORD said to the Accuser, “Very well, all
that he has is in your power, only do not lay a
hand on the man himself.” So the Accuser went
out from the presence of the LORD.

13 One day, when his sons and daughters were
eating and drinking wine in the house of their
eldest brother,

14 a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen
were ploughing and the donkeys were grazing
beside them,

15 when the Sabeans swooped down and carried
them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I
alone have escaped to tell you.”

16 He had not finished speaking when another
arrived and said, “God’s fire fell from the sky and
burned up the sheep and the servants, consuming
them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

17 While he was still speaking, another came and
said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided
the camels and carried them off. They put the
servants to the sword, and I alone have escaped to
tell you.”

18 While he was still speaking, another came and
said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating
and drinking wine in the house of their eldest
brother,

19 when a mighty wind came from across the
desert and struck the four corners of the house. It
fell on the young people and they are dead, and I
alone have escaped to tell you.”

20 Then Job got up, tore his robe and shaved his
head. He fell to the ground and worshipped.

21 He said, “Naked I came out of my mother’s
womb, and naked I will go back. The LORD gave,
and the LORD has taken away; may the name of
the LORD be blessed.”

22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with
wrong.

1 Probably in the region of Edom or northern Arabia; compare Lamentations 4:21.

2 Hebrew ‘blessed’, a polite way of avoiding the thought of cursing God; so also in 1:11; 2:5, 9.

3 Heavenly beings; compare 38:7.

4 Hebrew *ha-satan*, ‘the accuser’ or ‘the adversary’, a title; so throughout chapters 1–2. Compare 1 Chronicles 21:1 and Zechariah 3:1–2.

Chapter 2

Job 2 tells how the sons of God again present themselves before the LORD. The LORD points to Job, who still holds fast to his integrity, though the Accuser incited Him to ruin him without cause. The Accuser replies that a man will give all he has for his life; strike his flesh and bone, and he will curse God to His face. The LORD gives Job into his power but tells him to spare his life. Job is struck with painful sores from head to foot, and he sits among the ashes, scraping himself with a piece of broken pottery. His wife urges him to curse God and die, but he answers that they must accept trouble from God as well as good. Job does not sin with his lips. His three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, come to comfort him. They hardly recognise him; they weep, tear their robes and sit with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, and no one speaks a word, for they see how great his suffering is.

1 One day the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and the Accuser also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

2 The LORD said to the Accuser, “Where have you come from?” The Accuser answered the LORD, “From roaming through the earth and walking back and forth on it.”

3 The LORD said to the Accuser, “Have you considered My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still holds fast to his integrity, though you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.”

4 The Accuser answered the LORD, “Skin for skin![1] A man will give all that he has for his life.

5 But now reach out Your hand and strike his bone and his flesh, and he will curse You to Your face.”

6 The LORD said to the Accuser, “Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life.”

7 So the Accuser went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with painful sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

8 Job took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself with, and he sat among the ashes.

9 His wife said to him, “Are you still holding fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!”

10 But he said to her, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God and not accept trouble?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

11 When Job’s three friends heard of all this trouble that had come on him, they came, each from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite. They agreed to meet and go to show him sympathy and comfort him.

12 When they looked up from a distance, they could hardly recognise him. They wept aloud, and each of them tore his robe and threw dust into the air over their heads.

13 Then they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, for they saw how very great his suffering was.

1 Probably a proverb; its exact sense is uncertain.

Chapter 3

Job 3 tells how Job at last opens his mouth and curses the day of his birth. He wishes that day and the night of his conception had been swallowed in darkness and blotted from the calendar, because they did not shut the doors of his mother’s womb. Why did he not die at birth? Then he would be at rest with kings and counsellors, like a stillborn child that never saw the light, in the place where the wicked cease from troubling, the weary rest, the prisoners are at ease and the slave is free. Why is light given to those in misery, who long for death as for hidden treasure, and whose way God has hedged in? His sighing is his food, his groans pour out like water; what he feared has come on him, and he has no peace, only turmoil.

1 After this Job broke his silence and cursed the
day of his birth.
2 Job said:
3 “Let the day perish on which I was born, and the
night that said, ‘A boy is conceived.’
4 Let that day be darkness. May God above not
look for it, and may no light shine on it.
5 Let darkness and deep shadow claim it again; let
a cloud settle on it, and blackness of the day
terrify it.
6 As for that night, let thick darkness seize it. Let it
not be counted among the days of the year, nor
enter the number of the months.
7 Yes, let that night be barren; let no cry of joy be
heard in it.
8 Let those who curse days curse it, those who are
skilled at rousing Leviathan.[1]
9 Let the stars of its dawn be dark. Let it wait for
light that never comes, and let it not see the
eyelids of the morning,
10 because it did not shut the doors of my mother’s
womb, or hide trouble from my eyes.
11 Why did I not die at birth, or perish as I came
from the womb?
12 Why were there knees to receive me, or breasts
for me to suck?
13 For now I would be lying down in quiet; I would
be asleep and at rest,
14 with kings and counsellors of the earth, who
rebuilt ruins for themselves,
15 or with princes rich in gold, whose houses were
stuffed with silver.
16 Or why was I not hidden like a stillborn child,
like infants who never saw the light?
17 There the wicked rage no more, and there the
exhausted find rest.
18 There the prisoners are at ease together; they
no longer hear the slave driver’s voice.
19 Small and great alike are there, and the slave
has left his master behind.
20 Why is light given to the wretched, and life to
the bitter in soul,
21 who long for death, and it does not come, who
search for it more than for hidden treasure,
22 who would rejoice with gladness and be glad to
find the grave?
23 Why give light to a man who cannot see his
road, whom God has hemmed in?
24 For my sighing comes in place of my food, and
my groans pour out like water.
25 What I feared most has come on me, and what I
dreaded has happened to me.
26 I have no ease, no quiet, no rest; only turmoil
comes.”

1 A sea monster, symbol of chaos, thought to be stirred up by sorcerers; compare 41:1.

Chapter 4

Job 4 begins the first speech of Eliphaz the Temanite. He reminds Job that he has often strengthened others, but now he himself is dismayed. Should his fear of God not be his confidence, and his blameless ways his hope? Who that was innocent ever perished? Those who plough evil and sow trouble reap the same, and by the breath of God they perish. Eliphaz tells of a word that came to him secretly at night: dread seized him, a spirit passed before his face, and a voice said that no mortal can be righteous before God. If God does not trust even His servants and charges His angels with error, how much less those who live in houses of clay, who are crushed like a moth and perish between morning and evening without wisdom.

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:
2 “If someone ventures a word with you, will you
be offended? But who can keep from speaking?
3 You have taught many, and you have
strengthened feeble hands.
4 Your words have kept the stumbling on their feet,
and you have steadied knees that were giving way.
5 But now that it has reached you, you lose heart;
now it touches you, and you are shaken.
6 Is your fear of God not your confidence, and the
integrity of your ways your hope?
7 Think now: who that was innocent ever perished?
Where were the upright ever cut off?
8 As I have seen, those who plough evil and sow
trouble reap the same.

9 God breathes, and they perish; His angry blast
finishes them.
10 The lion may roar, the fierce lion may growl, yet
the teeth of the young lions are broken.
11 The strong lion dies for lack of prey, and the
cubs of the lioness are scattered.
12 Now a word came to me in secret, and my ear
caught a whisper of it.
13 Amid unsettling thoughts in the visions of the
night, when men lie in deep sleep,
14 dread and trembling seized me and made all my
bones shake.
15 A spirit[1] glided past my face, and the hair of my
body stood on end.
16 It stood still, but I could not make out its
appearance. A form was before my eyes; there
was silence, and then I heard a voice:
17 'Can a mortal be righteous before God? Can a
man be pure before his Maker?
18 If He does not trust His own servants, and finds
fault even with His angels,
19 how much more those who live in houses of clay,
founded in the dust, who are crushed as easily as
a moth!
20 Between morning and evening they are
shattered; unnoticed, they perish for ever.
21 Is their tent cord not pulled up within them?
They die, and without wisdom.'

1 Or 'a wind'.

Chapter 5

Job 5 continues the speech of Eliphaz. No holy one will answer Job; resentment kills the fool, and his children are left unprotected. Trouble does not spring from the ground, for man is born to it. Eliphaz says that he would seek God and lay his cause before Him, who does great things beyond searching out, gives rain, lifts up the lowly and catches the wise in their craftiness. Blessed is the man God corrects, so Job must not despise the discipline of the Almighty. He wounds and He binds up; He will rescue Job from six troubles, from famine, war and slander. Job will be at peace with the stones and the wild animals, his tent will be secure, his descendants many, and he will come to his grave in full old age. This, says Eliphaz, is what they have found to be true.

1 Call out if you like; will anyone answer you?
Which of the holy ones will you turn to?
2 For resentment kills the fool, and envy slays the
simple.
3 I have seen a fool taking root, but suddenly I
cursed his home.
4 His children are far from safety; they are crushed
at the gate, with no one to rescue them.
5 The hungry devour his harvest, taking it even
from among the thorns, and the thirsty pant after
their wealth.[1]
6 For trouble does not grow out of the dust, nor
does sorrow sprout from the ground.
7 Yet man is born for trouble, as surely as sparks[2]
fly upward.
8 As for me, I would seek God, and to God I would
commit my cause.
9 He does great things beyond all searching out,
wonders without number.
10 He gives rain on the earth and sends water on
the fields.
11 He sets the lowly on high, and those who mourn
are lifted to safety.
12 He frustrates the plans of the crafty, so that
their hands achieve no success.
13 He catches the wise in their craftiness,[3] and the
schemes of the cunning are swept away.
14 They meet with darkness in the daytime, and at
noon they grope as if it were night.
15 But He saves the needy from the sword of their
mouth and from the hand of the mighty.
16 So the poor have hope, and injustice shuts its
mouth.
17 See how blessed is the man whom God corrects.
So do not reject the discipline of the Almighty.
18 For He wounds, but He binds up; He strikes, but
His hands heal.
19 He will rescue you from six troubles, and in the
seventh no harm will touch you.
20 When famine comes He will save you from
death, and when war comes, from the sword's
power.

21 You will be hidden from the lash of the tongue,
and you will not fear destruction when it comes.
22 You will laugh at destruction and famine, and
you need not fear the wild animals.
23 For you will have a covenant with the stones of
the field, and the wild animals will be at peace
with you.
24 You will know that your tent is secure; you will
inspect your home and find nothing missing.
25 You will know that your descendants will be
many, and your offspring like the grass of the
earth.
26 You will come to your grave in ripe old age, as a
stack of grain is brought in at its season.
27 See, we have looked into this, and it is true.
Hear it, and know it for yourself."

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.
2 Hebrew 'the sons of Resheph'; or 'as birds'.
3 Quoted in 1 Corinthians 3:19.

Chapter 6

Job 6 gives Job's reply. If his anguish could be weighed, it would be heavier than the sand of the seas, which is why his words have been wild, for the arrows of the Almighty are in him. He longs for God to crush him, and he would still have this comfort, that he has not denied the words of the Holy One. He has no strength left and no help within him. His friends have failed him like a seasonal stream that dries up in the heat and disappoints the caravans. He has not asked them for gifts or rescue, so let them teach him and show him where he has gone wrong. Honest words are painful, but what does their arguing prove? He asks them to look at him and to think again, for his integrity is at stake.

1 Then Job answered:
2 "If only my anguish could be weighed, and all my
calamity laid with it on the scales!
3 It would surely outweigh the sand of the seas;
that is why my words have been wild.
4 For the arrows of the Almighty are in me, and my
spirit drinks their poison; God's terrors are lined
up against me.
5 Does the wild donkey bray when it has grass, or
the ox bellow over its fodder?
6 Is tasteless food eaten without salt, or is there
any flavour in the white of an egg?[1]
7 I refuse to touch such things; they are like
loathsome food to me.
8 Oh, that my request might be granted, and that
God would give me what I hope for!
9 If only it would please God to crush me, to let
loose His hand and cut me off!
10 Then I would still have this comfort, and I would
leap for joy in unsparing pain, that I have not
denied the words of the Holy One.
11 What strength do I have left, that I should wait?
What end is in store, that I should be patient?
12 Is my strength the strength of stones? Is my
flesh made of bronze?
13 Have I any help within me, now that all success
has been driven from me?
14 A man in despair should have loyal kindness
from his friend, even if he forsakes the fear of the
Almighty.
15 My brothers have been as treacherous as a
stream, like wadis that run dry,
16 which are dark with thawing ice, swollen with
melting snow,
17 but in the dry season they vanish; when it is hot,
they disappear from their place.
18 Caravans turn aside from their routes; they go
up into the wasteland and perish.
19 The caravans of Tema looked for water, the
travelling merchants of Sheba hoped for it.
20 They were put to shame because they had
trusted; they came there and were disappointed.
21 So now you have become nothing to me.[2] You
see something terrible and take fright.
22 Have I ever said, 'Give me something,' or 'Pay a
bribe for me from your wealth,'
23 or 'Rescue me from the enemy's hand,' or
'Ransom me from the grip of the ruthless'?
24 Teach me, and I will be silent. Show me where I
have gone wrong.

25 How painful are honest words! But what does
your arguing prove?
26 Do you mean to correct what I say, when you
treat a desperate man's words as wind?
27 You would even cast lots for an orphan, and
bargain over your friend!
28 But now, please look at me. I will not lie to your
face.
29 Think again, let there be no injustice; think
again, for my integrity is at stake.
30 Is there any wrong on my tongue? Can my
palate not tell what is ruinous?

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.
2 So the written Hebrew, 'not'; the spoken text has 'to it'.

Chapter 7

Job 7 continues Job's reply, now turned towards God. Human life is hard service, like the days of a hired labourer; he has been given months of futility and nights of misery, and his flesh is clothed with worms. His days run faster than a weaver's shuttle and end without hope; he will go down to Sheol and not return. So he will not hold back his complaint. Is he the sea or a sea monster, that God sets a guard over him? God terrifies him with dreams, and he would prefer death. What is man, that God should examine him every moment? Even if he has sinned, what has he done to God, the watcher of men? Why does God not pardon him, for soon he will lie in the dust and be gone?

1 Does man not have hard service on earth? Are his
days not like the days of a hired labourer?
2 Like a slave longing for the evening shade, like a
labourer waiting for his wages,
3 so I have been allotted months of futility, and
nights of misery have been assigned to me.
4 When I lie down I think, 'When shall I get up?'
But the night drags on, and I toss until dawn.
5 My flesh is clothed with worms and scabs; my
skin hardens, then breaks open.
6 My days run faster than a weaver's shuttle, and
they come to an end without hope.[1]
7 Remember that my life is only a breath; my eye
will not see good again.
8 The eye that sees me will see me no more; Your
eyes will be on me, but I will be gone.
9 As a cloud fades and vanishes, so whoever goes
down to Sheol[2] does not come up.
10 He will never return to his house, and his place
will know him no more.
11 So I will not keep silent. I will speak out of my
spirit's anguish; I will pour out the bitterness of
my soul.
12 Am I the sea, or some monster of the deep, that
You post a guard against me?
13 When I say, 'My bed will comfort me, my couch
will ease my complaint,'
14 then You frighten me with dreams and terrify me
with visions,
15 so that I would choose strangling, and death
rather than these bones of mine.
16 I loathe my life; I will not live for ever. Leave me
alone, for my days are a breath.
17 What is man, that You make so much of him,
that You set Your mind on him,[3]
18 that You examine him every morning and test
him every moment?
19 Will You never look away from me, or leave me
alone until I swallow my spit?
20 If I have sinned, what have I done to You,
watcher of men? Why have You made me Your
target? Why have I become a burden to You?[4]
21 Why do You not pardon my offence and take
away my sin? For now I will lie down in the dust;
You will search for me, but I will be gone."

1 Or 'when the thread runs out'; the Hebrew word means both 'hope' and 'thread'.
2 The place of the dead.
3 A bitter turn on the thought of Psalm 8:4.
4 So an ancient scribal tradition and the Greek; the Hebrew has 'to myself'.

Chapter 8

Job 8 gives the first speech of Bildad the Shuhite. How long will Job's words blow like a great wind? God does not pervert justice. If Job's children sinned, God gave them over to their guilt; if Job will seek God and is pure and upright, God will restore him, and his latter days will be great. Bildad appeals to the wisdom of past generations: as papyrus withers without water, so the hope of the godless perishes, and his confidence is a spider's web. He may flourish like a plant in the sun, but he is torn from his place. God does not reject the blameless or uphold evildoers. He will yet fill Job's mouth with laughter, and his enemies will be clothed with shame.

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

2 "How long will you go on saying such things?
Your words are a blustering wind.

3 Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty
pervert what is right?

4 If your children sinned against Him, He gave
them over to the power of their offence.

5 But if you will seek God and plead with the
Almighty,

6 if you are pure and upright, then even now He
will rouse Himself for you and restore your
rightful home.

7 Your beginning will seem small, so greatly will
your latter days increase.

8 Ask now of the former generation, and consider
what their ancestors found out.

9 We were born yesterday and know nothing; a
shadow passing over the earth is all our days.

10 Will they not teach you and tell you, and bring
out words from their understanding?

11 Can papyrus grow tall where there is no marsh?
Can reeds flourish without water?

12 While still in flower and not yet cut, they wither
faster than any grass.

13 Such is the fate of all who forget God; the hope
of the godless will perish.

14 What he relies on snaps, and what he trusts in is
a spider's web.

15 He leans on his house, but it will not stand; he
clings to it, but it will not hold.

16 He is like a lush plant in the sunshine, its shoots
spreading over the garden.

17 Its roots twine round a pile of rocks, and it looks
for a place among the stones.

18 But when it is torn from its place, that place
disowns it, saying, 'I never saw you.'

19 See, that is the joy of its way,[1] and out of the
dust others will spring up.

20 See, God does not reject the blameless, nor does
He take evildoers by the hand.

21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and
your lips with shouts of joy.

22 Your enemies will wear shame like a garment,
and the tent of the wicked will vanish."

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; perhaps a bitter irony.

Chapter 9

Job 9 gives Job's reply to Bildad. He agrees that no one can be right before God, for who could argue with Him and win? God moves mountains, shakes the earth, commands the sun and stars, and made the constellations; He passes by unseen. Job could only plead for mercy before such a judge. Even if he were innocent, his own mouth would condemn him. Blameless and wicked alike are destroyed, and the earth is given into the hands of the wicked. His days fly past like swift boats. If he were to wash himself clean, God would plunge him into a pit. God is not a man whom he can answer in court, and there is no one to arbitrate between them, to lay a hand on both.

1 Then Job answered:

2 "Yes, I know that this is so. But how can a mortal
be in the right before God?

3 If someone wished to argue with Him, he could
not answer Him once in a thousand times.

4 He is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who
has defied Him and come out unharmed?

5 He moves mountains before they know it,
overturning them in His anger.

6 He jolts the earth from its place, and its pillars
quake.

7 He commands the sun, and it does not rise; He seals up the stars.

8 He alone spreads out the sky and walks on the high waves of the sea.

9 He made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south.

10 He does great things beyond all searching out, wonders without number.

11 See, He passes by me, and I do not see Him; He moves on, and I do not perceive Him.

12 If He snatches something away, who can stop Him? Who can say to Him, 'What are You doing?'

13 God does not hold back His anger; the helpers of Rahab[1] cowered beneath Him.

14 How then can I answer Him, or choose my words to argue with Him?

15 Though I were in the right, I could not answer; I could only plead with my judge for mercy.

16 If I called and He answered me, I do not believe He would listen to my voice.

17 He batters me with a storm and adds to my wounds for no reason.

18 He gives me no time to draw breath, but sates me with bitterness.

19 If it is a contest of strength, He is the mighty one! If it is a matter of justice, who can summon Him?[2]

20 Though I were in the right, my own mouth would condemn me; though I were blameless, it would prove me crooked.

21 I am blameless, but I care nothing for myself; I loathe my life.

22 It is all one; that is why I say, 'He destroys the blameless and the wicked alike.'

23 When disaster brings sudden death, He mocks the despair of the innocent.

24 The earth is handed over to the wicked, and He blindfolds its judges. If He is not the one, then who is?

25 My days are swifter than a runner; they flee away without seeing any good.

26 They skim past like boats of papyrus, like an eagle swooping on its prey.

27 If I say, 'I will forget my complaint, I will change my expression and smile,'

28 I still dread all my pains, for I know You will not hold me innocent.

29 I shall be found guilty, so why should I labour in vain?

30 Though I scrub myself with snow and clean my hands with lye,

31 You will plunge me into a pit, and my own clothes will abhor me.

32 For He is not a man like me, that I could answer Him, that we could go to court together.

33 There is no arbiter between us, to lay his hand on us both,

34 who could take His rod away from me, so that dread of Him no longer terrified me.

35 Then I would speak without fear of Him. But as things stand with me, I cannot.

1 A sea monster, symbol of chaos; compare 26:12 and Isaiah 51:9.

2 So the Greek; the Hebrew has 'summon me'.

Chapter 10

Job 10 continues Job's complaint. Loathing his life, he asks God not to condemn him but to tell him the charge. Does it please God to oppress the work of His own hands? Does He see as humans see, that He hunts for Job's sin, though He knows he is not guilty? God's hands shaped him, like clay, poured him out like milk, clothed him with skin and flesh and gave him life and loyal kindness; yet all the time He was planning this. If Job sins, God watches; if he is righteous, he still cannot lift his head. Why did God bring him out of the womb? He asks for a little comfort before he goes to the land of darkness and deep shadow, from which he will not return.

1 I loathe my life. I will give free rein to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

2 I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me. Tell me what charge You have against me.

3 Does it please You to oppress me, to reject the work of Your hands, and to smile on the schemes of the wicked?

4 Do You have eyes of flesh? Do You see as a mortal sees?

5 Are Your days like the days of a mortal, or Your years like a man’s years,

6 that You must seek out my guilt and search for my sin,

7 though You know that I am not guilty, and that no one can rescue me from Your hand?

8 Your hands shaped me and made me, and now You turn round and destroy me.

9 Remember that You made me like clay; will You turn me back to dust?

10 Did You not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese?

11 You dressed me in skin and flesh and wove me together with bones and sinews.

12 You gave me life and loyal kindness, and Your care has watched over my spirit.

13 Yet this You hid in Your heart; I know this was in Your mind.

14 If I sinned, You would be watching me and would not acquit me of my guilt.

15 If I am guilty, woe to me! If I am in the right, I still cannot lift my head, filled as I am with shame and soaked in my misery.

16 If I hold it up, You hunt me like a lion and show Your wondrous power against me again.

17 You bring new witnesses against me and increase Your anger towards me; wave after wave of forces come against me.[1]

18 Why then did You bring me out of the womb? I wish I had died before any eye saw me!

19 I would be as though I had never been, carried from the womb to the grave.

20 Are my days not few? Then stop! Leave me alone, so that I may have a little cheer

21 before I go, never to return, to the land of darkness and deep shadow,

22 the land of gloom like thick darkness, of deep shadow and disorder, where even the light is like darkness.’”

1 The meaning of the last words of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Chapter 11

Job 11 gives the first speech of Zophar the Naamathite. Should such a flood of words go unanswered? Job claims to be pure, but if God would only speak, He would show him the secrets of wisdom, and Job would see that God has forgotten part of his guilt. Can anyone find out the depths of God? They are higher than heaven and deeper than Sheol. God knows who is false. If Job will set his heart right, stretch out his hands and put away his sin, he will lift up his face without shame. His trouble will pass like waters gone by, his life will be brighter than noon, and he will rest secure; but the eyes of the wicked will fail.

1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:

2 “Should all these words go unanswered? Should a great talker be declared right?

3 Will your babbling silence people? When you mock, will no one put you to shame?

4 For you say, ‘My teaching is pure, and I am clean in Your sight.’

5 But if only God would speak and open His mouth against you,

6 and show you the secrets of wisdom, for true wisdom has two sides! Know then that God has forgotten some of your guilt.

7 Can you find out the depths of God? Can you reach the limits of the Almighty?

8 They are higher than the heavens; what can you do? They are deeper than Sheol; what can you know?

9 Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea.

10 If He passes by and locks someone up and calls an assembly, who can stop Him?

11 For He knows those who are false; when He sees wrongdoing, will He not take note?

12 An empty-headed man will gain understanding when a wild donkey’s foal is born a man.[1]

13 But if you direct your heart rightly and stretch out your hands to Him,

14 if you put away the wrongdoing in your hand and let no injustice live in your tents,

15 then you will lift up your face without blemish; you will stand firm and have no fear.

16 You will forget your trouble, and remember it only as water that has flowed away.

17 Your life will be brighter than noonday; its darkness will be like the morning.

18 You will feel secure, because there is hope; you will look around and lie down in safety.

19 You will rest, with no one to frighten you, and many will seek your favour.

20 But the eyes of the wicked will fail. There will be no escape for them; their hope is to breathe their last.”

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; probably a proverb.

Chapter 12

Job 12 begins Job’s reply to Zophar. No doubt, he says with scorn, they are the people, and wisdom will die with them; but he too has understanding. He has become a laughing stock, though he is blameless, while robbers live at ease. Let them ask the animals, the birds, the earth and the fish, for all of them know that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the life of every living thing is in His hand. Wisdom and might belong to God. He tears down and it is not rebuilt, withholds the waters and sends them. He leads counsellors away stripped, makes fools of judges, loosens the bonds of kings, overthrows the mighty, reveals deep things, makes nations great and destroys them, and takes away the understanding of leaders, so that they grope in darkness.

1 Then Job answered:

2 “Truly you are the people who matter, and wisdom will die with you!

3 But I have a mind as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Who does not know such things as these?

4 I have become a laughing stock to my friends, I who called on God and He answered me, a righteous and blameless man, a laughing stock!

5 Those at ease despise misfortune; they think it is ready for those whose feet are slipping.

6 The tents of robbers are at peace, and those who provoke God are secure, those who carry their god in their hand.[1]

7 But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you.

8 Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, and let the fish of the sea inform you.

9 Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD[2] has done this?

10 Every living creature’s life is in His hand, and the breath of every human being.

11 Does the ear not test words as the palate tastes food?

12 Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding comes with long life.

13 With God are wisdom and might; counsel and understanding are His.

14 What He tears down cannot be rebuilt; whom He imprisons cannot be released.

15 If He holds back the waters, they dry up; if He sends them out, they overwhelm the land.

16 Strength and success are with Him; both the misled and the misleader are His.

17 He leads counsellors away barefoot and makes fools of judges.

18 He undoes the belt of kings and binds a cloth round their waists.

19 He leads priests away barefoot and overthrows the long established.

20 He silences the trusted adviser and takes away the discernment of the elders.

21 He heaps contempt on nobles and slackens the belt of the strong.

22 He uncovers deep things out of the darkness and brings deep shadow into the light.

23 He makes nations great and destroys them; He enlarges nations and leads them away.

24 He takes away the understanding of the leaders of the earth and sends them wandering in a trackless waste.

25 They grope in the dark with no light, and He makes them stagger like drunkards.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

2 The only use of the name *YHWH* in the speeches of chapters 3–37; compare Isaiah 41:20.

Chapter 13

Job 13 continues Job's reply. He knows as much as his friends do, but he wants to speak to the Almighty and argue his case with God. They are plasterers of lies and worthless physicians, and it would be wisdom for them to keep silent. Will they speak falsely for God and show Him partiality? He will surely rebuke them. Job will take his life in his hands: even if God kills him, he will wait for Him and defend his ways to His face. He has prepared his case and knows he will be vindicated. He asks God to withdraw His hand and not to terrify him, and to call him or let him speak. How many are his sins? Why does God hide His face and treat him as an enemy, chasing a windblown leaf and putting his feet in the stocks?

1 All this my own eye has seen; my ear has taken it in and understood.

2 I know as much as you do; I am in no way your inferior.

3 But I would speak to the Almighty; I want to argue my case with God.

4 As for you, you smear everything with lies; you are worthless physicians, all of you.

5 If only you would keep quiet! That would be your wisdom.

6 Listen now to my argument, and pay attention to the pleas of my lips.

7 Will you speak falsely for God? Will you tell lies on His behalf?

8 Will you show Him partiality? Will you plead the case for God?

9 Would it go well if He examined you? Can you deceive Him as you might deceive a man?

10 He will surely rebuke you if you secretly show partiality.

11 Will His majesty not terrify you, and the dread of Him fall on you?

12 Your maxims are ashes; your defences crumble like clay.

13 Be silent, and let me speak, whatever may come on me.

14 Why put my flesh between my teeth, and take my life in my hands?

15 Even if He kills me, I will wait for Him;[1] I will still defend my ways to His face.

16 This itself will be my deliverance, for no godless person can come before Him.

17 Listen closely to my words, and let my declaration be in your ears.

18 See now, I have set out my case; I know that I will be proved right.

19 Who is there who will argue with me? For then I would be silent and die.

20 Only grant me two things, and then I will not hide from Your face:

21 take Your hand far away from me, and do not let Your dread terrify me.

22 Then summon me, and I will reply; or let me speak first, and You respond.

23 How many are my sins and offences? Show me my wrongdoing and my sin.

24 Why do You hide Your face and regard me as Your enemy?

25 Will You terrify a windblown leaf, and chase after dry chaff?

26 For You draw up bitter charges against me and make me pay for the sins of my youth.

27 You put my feet in the stocks and watch all my paths; You mark out the soles of my feet.

28 So man wastes away like something rotten, like a garment eaten by moths.

1 So the spoken Hebrew; the written text has 'I have no hope'.

Chapter 14

Job 14 continues Job's address to God. Man born of woman has few days, full of turmoil; he springs up like a flower and withers, flees like a shadow. Yet God fixes His eyes on him, though his days are numbered and his limits set. There is hope for a tree, for it may sprout again from a stump, but a man dies and is gone. As water evaporates from a lake, so a man lies down and does not rise until the heavens are no more. Job wishes that God would hide him in Sheol until His anger had passed, and then remember him. If a man dies, will he live again? God would call and he would answer. But now God counts his steps and seals up his offences. As water wears away stones, so God destroys the hope of man.

1 Man, born of woman, has few days, and they are
full of turmoil.
2 He comes up like a flower and withers; he flees
like a shadow and does not stay.
3 Do You fix Your eye on such a one? Will You bring
him into court with You?
4 Who can bring something clean out of what is
unclean? No one!
5 Since his days are determined, and the number
of his months is with You, and You have set limits
he cannot pass,
6 look away from him and let him rest, until he has
finished his day like a hired labourer.
7 For there is hope for a tree: if it is cut down, it
will sprout again, and its new shoots will not fail.
8 Though its roots grow old in the ground and its
stump dies in the soil,
9 at the scent of water it will bud and put out
branches like a young plant.
10 But a man dies and lies powerless; a mortal
breathes his last, and where is he?
11 As water disappears from a lake and a river
dries up and vanishes,
12 so a man lies down and does not rise. Until the
heavens are no more, he will not wake or be
roused from his sleep.
13 If only You would hide me in Sheol, conceal me
until Your anger has passed, and set me a time
and remember me!
14 If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of
my hard service I would wait until my release[1]
should come.
15 You would call, and I would answer You; You
would long for the work of Your hands.
16 For then You would count my steps, but not keep
watch over my sin.
17 My offence would be sealed up in a bag, and You
would cover over my guilt.
18 But as a mountain falls and crumbles, and a rock
is moved from its place,
19 as water wears away stones, and floods wash
away the soil of the earth, so You destroy a
mortal's hope.
20 You overpower him once for all, and he is gone;
You change his face and send him away.
21 His sons may be honoured, but he does not
know it; they may be brought low, but he does not
see it.
22 He feels only the pain of his own body, and
mourns only for himself."

1 Hebrew *halifah*, 'change' or 'renewal', from the same root as 'sprout' in verse 7.

Chapter 15

Job 15 gives the second speech of Eliphaz. Job's words are hot air, and they undermine the fear of God; his own mouth condemns him. Was he the first man born? Has he listened in the council of God? Eliphaz and his friends have grey-haired men on their side, and are the comforts of God not enough for him? What is man, that he could be pure, when even the heavens are not clean in God's sight? Eliphaz then declares what wise men have handed down: the wicked man writhes in pain all his days, terrors fill his ears, and he is marked for the sword. Because he shook his fist at God, he will not prosper; he will not escape the darkness, and his branch will wither. The company of the godless is barren, and they conceive trouble and give birth to deceit.

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:
2 "Should a wise man answer with windy
knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?
3 Should he argue with useless talk, with words
that do no good?
4 But you even do away with the fear of God and
hinder devotion to Him.
5 Your guilt guides your mouth, and you take up
the speech of the crafty.
6 It is your own mouth that condemns you, not
mine; your lips bear witness against you.
7 Were you the first man to be born? Were you
brought forth before the hills?[1]
8 Do you listen in the council of God? Do you keep
wisdom to yourself?
9 What do you know that we do not know? What do
you understand that we do not?
10 Both the grey-haired and the aged are among
us, older than your father.
11 Are the comforts of God too small for you, the
gentle words spoken to you?

12 What has carried your heart away? What makes
your eyes flash,
13 that you turn your spirit against God and let
such words pour from your mouth?
14 What is man, that he could be pure, or one born
of woman, that he could be righteous?
15 If God puts no trust in His holy ones, and the
heavens are not clean in His sight,
16 how much less one who is detestable and
corrupt, a man who drinks up wrongdoing like
water!
17 Listen to me, and I will explain; I will tell you
what I have seen,
18 what wise men have declared, hiding nothing
from their fathers,
19 to whom alone the land was given, when no
foreigner passed among them.
20 The wicked man writhes in pain all his days,
through all the years stored up for the ruthless.
21 Sounds of terror fill his ears; in time of peace
the destroyer comes on him.
22 He has no hope of returning from the darkness,
and he is marked out for the sword.
23 He roams in search of bread, wondering where
it is. He knows that the day of darkness is close at
hand.
24 Distress and anguish terrify him; they
overpower him like a king ready for battle.
25 For he has stretched out his hand against God
and defied the Almighty,
26 charging at Him with stiff neck and a thick,
studded shield.
27 Though his face is covered with fat and his waist
bulges with flesh,
28 he will live in ruined towns, in houses where no
one should live, doomed to be heaps of rubble.
29 He will not stay rich, and his wealth will not last;
his possessions will not spread over the land.
30 He will not escape the darkness. A flame will
wither his shoots, and he will be swept away by
the breath of God’s mouth.
31 Let him not trust in emptiness and deceive
himself, for emptiness will be his reward.
32 It will be paid in full before his time, and his
branch will not be green.
33 He will be like a vine stripped of its unripe
grapes, like an olive tree shedding its blossom.
34 For the company of the godless is barren, and
fire consumes the tents of bribery.
35 They conceive trouble and give birth to evil, and
their womb prepares deceit.”

1 Compare Wisdom’s words in Proverbs 8:25.

Chapter 16

Job 16 gives Job’s reply. He has heard all this before; his friends are miserable comforters, and in their place he could make fine speeches too. His pain is not eased whether he speaks or is silent. God has worn him out, torn him in anger and handed him over to the wicked; He seized him by the neck, set him up as a target and rushed at him like a warrior. Job has sewn sackcloth on his skin, and his face is red with weeping, though his hands are free of violence and his prayer is pure. He cries out to the earth not to cover his blood. Even now he has a witness in heaven, one who will plead for him with God, for his years are few and he is going on the road of no return.

1 Then Job answered:
2 “I have heard many such things; miserable
comforters are you all!
3 Will there ever be an end to windy words? What
drives you to go on answering?
4 I too could speak as you do, if you were in my
place. I could compose fine speeches against you
and shake my head at you.
5 I could strengthen you with my mouth, and my
moving lips would bring you relief.
6 If I speak, my pain is not relieved; and if I hold
back, how much of it goes away?
7 But now He has worn me out; You have
devastated all my household.
8 You have shrivelled me up, and that has become
a witness; my gauntness rises up and testifies to
my face.
9 His anger has torn me and hated me; He has
gnashed His teeth at me. My enemy sharpens His
eyes against me.

10 Men gape at me with open mouths; they strike
my cheek in scorn and join forces against me.
11 God hands me over to the unjust and throws me
into the hands of the wicked.
12 I was at ease, but He shattered me; He seized
me by the neck and crushed me. He set me up as
His target;
13 His archers ring me round. He splits my kidneys
open without mercy and spills my gall on the
ground.
14 He breaks me down, breach after breach; He
rushes at me like a warrior.
15 I have sewn sackcloth over my skin and thrust
my strength[1] into the dust.
16 My face is red with weeping, and deep shadow
lies on my eyelids,
17 yet my hands have done no violence, and my
prayer is pure.
18 O earth, do not cover my blood; let my cry find
no resting place.
19 Even now my witness is in the heavens; the one
who speaks for me is on high.
20 My friends scorn me;[2] my eye pours out tears to
God.
21 May He argue the case of a man with God, as a
person does with his friend.
22 For only a few years will pass before I go on the
road of no return.

1 Hebrew ‘my horn’.
2 Or ‘My intercessor is my friend’.

Chapter 17

Job 17 continues Job’s lament. His spirit is broken, his days are finished, and the grave is ready for him, while mockers surround him. He asks God to give the pledge for him, for no one else will. God has closed his friends’ minds to understanding. He has become a byword, and people spit in his face; his eyes are dim with grief, and his body is a shadow. The upright are appalled at this, yet the righteous hold to their way. Not one wise man is found among his friends. His days are past and his plans are broken. If he hopes for anything, it is for Sheol as his home. He calls the pit his father and the worm his mother and sister. Where then is his hope? It will go down with him to the gates of Sheol.

1 My spirit is broken, my days are snuffed out, and
the grave is waiting for me.
2 Surely mockers are all around me, and my eye
dwells on their provocation.
3 Give me, I pray, a pledge from You. Who else will
shake hands to stand surety for me?
4 You have closed their minds to understanding, so
You will not let them triumph.
5 A man who informs on his friends for gain, the
eyes of his children will fail.[1]
6 He has made me a byword among the peoples; I
have become one in whose face people spit.
7 My eye has grown dim with grief, and all my
limbs are like a shadow.
8 The upright are appalled at this, and the innocent
is stirred up against the godless.
9 Yet the righteous holds to his way, and the one
with clean hands grows stronger and stronger.
10 But come back, all of you, and try again. I will
not find a wise man among you.
11 My days have passed; my plans are shattered,
and the desires of my heart.
12 They turn night into day: ‘Light is near,’ they
say, in the face of darkness.
13 If I look to Sheol as my home, and spread out my
bed in the darkness,
14 if I say to the pit, ‘You are my father,’ and to the
worm, ‘My mother,’ or ‘My sister,’
15 where then is my hope? Who can see any hope
for me?
16 Will it go down to the bars of Sheol? Shall we
descend together into the dust?”

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; probably a proverb.

Chapter 18

Job 18 gives the second speech of Bildad. How long will Job go on talking, and why does he treat his friends like cattle? Should the earth be abandoned for his sake? The lamp of the wicked goes out. His own schemes bring him down; traps and snares catch him by the heel. Terrors frighten him on every side, disease devours his skin, and he is marched off to the king of terrors. His roots dry up, his memory perishes from the earth, and he has no descendants. People in the west and in the east are appalled at his fate. Such, says Bildad, is the dwelling of the wicked man, the place of one who does not know God.

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

2 "How long will you hunt for words? Show some
sense, and then we can talk.

3 Why are we regarded as cattle, as stupid in your
sight?

4 You who tear yourself in your anger, is the earth
to be abandoned for your sake, or a rock moved
out of its place?

5 Yes, the light of the wicked is put out, and the
flame of his fire does not shine.

6 The light in his tent grows dark, and the lamp
beside him goes out.

7 His firm stride is shortened, and his own
schemes bring him down.

8 His feet lead him into a net, and he walks onto a
pitfall.

9 A trap seizes him by the heel, and a snare holds
him fast.

10 A noose is hidden for him on the ground, and a
trap lies in his path.

11 Terrors frighten him on every side and dog his
every step.

12 Calamity is hungry for him, and disaster stands
ready at his side.

13 It eats away parts of his skin; the firstborn of
death devours his limbs.[1]

14 He is torn from the security of his tent and
marched off to the king of terrors.[2]

15 Nothing of his remains in his tent; sulphur is
scattered over his home.

16 His roots dry up below, and his branches wither
above.

17 His memory perishes from the earth, and he has
no name in the streets.

18 He is thrust from light into darkness and driven
out of the world.

19 He has neither child nor descendant among his
people, and no survivor where he lived.

20 Those in the west are appalled at his fate, and
those in the east are seized with horror.

21 Surely such is the dwelling of the wicked man,
and such the place of one who does not know
God."

1 Probably a deadly disease.

2 That is, death.

Chapter 19

Job 19 gives Job's reply to Bildad. How long will his friends torment him with words? It is God who has wronged him and drawn His net around him; he cries out and no one answers. God has stripped him of honour, torn him down and counted him an enemy. His brothers, friends, guests, servants, wife and even small children have turned against him. He begs his friends for pity, for the hand of God has struck him. He wishes that his words could be cut into rock for ever. Yet he knows that his Redeemer is alive and will at last rise up on the dust, and that he himself, with his own eyes, will see God. He warns his friends to fear the sword.

1 Then Job answered:

2 "How long will you go on tormenting me and
grinding me down with words?

3 These ten times you have reproached me; you are
not ashamed to wrong me.

4 Even if I have indeed gone astray, my error stays
with me.

5 If you truly set yourselves up against me and use
my disgrace as an argument against me,

6 then know that God has wronged me and has
thrown His net around me.

7 I cry out, 'Violence!' but I get no answer; I call
for help, but there is no justice.

8 He has blocked my road so that I cannot get
through, and He has laid darkness over my paths.
9 He has taken my honour from me and lifted the
crown from my head.
10 He tears me down on every side until I am gone;
He has uprooted my hope like a tree.
11 His anger burns against me, and He counts me
among His enemies.
12 His troops advance together; they have built up
a road against me and camped around my tent.
13 He has put my brothers far from me, and those
who know me have become strangers.
14 My relatives have failed me, and my close
friends have forgotten me.
15 The guests in my house and my servant girls
count me a stranger; I have become a foreigner in
their eyes.
16 I call to my servant, but he does not answer,
though I plead with him with my own mouth.
17 My breath is offensive to my wife, and I am
loathsome to my own brothers.[1]
18 Even small children despise me; when I get up,
they speak against me.
19 All my closest friends abhor me, and those I love
have turned against me.
20 I am nothing but skin and bones, and I have got
away with only the skin of my teeth.
21 Pity me, pity me, my friends, for God's hand has
struck me down.
22 Why do you pursue me as God does? Will you
never have enough of my flesh?
23 Oh, that my words were written down! Oh, that
they were inscribed on a scroll!
24 Oh, that with an iron tool and with lead they
were carved in the rock for ever!
25 But I know that my Redeemer[2] is alive, and in
the end He will rise up on the dust.
26 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my
flesh[3] I shall see God.
27 I myself shall see Him; my own eyes shall look
on Him, and no other's. My heart faints within me!
28 If you say, 'How we will hound him!' and 'The
root of the matter is found in him,'
29 fear the sword yourselves, for wrath brings the
punishment of the sword, and then you will know
there is a judgement."

1 Hebrew 'the sons of my womb', probably the sons of his mother.
2 Hebrew *goel*, the near kinsman who defends a relative's cause, buys him back and avenges his blood; compare Ruth 4:1–6.
3 Or 'apart from my flesh'.

Chapter 20

Job 20 gives the second speech of Zophar. Stung by Job's rebuke, he declares what has been known since man was set on the earth: the triumph of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless lasts a moment. Though he rises to the skies, he will vanish like a dream. Evil tastes sweet in his mouth, but it turns to poison in his stomach, and he must vomit up the wealth he has swallowed. Because he has crushed the poor and seized houses, he has no peace. In the fullness of his plenty distress overtakes him, God's anger rains on him, and an arrow pierces him. Darkness waits for his treasures, the heavens expose his guilt, and the earth rises against him. Such is the portion God assigns to the wicked.

1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:
2 "My troubled thoughts make me answer, because
of the agitation within me.
3 I hear a rebuke that insults me, and my
understanding prompts me to reply.
4 Do you not know this from of old, since man was
placed on the earth,
5 that the triumph of the wicked is short, and the
joy of the godless lasts only a moment?
6 Though his pride reaches up to the heavens and
his head touches the clouds,
7 he will perish for ever like his own dung; those
who saw him will say, 'Where is he?'
8 He will fly away like a dream and not be found;
he will be chased away like a vision of the night.
9 The eye that saw him will see him no more, and
his place will no longer behold him.
10 His children will seek the favour of the poor, and
his own hands must give back his wealth.
11 His bones may be full of youthful vigour, but it
will lie down with him in the dust.

12 Though evil is sweet in his mouth and he hides it under his tongue,

13 though he savours it and will not let it go, but holds it in his mouth,

14 yet his food turns sour in his stomach; it becomes the venom of snakes within him.

15 He swallows wealth but vomits it up; God forces it out of his belly.

16 He will suck the poison of snakes, and the viper's tongue will kill him.

17 He will not enjoy the streams, the rivers flowing with honey and curds.

18 He will give back what he gained and not swallow it; he will take no pleasure in the profit of his trading.

19 For he has crushed the poor and abandoned them; he has seized a house he did not build.

20 Because his greed knew no rest, he will not escape with anything he treasures.

21 Nothing was left for him to devour, so his prosperity will not last.

22 In the fullness of his plenty he will be in distress; the full force of misery will come on him.

23 When he has filled his belly, God will send His burning anger on him and rain it down on him as his food.

24 He may flee from an iron weapon, but a bronze arrow will pierce him.

25 He pulls it out of his back, the gleaming point[1] out of his liver, and terrors come over him.

26 Total darkness is stored up for his treasures. A fire no one has fanned will consume him and devour what is left in his tent.

27 The heavens will reveal his guilt, and the earth will rise up against him.

28 The possessions of his house will be carried away, swept off on the day of God's anger.

29 This is the wicked man's portion from God, the inheritance God has decreed for him."

1 Hebrew 'lightning', a flashing arrowhead.

Chapter 21

Job 21 gives Job's reply to Zophar. Let his friends listen, and then mock on. His complaint is not against a man; let them look at him and be appalled. Why do the wicked live on, grow old and increase in power? Their homes are safe, their cattle breed, their children dance, and they spend their days in prosperity, though they tell God to leave them alone. How often is the lamp of the wicked put out? The friends say that God stores up punishment for their children, but let the wicked themselves drink the wrath of the Almighty. One man dies in full vigour, another in bitterness, and worms cover them both. Travellers can tell that the wicked are spared on the day of disaster, and they are buried with honour. How then can the friends comfort him with empty words? Their answers are falsehood.

1 Then Job answered:

2 "Listen carefully to my words, and let this be the comfort you give me.

3 Bear with me while I speak, and when I have spoken, mock on.

4 Is my complaint against a man? Why should I not be impatient?

5 Look at me and be appalled, and put your hand over your mouth.

6 When I think of it I am terrified, and shuddering seizes my body.

7 Why do the wicked go on living, growing old and increasing in power?

8 Their children are established around them, and their offspring before their eyes.

9 Their homes are safe from fear, and the rod of God is not on them.

10 Their bull breeds without fail; their cow calves and does not miscarry.

11 They let their little ones run free like lambs, and their children skip about.

12 They sing to the tambourine and lyre and make merry to the sound of the pipe.

13 They spend their days in prosperity and go down to Sheol in peace.

14 Yet they say to God, 'Leave us alone! We have no wish to know Your ways.

15 Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? What would we gain by praying to Him?'

16 Yet their prosperity is not theirs to command. I want no part in the counsel of the wicked.

17 How often is the lamp of the wicked put out?
How often does disaster come on them, the pains
God gives out in His anger?

18 How often are they like straw before the wind,
like chaff carried off by a storm?

19 You say, ‘God stores up a man’s punishment for
his children.’ Let Him repay the man himself, so
that he knows it!

20 Let him see his own ruin with his eyes, and
drink the Almighty’s wrath.

21 For what does he care about his family after
him, when the number of his months has run out?

22 Can anyone teach God knowledge, seeing that
He judges even those on high?

23 One man dies in full vigour, wholly at ease and
secure,

24 his body well nourished,[1] his bones rich with
marrow.

25 Another dies in bitterness of soul, never having
tasted anything good.

26 They lie down alike in the dust, and worms
cover them both.

27 See, I know your thoughts, and the schemes by
which you wrong me.

28 For you say, ‘Where is the house of the great
man? Where is the tent where the wicked lived?’

29 Have you not asked those who travel the roads?
Do you not accept their evidence,

30 that the wicked man is spared on the day of
disaster, and rescued on the day of wrath?

31 Who denounces his conduct to his face? Who
repays him for what he has done?

32 He is carried to the grave, and a watch is kept
over his tomb.

33 The clods of the valley are sweet to him. All
mankind follows after him, and countless people
go before him.

34 How then can you comfort me with empty
words? Your answers are nothing but falsehood.”

1 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.

Chapter 22

Job 22 gives the third speech of Eliphaz. Can a man benefit God? Eliphaz now charges Job with great wickedness: he has taken pledges from his brothers for nothing, stripped the naked, refused water to the thirsty and bread to the hungry, and sent widows away empty. That is why snares surround him. Job thinks that God cannot see through the thick clouds, but will he keep to the old way of the wicked, who told God to leave them? Eliphaz urges him to submit to God, receive instruction, return to the Almighty and put away injustice. If he throws away his gold, the Almighty will be his gold. He will delight in the Almighty, pray and be heard; God will save the humble and rescue even the guilty through the cleanness of Job’s hands.

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

2 “Can a man be of use to God? Can even a wise
man benefit Him?

3 Does it give the Almighty any pleasure if you are
righteous? Does He gain if your ways are
blameless?

4 Is it for your fear of Him that He rebukes you and
brings you to judgement?

5 Is your wickedness not great? Is there no end to
your sins?

6 For you have taken pledges from your brothers
for no reason and stripped people of their
clothing, leaving them naked.

7 You gave no water to the weary and withheld
bread from the hungry,

8 while the powerful man owned the land, and the
favoured man lived in it.

9 You have sent widows away empty and broken
the strength of the fatherless.

10 That is why snares surround you and sudden
terror overwhelms you,

11 why darkness blinds you, and a flood of water
covers you.

12 Is God not high in the heavens? See how lofty
are the highest stars!

13 Yet you say, ‘What can God know? Does He
judge from behind the thick darkness?

14 Thick clouds veil Him, so that He cannot see, as
He walks on the vault of heaven.’

15 Will you keep to the old path that the wicked
have trodden?

16 They were snatched away before their time;
their foundations were swept away by a flood.

17 They said to God, ‘Leave us alone! What can the
Almighty do to us?’
18 Yet He was the one who filled their houses with
good things. I want no part in the counsel of the
wicked.
19 The righteous look on with gladness, and the
innocent mock them:
20 ‘Surely our enemies are destroyed, and fire has
consumed what they left.’
21 Come to terms with Him and be at peace; in this
way good will come to you.
22 Accept teaching from His mouth, and store His
words in your heart.
23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be
restored. If you put injustice far from your tent,
24 if you lay your gold in the dust, the gold of Ophir
among the stones of the wadis,
25 then the Almighty will be your gold and your
precious silver.
26 Then the Almighty will be your delight, and you
will look up to God.
27 You will pray to Him, and He will hear you, and
you will fulfil your vows.
28 What you decide on will be done, and light will
shine on your ways.
29 When people are brought low and you say, ‘Lift
them up!’ He will save the humble.[1]
30 He will rescue even one who is not innocent,
who will be rescued through the cleanness of your
hands.”

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Chapter 23

Job 23 gives Job’s reply to Eliphaz. His complaint is still bitter. If only he knew where to find God! He would set out his case before Him and hear His answer, and he believes that God would pay attention, and an upright man could reason with Him. But he goes forward and backward, to the left and right, and cannot find Him. Yet God knows the road he is on; when He has tested him, he will come out as gold. Job has kept to God’s way and treasured His words. But God does as He pleases, and Job is terrified of Him, though he is not silenced by the darkness.

1 Then Job answered:
2 “My complaint is still bitter today; His hand[1] lies
heavy on me despite my groans.
3 If only I knew where to find Him, so that I could
come to His dwelling!
4 I would lay out my case before Him and fill my
mouth with arguments.
5 I would learn what answer He would give me and
understand what He would say to me.
6 Would He contend with me in His great power?
No, He would pay attention to me.
7 There an upright man could reason with Him,
and I would be acquitted by my Judge for ever.
8 But if I go to the east, He is not there; if to the
west, I do not perceive Him.
9 When He is at work in the north, I do not see
Him; when He turns to the south, I cannot catch
sight of Him.
10 Yet He knows the road I am on; let Him test me,
and I will come out as pure gold.
11 My feet have kept close to His steps; I have held
to His way and not turned aside.
12 I have not departed from the commandment of
His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth
more than my daily bread.
13 But He stands alone, and who can turn Him
back? What He desires, He does.
14 For He will carry out what He has decreed for
me, and many such plans are with Him.
15 That is why I am terrified in His presence; when
I think of it, I am afraid of Him.
16 God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has
terrified me.
17 Yet I am not silenced by the darkness, by the
thick gloom that covers my face.

1 So the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew has ‘my hand’.

Chapter 24

Job 24 continues Job's complaint. Why does the Almighty not set times for judgement? The wicked move boundary stones, steal flocks, and take the donkey of the orphan and the ox of the widow. The poor are driven out like wild donkeys to scavenge in the desert; they go naked, cold and wet, and carry sheaves while hungry. The groans of the dying rise from the city, yet God charges no one with wrong. The murderer, the adulterer and the burglar rebel against the light and work by night. The chapter then says that the wicked are swept away; Sheol snatches those who have sinned, and they are forgotten, though God may let them feel secure. They are exalted for a little while, then cut off like heads of grain. If this is not so, who can prove Job a liar?

1 Why does the Almighty not set times for
judgement? Why do those who know Him never
see His days?
2 People move boundary stones; they seize flocks
and pasture them.
3 They drive away the orphan's donkey and take
the widow's ox as a pledge.
4 They thrust the needy off the road, and all the
poor of the land are forced into hiding.
5 Like wild donkeys in the wilderness, the poor go
out to their work, searching for food; the desert
provides food for their children.
6 They gather fodder in the field and glean in the
vineyard of the wicked.
7 They spend the night naked, without clothing,
with no covering against the cold.
8 They are drenched by mountain rains and cling
to the rock for lack of shelter.
9 The fatherless child is snatched from the breast,
and the infant of the poor is seized for a debt.
10 The poor go about naked, without clothing, and
carry the sheaves while they go hungry.
11 They press olive oil between the terraces and
tread the winepresses, yet they suffer thirst.
12 From the city the dying groan, and the souls of
the wounded cry for help, yet God charges no one
with wrong.
13 There are those who rebel against the light; they
do not know its ways or stay on its paths.
14 The murderer rises before daylight to kill the
poor and needy, and at night he is like a thief.
15 The adulterer's eye waits for the twilight. 'No
eye will see me,' he says, and he disguises his
face.
16 In the dark they break into houses; by day they
shut themselves in, for they do not know the light.
17 For all of them, deep shadow is their morning;
they are at home with the terrors of deep shadow.
18 They are scum on the surface of the water;[1]
their portion of the land is cursed, and no one
turns towards their vineyards.
19 As drought and heat snatch away melted snow,
so Sheol snatches those who have sinned.
20 The womb forgets them, the worm feasts on
them; they are remembered no more, and
wickedness is broken like a tree.
21 They wrong the childless woman and do no good
to the widow.
22 Yet God drags away the mighty by His power;
though they rise up, they have no assurance of
life.
23 He may let them rest in security, but His eyes
are on their ways.
24 They are exalted for a little while, and then they
are gone; they are brought low and gathered up
like all others, cut off like heads of grain.
25 If this is not so, who can prove me a liar and
show that my words are nothing?"

1 Verses 18–24 are hard to fit in Job's mouth; he may be quoting his friends, or some lines may belong elsewhere. Many Hebrew words here are uncertain.

Chapter 25

Job 25 gives Bildad's short third speech. Dominion and awe belong to God, who keeps peace in the heights of heaven. His forces are beyond counting, and His light rises on everyone. How then can a mortal be righteous before God, or one born of woman be pure? Even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in His sight, so how much less a human being, who is a maggot and a worm.

1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

2 “Dominion and awe belong to God; He establishes peace in His high heavens.

3 Can His forces be counted? On whom does His light not rise?

4 How then can a mortal be right before God? How can one born of woman be pure?

5 If even the moon is not bright, and the stars are not pure in His sight,[1]

6 how much less a mortal, who is a maggot, a human being, who is a worm!”

1 Compare 15:14–16.

Chapter 26

Job 26 gives Job’s reply to Bildad. With biting scorn he asks how Bildad has helped the powerless and what insight he has shown. Then he describes God’s power: the dead tremble before Him, and Sheol and Abaddon lie open to Him. He stretches out the north over empty space, hangs the earth on nothing, binds up the waters in His clouds, marks out the horizon and shakes the pillars of heaven. By His power He stirred up the sea, by His understanding He struck down Rahab, and His hand pierced the fleeing serpent. Yet these are only the edges of His ways, a faint whisper of Him. Who can understand the thunder of His power?

1 Then Job answered:

2 “How you have helped the powerless! How you have saved the arm that has no strength!

3 What advice you have given to one without wisdom! What great insight you have shown!

4 With whose help have you uttered these words? Whose spirit has spoken through you?

5 The dead tremble beneath the waters, and those who live in them.

6 Sheol lies naked before God, and Abaddon[1] is uncovered.

7 He spreads the north over emptiness and suspends the earth on nothing.

8 He binds up the waters in His clouds, and the clouds do not burst under them.

9 He covers the face of the full moon,[2] spreading His cloud over it.

10 He has marked out a circle on the face of the waters, at the boundary between light and darkness.

11 The pillars of heaven tremble, astounded at His rebuke.

12 By His power He stirred up the sea; by His understanding He struck down Rahab.

13 By His breath the heavens were made clear; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.

14 See, these are only the outer edges of His ways, and how faint a whisper we hear of Him! Who then can understand the thunder of His power?”

1 ‘Destruction’, another name for the place of the dead; compare 28:22 and Revelation 9:11.
2 Or ‘His throne’.

Chapter 27

Job 27 tells how Job continues his discourse. He swears by the living God, who has denied him justice, that as long as he has breath he will not speak falsely or give up his integrity; he will not say that his friends are right. May his enemy be like the wicked, for what hope has the godless when God takes his life? Job will teach them about the hand of God. This is the portion of the wicked: his children die by the sword, his survivors are buried by the plague, the righteous wear the clothes he has stored up, and his house is as fragile as a moth’s. Terrors overtake him like a flood, the east wind carries him away, and people clap their hands at him.

1 Job continued his discourse:

2 “As God lives, who has denied me justice, and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter,

3 as long as there is life in me and the breath of God is in my nostrils,

4 my lips will not speak wrong, and my tongue will not utter deceit.

5 Far be it from me to say that you are right! Until I die I will not give up my integrity.

6 I will cling to my righteousness and not let it go;
my heart will not condemn any of my days.
7 May my enemy be like the wicked, and anyone
who rises against me like the unjust.
8 For what hope has the godless man when his life
is cut short, when God demands his soul?
9 Will God hear his cry when distress comes on
him?
10 Can he find his delight in the Almighty? Will he
call on God at every moment?
11 I will teach you about the hand of God; I will not
hide what is with the Almighty.
12 You have all seen this yourselves. Why then do
you talk such nonsense?
13 This is the portion of a wicked man from God,
the inheritance that the ruthless receive from the
Almighty.[1]
14 If his children are many, it is for the sword, and
his descendants will never have enough to eat.
15 Those who survive him will be buried by the
plague, and their widows will not weep.
16 Though he heaps up silver like dust and piles up
clothing like clay,
17 what he piles up the righteous will wear, and the
innocent will share out the silver.
18 The house he builds is like a moth's cocoon, like
a shelter made by a watchman.
19 He lies down rich, but will not do so again;[2] he
opens his eyes, and it is gone.
20 Terrors overtake him like a flood; a storm
snatches him away in the night.
21 The east wind lifts him up and he is gone; it
sweeps him out of his place.
22 It hurls itself at him without mercy, as he flees
headlong from its power.
23 It claps its hands at him and hisses him out of
his place.

1 Verses 13–23 sound more like the friends than Job. He may be turning their own words against them, or these lines may be a lost third speech of Zophar.

2 So the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew has 'but will not be gathered'.

Chapter 28

Job 28 is a poem on wisdom. Man can find silver, gold and iron; miners cut shafts in remote places and bring hidden things to light. But where can wisdom be found? Mortals do not know its value, and the deep and the sea say that it is not with them. It cannot be bought with gold or silver, with onyx or sapphire, and it is worth more than pearls. It is hidden from all living things; Abaddon and Death have heard only a rumour of it. God alone understands the way to it. When He gave the wind its weight and made a decree for the rain, He saw wisdom and established it. And He said to man that fearing the Lord is wisdom, and turning from evil is understanding.

1 There is a mine for silver and a place where gold
is refined.
2 Iron is taken from the earth, and copper is
smelted from ore.
3 Man puts an end to darkness, searching out the
farthest limits for ore in the gloom and deep
shadow.
4 Far from where people live he cuts a shaft, in
places forgotten by the foot; he dangles and sways
far from others.
5 The earth, from which food comes, is turned over
below as if by fire.
6 Its rocks are the source of sapphires, and its dust
contains gold.
7 No bird of prey knows that hidden path, and the
falcon's eye has not seen it.
8 Proud beasts have not trodden it, and the lion
has not passed over it.
9 Man puts his hand to the flinty rock and
overturns mountains at their roots.
10 He cuts channels through the rocks, and his eye
sees every precious thing.
11 He dams up the sources of the streams and
brings what is hidden to light.
12 But wisdom, where can it be found? And where
does understanding live?
13 Mortals do not know its worth, and it is not
found in the land of the living.
14 The deep says, 'It is not in me,' and the sea says,
'It is not with me.'
15 It cannot be bought with the finest gold, and
silver cannot be weighed out as its price.

16 It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, in
precious onyx or sapphire.
17 Gold and glass cannot equal it, nor can it be
exchanged for vessels of fine gold.
18 Coral and crystal are not worth mentioning; the
price of wisdom is above pearls.
19 The topaz of Cush cannot equal it, and it cannot
be valued in pure gold.
20 Wisdom, then, where does it come from? And
where does understanding live?
21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living things,
and concealed from the birds of the air.
22 Abaddon and Death say, 'We have heard a
rumour of it with our ears.'
23 God understands the way to it, and He knows its
place.
24 For His gaze reaches to the ends of the earth,
and He sees all that is under heaven.
25 When He gave the wind its weight and
measured out the waters,
26 when He made a decree for the rain and a path
for the thunderbolt,
27 then He saw wisdom and told of it; He
established it and searched it out.
28 And He said to man, 'See, to fear the Lord, that
is wisdom, and to turn from evil is
understanding.'"[1]

1 Compare Psalm 111:10 and Proverbs 9:10.

Chapter 29

Job 29 tells how Job continues his discourse, longing for the months gone by, when God watched over him, His lamp shone on his head, and the Almighty was with him and his children were around him. At the city gate young men stepped aside, the old rose, and leaders fell silent. He rescued the poor who cried for help and the fatherless, the widow sang for joy, and he wore righteousness like a robe. He was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame, a father to the needy, and he broke the jaws of the wicked. He thought that he would die in his nest, full of days. People waited for his words as for the rain, and he sat as their chief, like a king among his troops, one who comforts mourners.

1 Job continued his discourse:
2 "If only I were as I was in months gone by, in the
days when God kept watch over me,
3 when His lamp was shining over my head, and I
walked by His light through the dark!
4 Oh, for the days of my prime, when the
friendship of God rested on my tent,
5 when the Almighty was still at my side, and my
children stood around me,
6 when my steps were bathed in curds and the
rock poured out streams of oil for me!
7 When I went out to the city gate and took my
seat in the square,
8 the young men saw me and stepped aside, and
the old men rose to their feet.
9 The leaders stopped talking and put their hands
over their mouths.
10 The voices of the nobles were hushed, and their
tongues stuck to the roof of their mouths.
11 When the ear heard, it called me blessed, and
when the eye saw, it spoke well of me,
12 because I rescued the poor who cried for help,
and the fatherless who had no one to help them.
13 The blessing of the dying came on me, and I
made the widow's heart sing for joy.
14 I wore righteousness, and it clothed me; my
justice was my robe and turban.
15 I was eyes for the blind, and I was feet for the
lame.
16 I was a father to the needy, and I took up the
case of the stranger.
17 I broke the fangs of the unjust and snatched the
prey from his teeth.
18 I thought, 'I shall die in my own nest, and
multiply my days like the sand.[1]
19 My roots will spread out to the water, and the
dew will lie all night on my branches.
20 My glory will stay fresh within me, and my bow
ever new in my hand.'
21 People listened to me and waited, and kept
silent for my counsel.
22 After I had spoken, they said no more; my words
fell gently on them.

23 They waited for me as for the rain, and opened their mouths as for the spring rain.

24 I smiled on them when they had lost confidence, and they did not cast down the light of my face.

25 I chose their way for them and sat as their chief. I lived like a king among his troops, like one who comforts mourners.

1 Or ‘like the phoenix’.

Chapter 30

Job 30 contrasts his past with his present. Now he is mocked by younger men whose fathers he would not have put with his sheepdogs, outcasts who gnaw the dry ground and live in gullies. He has become their song and their byword; they spit at him and attack him, because God has loosened his bowstring. Terrors overwhelm him, his life ebbs away, and pain gnaws at his bones through the night. He cries to God, who does not answer, but has become cruel to him and tosses him in the storm, bringing him to death. Did he not weep for those in trouble? He hoped for good and evil came. His skin turns black, his bones burn with fever, and his lyre is tuned to mourning.

1 But now they laugh at me, men younger than I, whose fathers I would have refused to put with my sheepdogs.

2 What use was the strength of their hands to me, when their vigour had gone?

3 Gaunt with want and hunger, they gnaw the dry ground, in the gloom of waste and desolation.

4 They pluck saltwort among the bushes, and the root of the broom tree is their food.[1]

5 They are driven out from among people, who shout after them as after thieves.

6 They have to live in the gullies of the wadis, in holes in the ground and among the rocks.

7 They bray among the bushes and huddle together under the nettles.

8 A senseless and nameless brood, they have been whipped out of the land.

9 And now I have become their song, a byword among them.

10 They abhor me and keep their distance; they do not hesitate to spit in my face.

11 Because God has loosened my bowstring and afflicted me, they have thrown off all restraint before me.

12 On my right the rabble rise up; they send me sprawling and build their siege ramps against me.

13 They break up my path and promote my ruin, and no one holds them back.

14 They come in as through a wide breach; they roll in amid the crash.

15 Terrors are turned on me; my dignity is driven away as by the wind, and my safety has passed like a cloud.

16 And now my soul is poured out within me; days of misery have seized me.

17 Night pierces my bones, and my gnawing pains never rest.

18 With great force He grips my clothing;[2] He binds me like the neck of my tunic.

19 He has thrown me into the mud, and I have become like dust and ashes.

20 I cry out to You, and You give no answer; I stand before You, and You only stare at me.

21 You have become cruel towards me; with Your mighty hand You attack me.

22 You lift me up on the wind and make me ride on it; You toss me about in the storm.

23 I know You will deliver me to death, the meeting place of all the living.

24 Yet does no one stretch out a hand in a heap of ruins, or cry for help in his disaster?

25 Did I not weep for those in trouble? Did my soul not grieve for the needy?

26 But when I hoped for good, evil came; when I waited for light, darkness came.

27 My insides are in turmoil and never rest; days of misery confront me.

28 I go about blackened, but not by the sun; I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.

29 I have become a brother of jackals and a companion of ostriches.

30 My skin turns black and peels from me, and my bones burn with fever.

31 My lyre is tuned to mourning, and my pipe to the sound of weeping.

1 Or ‘is their fuel’.

2 So the Greek; the Hebrew is uncertain.

Chapter 31

Job 31 gives Job’s final oath of innocence. He has made a covenant with his eyes; God sees his ways and counts his steps. If he has walked in falsehood, let God weigh him on honest scales. If his heart has gone after a woman, let his wife grind for another. If he has denied justice to his servants, what would he answer God, who made them both? If he has refused the poor, eaten alone, left the orphan or the naked without help, or raised his hand against the fatherless, let his arm fall from its socket. He has not trusted in gold or worshipped the sun and moon, rejoiced at his enemy’s ruin, turned away the stranger, or hidden his sin. He wishes that someone would hear him; here is his signature, and let the Almighty answer him. If his land cries out against him, let thorns grow in place of wheat. The words of Job are ended.

1 I have bound my eyes by a covenant; how then could I gaze at a young woman?

2 For what would be my lot from God above, my inheritance from the Almighty on high?

3 Is it not disaster for the unjust, and calamity for those who do wrong?

4 Does He not see my ways and count all my steps?

5 If I have walked in falsehood, or my foot has hurried after deceit,

6 let God weigh me on honest scales, and He will know my integrity.

7 If my step has turned from the way, if my heart has followed my eyes, or if any stain has stuck to my hands,

8 then let me sow and another eat, and let my crops be uprooted.

9 If my heart has been enticed by a woman, or I have lurked at my neighbour’s door,

10 then let my wife grind grain for another man, and let others kneel over her.

11 For that would be a shameful act, a crime to be punished by the judges.

12 It would be a fire that burns all the way to Abaddon, and it would uproot my whole harvest.

13 If I have denied justice to my male or female servants when they brought a complaint against me,

14 what will I do when God rises up? What will I answer when He calls me to account?

15 Did He who made me in the womb not make them? Did the same One not form us both in the womb?

16 If I have kept the poor from what they desired, or let the widow’s eyes grow weary,

17 or eaten my bread alone and not shared it with the fatherless,

18 though from my youth I reared him as a father, and from my mother’s womb I guided the widow,

19 if I have seen anyone perishing for lack of clothing, or a needy person without covering,

20 if his body has not blessed me, warmed by the fleece of my sheep,

21 if I have raised my hand against the fatherless, because I saw that I had support at the gate,

22 then let my shoulder fall from its socket, and my arm be broken at the joint.

23 For I dreaded disaster from God, and because of His majesty I could not do such things.

24 If I have put my confidence in gold, or called fine gold my security,

25 if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, or because my hand had gained so much,

26 if I have looked at the sun when it shone, or the moon moving in splendour,

27 and my heart has been secretly enticed, and my hand has blown them a kiss,

28 this too would be a crime for the judges, for I would have denied God above.

29 If I have rejoiced at the ruin of my enemy, or exulted when trouble found him,

30 I have not let my mouth sin by calling down a curse on his life.

31 Have the men of my household not said, ‘Who has not been filled with his meat?’

32 No stranger had to spend the night in the street, for I opened my doors to the traveller.

33 If I have hidden my offences as others do,[1] burying my guilt in my heart,

34 because I feared the great crowd and the
contempt of the clans terrified me, so that I kept
silent and did not go out of doors,

35 oh, that I had someone to hear me! Here is my
signature; let the Almighty answer me! Let my
accuser write out his indictment!

36 Surely I would carry it on my shoulder and wear
it like a crown.

37 I would give Him an account of all my steps; I
would approach Him like a prince.

38 If my land protests against me, and all its
furrows weep,

39 if I have eaten its produce without payment, or
caused its owners to lose their lives,

40 then let thorns grow in place of wheat, and foul
weeds in place of barley." The words of Job are
ended.

1 Or 'as Adam did'.

Chapter 32

Job 32 tells how the three friends stop answering Job, because he is righteous in his own eyes. Elihu son of Barachel, a younger man, becomes angry with Job for justifying himself rather than God, and with the friends for finding no answer. He has waited out of respect for their age, but it is the Spirit of God that gives understanding, not years. He has listened to them, and none of them has refuted Job. Let them not say that they have found wisdom. Now he is full of words, like wine with no vent, and he must speak; he will show no partiality and flatter no one.

1 So these three men stopped answering Job,
because he was righteous in his own eyes.

2 Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite, of the
family of Ram, became angry. He was angry with
Job for justifying himself rather than God.

3 He was also angry with Job's three friends,
because they had found no answer and yet had
condemned Job.[1]

4 Elihu had waited before speaking to Job, because
they were older than he.

5 But when Elihu saw that the three men had no
answer, he became angry.

6 So Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite answered: "I
am young in years, and you are old; that is why I
was timid and afraid to tell you what I know.

7 I thought, 'Age should speak, and many years
should teach wisdom.'

8 But it is the spirit in a person, the breath of the
Almighty, that gives understanding.

9 It is not the old who are wise, nor the aged who
understand what is right.

10 So I say, 'Listen to me; I too will tell you what I
know.'

11 See, I waited for your words; I listened to your
reasoning while you searched for what to say.

12 I paid close attention to you, and not one of you
refuted Job or answered his words.

13 Do not say, 'We have found wisdom; it is God
who must defeat him, not man.'

14 Job has not directed his words against me, and I
will not answer him with your arguments.

15 They are dismayed and answer no more; they
have nothing left to say.

16 Must I wait because they do not speak, because
they stand there and answer no more?

17 I too will give my answer; I too will tell what I
know.

18 For I am brimming with words, and the spirit
within me presses me.

19 See, my belly is like wine with no vent, like new
wineskins ready to burst.

20 I must speak and find relief; I must open my lips
and answer.

21 I will show no partiality to anyone, nor will I
flatter any man.

22 For I do not know how to flatter; if I did, my
Maker would soon take me away.

1 An ancient Jewish tradition says the text once read 'and so had condemned God'.

Chapter 33

Job 33 continues Elihu's speech, now addressed to Job. He speaks sincerely, for the Spirit of God made him, and he too is formed from clay, so Job need not fear him. Job has claimed to be pure and said that God treats him as an enemy, but God is greater than man, and why should Job complain that He does not answer? God speaks in more ways than one: in dreams, to turn a man from wrongdoing and keep him from the pit, and through pain on a sickbed, when he draws near to death. If an angel speaks up for him, saying, "I have found a ransom," his flesh will be renewed; he will pray and see God's face with joy, and confess his sin. God does all this again and again to bring him back from the pit. Elihu tells Job to listen or to answer him.

1 But now, Job, listen to my words; pay attention to all I say.

2 See, I have opened my mouth, and my tongue speaks on my palate.

3 My words come from an upright heart, and my lips speak sincerely what they know.

4 God's Spirit made me, and it is the Almighty's breath that keeps me alive.

5 Answer me if you can; set out your case before me and take your stand.

6 See, I am just as you are before God; I too was pinched off from clay.

7 So no fear of me need terrify you, and my pressure will not be heavy on you.

8 But you have said in my hearing, and I have heard the sound of your words:

9 'I am pure, without offence; I am clean, and there is no guilt in me.

10 Yet God finds occasions against me and counts me as His enemy.

11 He puts my feet in the stocks and watches all my paths.'

12 In this you are not right, I tell you, for God is greater than man.

13 Why do you bring a complaint against Him, that He does not answer all a person's words?[1]

14 For God speaks in one way and in another, though no one notices.

15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on people as they slumber in their beds,

16 then He opens their ears and terrifies them with warnings,

17 to turn a person from his deed and keep a man from pride,

18 to hold back his soul from the pit and his life from crossing the river of death.[2]

19 Or he may be corrected by pain on his bed, with unceasing conflict in his bones,

20 so that his life loathes bread, and his soul rejects its favourite food.

21 His flesh wastes away until it cannot be seen, and his bones, once hidden, stick out.

22 His soul draws near to the pit, and his life to the messengers of death.

23 If there is an angel on his side, a mediator, one out of a thousand, to declare to him what is right,

24 and if he is gracious to him and says, 'Spare him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom,'

25 then his flesh will become as fresh as a child's; he will return to the days of his youth.

26 He will pray to God and find favour; he will see His face with shouts of joy, and God will restore him to his right standing.

27 He will sing before others and say, 'I sinned and perverted what was right, but I was not repaid as I deserved.

28 He has redeemed my soul from going down to the pit, and my life will see the light.'

29 See, God does all these things, twice or three times, with a person,

30 to bring back his soul from the pit, so that he may be lit by the light of life.

31 Pay attention, Job, and listen to me; be silent, and I will speak.

32 If you have anything to say, answer me; speak, for I want to see you vindicated.

33 If not, listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom."

1 Or 'that He gives no account of any of His actions'.

2 Or 'perishing by the sword'.

Chapter 34

Job 34 gives Elihu's second speech. He calls on wise men to test what he says. Job claims to be innocent and says that God has denied him justice and that it does no good to please God. But far be it from God to do evil; He repays each person for what he does, and the Almighty does not pervert justice. If He were to withdraw His breath, all flesh would die. God shows no partiality to princes and the rich, for they are all the work of His hands. His eyes are on everyone's ways, and there is no darkness where evildoers can hide. He shatters the mighty without enquiry and hears the cry of the poor. Who can condemn Him if He stays silent? Job speaks without knowledge, adding rebellion to his sin, and multiplies his words against God.

1 Then Elihu answered:

2 "Hear my words, you wise men; listen to me, you who know.

3 For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.

4 Let us choose for ourselves what is right, and decide among ourselves what is good.

5 For Job has said, 'I am in the right, but God has denied me justice.

6 Though I am right, I am counted a liar; my wound is incurable, though I am without offence.'

7 What man is like Job, who drinks up scorn like water,

8 who keeps company with evildoers and goes about with wicked men?

9 For he has said, 'It does a man no good to delight in God.'

10 So listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong.

11 For He repays a person for what he has done, and brings on him what his conduct deserves.

12 Surely God does not act wickedly, and the Almighty does not pervert justice.

13 Who put Him in charge of the earth? Who laid on Him the whole world?

14 If He were to set His mind on it and gather in His spirit and His breath,

15 all flesh would perish together, and mankind would return to the dust.

16 If you have understanding, hear this; listen to what I say.

17 Can one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn the righteous and mighty One,

18 who says to a king, 'You worthless man,' and to nobles, 'You wicked men,'

19 who shows no partiality to princes and does not favour the rich over the poor, for they are all the work of His hands?

20 They die in a moment, in the middle of the night; the people shake and pass away, and the mighty are removed, though no human hand is involved.

21 For His eyes are on a man's ways, and He sees all his steps.

22 There is no darkness or deep shadow where evildoers can hide.

23 For God does not need to examine a person further, that he should come before Him in judgement.

24 He shatters the mighty without enquiry and sets others in their place.

25 Because He knows their deeds, He overthrows them in the night, and they are crushed.

26 He strikes them down for their wickedness where everyone can see,

27 because they turned aside from following Him and paid no attention to any of His ways.

28 So they made the cry of the poor reach Him, and He listened to the cry of the afflicted.

29 But if He stays silent, who can condemn Him? If He hides His face, who can see Him, whether it is a nation or a person?

30 This is so that a godless man should not rule, and no one should ensnare the people.[1]

31 For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne my punishment; I will offend no more.

32 Teach me what I do not see; if I have done wrong, I will not do it again'?

33 Should He repay on your terms, when you reject them? You must choose, not I; so tell me what you know.

34 Men of understanding will say to me, as will a wise man who hears me,

35 'Job speaks without knowledge; his words are without insight.'

36 If only Job were tested to the limit, for answering like wicked men!

37 For on top of his sin he adds rebellion; he claps his hands at us and piles up his words against God.”

1 The meaning of the Hebrew in verses 29–33 is uncertain.

Chapter 35

Job 35 gives Elihu’s third speech. Does Job think it right to say that he is more in the right than God, and to ask what good it does him not to sin? Look up at the skies, says Elihu: God is far above us. Job’s sin does not harm God, and his righteousness gives Him nothing; they affect only other people. People cry out under oppression, but no one asks, “Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night?” God does not answer empty cries or pay attention to the proud. How much less will He hear Job, when he says that he does not see Him. Job opens his mouth with empty talk and multiplies words without knowledge.

1 Then Elihu answered:

2 “Do you think this is just, when you say, ‘I am more in the right than God’?

3 For you ask, ‘What good is it to You? What do I gain by not sinning?’

4 I will answer you, and your friends with you.

5 Look up at the heavens and see; gaze at the clouds high above you.

6 If you have sinned, what do you do to Him? If your offences are many, what does that do to Him?

7 If you are righteous, what can you offer Him? What does He take from your hand?

8 Your wickedness affects only a man like yourself, and your righteousness only a human being.

9 People cry out under a load of oppression; they call for help from the arm of the mighty.

10 But no one thinks to ask, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night,

11 who instructs us more than the beasts of the earth, and gives us more wisdom than the birds?’

12 There they cry out, but He does not answer, because of the pride of evil people.

13 Surely God does not listen to an empty cry, and the Almighty pays it no attention.

14 How much less when you say that you do not see Him, that your case is before Him and you are waiting for Him!

15 And now, because His anger does not punish, and He takes little notice of folly,[1]

16 So Job opens his mouth with empty talk and piles up words without knowledge.”

1 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.

Chapter 36

Job 36 begins Elihu’s last speech. He claims to speak on God’s behalf. God is mighty but despises no one. He does not keep the wicked alive, and He gives the afflicted their rights. When people are bound in affliction, He shows them their sin and opens their ears to correction; if they obey, they end their days in prosperity, but if not, they perish. God rescues the afflicted by their affliction, and He is drawing Job out of distress, so Job must not turn to evil. God is exalted in His power; who is a teacher like Him? Elihu then turns to God’s greatness in the storm: He draws up drops of water and pours down rain, spreads out His lightning and covers the sea. By these He governs the peoples and gives food in abundance.

1 Elihu continued:

2 “Bear with me a little longer, and I will show you that there is more to say on God’s behalf.

3 I will bring my knowledge from afar, and I will ascribe justice to my Maker.

4 For my words are truly no lie; one with perfect knowledge stands before you.

5 See, God is mighty, but He despises no one; He is mighty in strength of understanding.

6 He does not keep the wicked alive, and He gives the afflicted their rights.

7 He does not take His eyes off the righteous, but seats them with kings on the throne for ever, and they are exalted.

8 And if they are bound in chains, held fast by the cords of affliction,

9 He tells them what they have done, and how their offences have been arrogant.

10 He opens their ears to correction and commands them to turn from wrongdoing.

11 If they listen and serve Him, they will end their days in prosperity and their years in contentment.

12 But if they do not listen, they will cross the river of death and die without knowledge.

13 The godless in heart nurse their anger; they do not cry for help when He binds them.

14 They die in their youth, and their life ends among the male temple prostitutes.[1]

15 He rescues the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ears by their distress.

16 So too He has drawn you[2] out of the mouth of distress into a broad place without restriction, and your table is laid with rich food.

17 But you are full of the judgement due to the wicked; judgement and justice have hold of you.

18 Beware that wrath does not entice you into scoffing, and do not let a great ransom turn you aside.

19 Would your wealth, or all the force of your strength, keep you from distress?

20 Do not long for the night, when peoples vanish from their place.

21 Take care that you do not turn to evil, for you have preferred this to affliction.

22 See, God's power is exalted; what teacher is there like Him?

23 Who has prescribed His way for Him? Who can say, 'You have done wrong'?

24 Remember to magnify His work, of which people have sung.

25 All mankind has looked on it; mortals gaze at it from afar.

26 See, God is great, beyond our knowledge; the number of His years cannot be searched out.

27 For He draws up the drops of water; they distil as rain from His mist,

28 which the clouds pour down and shower abundantly on mankind.

29 Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunder from His pavilion?

30 See, He scatters His lightning around Him and covers the depths of the sea.

31 By these He governs the peoples and gives food in abundance.

32 He fills His hands with lightning and commands it to strike its mark.

33 Its thunder announces His coming; even the cattle tell of the approaching storm.

1 That is, in shame, at a young age.

2 The meaning of the Hebrew in verses 16–20 is uncertain.

Chapter 37

> *Job 37 concludes Elihu's speech. His heart pounds at the thunder of God's voice and the lightning sent to the ends of the earth. God does great things beyond understanding: He commands the snow and the rain, stops people from their work, drives animals to their dens, and sends the storm and the ice. He directs the clouds to do all He commands, for correction or for loyal kindness. Elihu tells Job to stop and consider God's wonders. Can Job spread out the skies, hard as a bronze mirror? No one could set out a case before God in the darkness. God comes in golden splendour; the Almighty is beyond our reach, great in power and justice, and so people fear Him.*

1 At this too my heart pounds and leaps from its place.

2 Listen, listen to the thunder of His voice, to the rumbling that comes from His mouth.

3 He lets it go under the whole heaven, and His lightning to the ends of the earth.

4 After it His voice roars; He thunders with His majestic voice, and He does not hold back the lightning when His voice is heard.

5 God thunders wonderfully with His voice; He does great things beyond our understanding.

6 For He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth,' and to the downpour, 'Be a mighty rain.'

7 He seals up the hand of every person, so that all may know His work.

8 The animals go into their dens and stay in their lairs.

9 The storm comes from its chamber, and the cold from the driving winds.

10 By the breath of God ice is formed, and the broad waters are frozen.

11 He loads the thick clouds with moisture; the clouds scatter His lightning.

12 They turn around by His guidance, to do all that He commands them over the face of the inhabited earth.

13 Whether for correction, or for His land, or for loyal kindness, He makes it happen.

14 Listen to this, Job; stop and consider the wonders of God.

15 Do you know how God orders them and makes the lightning flash from His cloud?

16 Do you know how the clouds are balanced, the wonders of Him who is perfect in knowledge,

17 you whose clothes are hot when the land lies still under the south wind?

18 Can you, like Him, spread out the skies, hard as a mirror of cast metal?

19 Teach us what we should say to Him; we cannot set out our case because of the darkness.

20 Should He be told that I wish to speak? Would anyone ask to be swallowed up?

21 Now no one can look at the sun when it is bright in the skies, after the wind has passed and cleared them.

22 Out of the north comes golden splendour; around God is awesome majesty.

23 The Almighty is beyond our reach, exalted in power; He will not violate justice and abundant righteousness.

24 Therefore people fear Him; He does not regard any who are wise in their own hearts.”[1]

1 Or ‘all the wise in heart fear Him’.

Chapter 38

Job 38 tells how the LORD answers Job out of the storm. Who darkens His counsel with words without knowledge? Job must brace himself and answer. Where was he when God founded the earth, when the morning stars sang together? Who shut in the sea and set its limits? Has he commanded the morning, seen the gates of death, or found the home of light and darkness? Has he entered the storehouses of snow and hail? Who cuts a channel for the rain, and who is the father of the dew? Can he bind the Pleiades, loose Orion, or send out the lightning? Who gives wisdom to the heart, or hunts prey for the lion, and who provides food for the raven when its young cry to God?

1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm:

2 “Who is this who darkens counsel with words without knowledge?

3 Brace yourself like a man; I will ask the questions, and you will inform Me.

4 Where were you when I founded the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding.

5 Who fixed its measurements? Surely you know! Who stretched a line across it?

6 On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone,

7 while the morning stars sang as one and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

8 Who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb,

9 when I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band,

10 when I fixed My limits for it and set bars and doors,

11 and said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here your proud waves must stop’?

12 Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, or shown the dawn its place,

13 to seize the earth by its edges and shake the wicked out of it?

14 The earth is changed like clay under a seal, and everything stands out like a garment.

15 The wicked are denied their light, and their uplifted arm is broken.

16 Have you gone down to the springs of the sea, or walked through the hidden depths?

17 Have the gates of death been shown to you? Have you seen the gates of deep shadow?

18 Have you understood the breadth of the earth?
Tell Me, if you know all this.
19 Where is the way to the home of light? And
where does darkness live,
20 that you may lead it to its territory and know the
paths to its house?
21 You must know, since you were already born,
and have lived so very many years!
22 Have you entered the storehouses of the snow,
or seen the storehouses of the hail,
23 which I keep in store for times of trouble, for
days of battle and war?
24 What is the way to the place where the light is
parted, where the east wind is scattered over the
earth?
25 Who has cut a channel for the torrents of rain,
and a path for the thunderbolt,
26 to bring rain on a land where no one lives, on a
wilderness with no human in it,
27 to satisfy the waste and desolate land and make
the ground sprout with grass?
28 Does the rain have a father? Who has fathered
the drops of dew?
29 From whose womb did the ice come? Who gave
birth to the frost of heaven,
30 when the waters turn as hard as stone and the
face of the deep freezes?
31 Can you tie up the chains of the Pleiades, or
undo the cords of Orion?
32 Can you bring out the constellations[1] at their
proper times, or guide the Bear with her cubs?
33 Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you
establish their rule on the earth?
34 Can you raise your voice to the clouds, so that a
flood of water covers you?
35 Can you send out the lightning, so that it goes
and says to you, ‘Here we are’?
36 Who has put wisdom in the inner being, or given
understanding to the mind?[2]
37 Who has the wisdom to count the clouds? Who
can tip over the water jars of the heavens,
38 when the dust hardens into a mass and the clods
stick together?
39 Do you hunt the lioness’s prey, or fill the hunger
of her cubs,
40 when they crouch in their dens and lie in wait in
their cover?
41 Who provides food for the raven, when its young
cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?

1 Hebrew *Mazzaroth*, perhaps the signs of the zodiac.
2 Or ‘to the ibis’ and ‘to the rooster’; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Chapter 39

Job 39 continues the LORD’s questions. Does Job know when the mountain goats give birth? Who set the wild donkey free, to laugh at the noise of the city? Will the wild ox serve him or harrow his valleys? The ostrich flaps proudly but leaves her eggs on the ground, for God has denied her wisdom, yet she laughs at the horse and rider. Did Job give the horse its might, which paws in the valley, laughs at fear and charges into battle at the trumpet? Is it by his understanding that the hawk soars, or at his command that the eagle builds on the crag and looks for prey?

1 Do you know when the mountain goats give
birth? Do you watch when the deer calve?
2 Can you count the months they must fulfil? Do
you know the time they give birth,
3 when they crouch, bring forth their young, and
are rid of their labour pains?
4 Their young grow strong and thrive in the open;
they go off and do not come back.
5 Who set the wild donkey free? Who loosened the
ropes of the swift donkey,
6 to whom I gave the desert for a home and the
salt land for a dwelling?
7 It laughs at the commotion of the city and does
not hear the shouts of a driver.
8 It ranges the hills for its pasture and searches for
anything green.
9 Will the wild ox consent to serve you? Will it
spend the night by your manger?
10 Can you hold the wild ox in the furrow with a
rope? Will it harrow the valleys behind you?

11 Will you rely on it because its strength is great,
and leave your heavy work to it?
12 Will you trust it to bring in your grain and
gather it to your threshing floor?
13 The ostrich's wings beat joyfully, but do they
have the stork's pinion and plumage?[1]
14 For she leaves her eggs on the ground and lets
them warm in the dust,
15 forgetting that a foot may crush them, or a wild
animal trample them.
16 She treats her young harshly, as if they were not
hers; she has no fear that her labour may be in
vain.
17 For God has deprived her of wisdom and given
her no share of understanding.
18 Yet when she spreads her wings to run, she
laughs at the horse and its rider.
19 Do you give the horse its might? Do you clothe
its neck with a flowing mane?
20 Do you make it leap like a locust? Its proud
snorting is terrifying.
21 It paws in the valley and rejoices in its strength;
it charges out to meet the weapons.
22 It laughs at fear and is not dismayed; it does not
turn back from the sword.
23 The quiver rattles against its side, with the
flashing spear and javelin.
24 Trembling with excitement it devours the
ground; it cannot stand still at the sound of the
trumpet.
25 At each blast of the trumpet it snorts, 'Aha!' It
smells the battle from afar, the thunder of the
commanders and the shouting.
26 Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars,
and spreads its wings towards the south?
27 Does the eagle climb at your command and build
its nest in the heights?
28 It lives on the cliff and spends the night there,
on the rocky crag, its stronghold.
29 From there it spies out its food; its eyes see it
from afar.
30 Its young ones suck up blood, and where the
slain are, there it is."

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; the word for 'stork' sounds like 'loyal one', which may be a play on her neglect of her young.

Chapter 40

Job 40 tells how the LORD challenges Job to answer, and Job replies that he is of small account and will put his hand over his mouth. Then the LORD speaks again from the storm: will Job discredit His justice to prove himself right? Let him clothe himself with majesty and bring down the proud, and then the LORD will admit that his own right hand can save him. The LORD then describes Behemoth, which He made as He made Job: it eats grass like an ox, has strength in its loins, a tail like a cedar and bones like bronze, and it is the first of God's works. It lies among the lotus plants and is not alarmed when the river rages.

1 The LORD said to Job:
2 "Will the one who finds fault contend with the
Almighty? Let him who argues with God answer."
3 Then Job answered the LORD:
4 "See, I am of small account; what can I answer
You? I put my hand over my mouth.
5 I have spoken once, and I will not reply; twice,
but I will say no more."
6 Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm:
7 "Brace yourself like a man; I will ask the
questions, and you will inform Me.
8 Would you really annul My justice? Would you
condemn Me so that you may be in the right?
9 Have you an arm like God's? Can you thunder
with a voice like His?
10 Then adorn yourself with majesty and dignity,
and clothe yourself with glory and splendour.
11 Unleash the fury of your anger; find everyone
who is proud and bring him down.
12 Look at everyone who is proud and humble him;
tread down the wicked where they stand.
13 Bury them all in the dust; shroud their faces in
the hidden place.
14 Then I Myself will acknowledge that your own
right hand can save you.
15 Look now at Behemoth,[1] which I made as I made
you. It eats grass like an ox.

16 See the strength in its loins, the power in the
muscles of its belly.
17 It stiffens its tail like a cedar; the sinews of its
thighs are knit together.
18 Its bones are tubes of bronze; its limbs are like
bars of iron.
19 It is the first of the works of God; only its Maker
can approach it with His sword.
20 The hills bring it their produce, where all the
wild animals play.
21 It lies under the lotus plants, hidden among the
reeds in the marsh.
22 The lotus plants cover it with their shade; the
willows of the brook surround it.
23 If the river rages, it is not alarmed; it is
confident though the Jordan surges against its
mouth.
24 Can anyone capture it by its eyes, or pierce its
nose with a snare?

1 Perhaps the hippopotamus, or a great beast standing for all untamed power.

Chapter 41

Job 41 continues the LORD's speech with Leviathan. Can Job draw it out with a hook, make a covenant with it, or keep it as a pet? Anyone who lays a hand on it will not do so twice. If no one dares to rouse it, who can stand before God? Everything under heaven belongs to Him. The LORD describes its limbs, its terrible teeth, its armour of close-set shields, the fire and smoke from its mouth and nostrils, its strength and its heart as hard as stone. Sword, spear and arrow are useless against it; it counts iron as straw and laughs at the javelin. It makes the deep boil like a pot and leaves a shining wake. There is nothing like it on earth, a creature without fear, king over all the proud.

1 Can you land Leviathan[1] with a hook, or hold
down its tongue with a line?
2 Can you put a rope through its nose, or pierce its
jaw with a barb?
3 Will it keep pleading with you? Will it speak
gently to you?
4 Will it make a covenant with you, so that you can
take it as your servant for life?
5 Will you play with it as with a bird, or put it on a
leash for your girls?
6 Will traders bargain over it? Will they divide it up
among the merchants?
7 Can you fill its hide with harpoons, or its head
with fishing spears?
8 Lay a hand on it, and remember the battle; you
will not do it again!
9 See, any hope of mastering it is false; the mere
sight of it lays a man low.
10 No one is so fierce that he dares to rouse it. Who
then can stand before Me?
11 Who has given to Me first, that I should pay him
back?[2] All that is under heaven is Mine.
12 I will not keep silent about its limbs, its mighty
strength and its graceful form.
13 Who can strip off its outer coat? Who can come
within its double armour?
14 Who can open the doors of its face, ringed with
terrifying teeth?
15 Its back has rows of shields, tightly sealed
together.
16 Each is so close to the next that no air can come
between them.
17 They are joined to one another; they cling
together and cannot be parted.
18 Its sneezes flash out light; its eyes are like the
eyelids of the dawn.
19 Torches stream from its mouth, and sparks of
fire leap out.
20 Smoke pours from its nostrils, as from a boiling
pot over burning reeds.
21 Its breath sets coals ablaze, and flames shoot
from its mouth.
22 Strength lodges in its neck, and dismay dances
before it.
23 The folds of its flesh stick together, firm on it
and immovable.
24 Its heart is as hard as stone, as hard as a lower
millstone.
25 When it rises up, the mighty are afraid; they
draw back at its thrashing.
26 The sword that reaches it has no effect, nor does
the spear, the dart or the javelin.

27 It regards iron as straw, and bronze as rotten
wood.
28 The arrow cannot make it flee; slingstones
become chaff to it.
29 It regards a club as chaff, and it laughs at the
rattling javelin.
30 Its underside is like jagged pieces of pottery; it
spreads itself like a threshing sledge on the mud.
31 It makes the deep boil like a cauldron and stirs
up the sea like a pot of ointment.
32 Behind it it leaves a shining wake; one would
think the deep had white hair.
33 Nothing on earth is its equal, a creature without
fear.
34 It looks down on everything that is lofty; it is
king over all the proud."

1 Perhaps the crocodile, or the sea monster of 3:8 and Psalm 74:14. In Hebrew 41:1–8 are numbered 40:25–32, and 41:9–34 are numbered 41:1–26.

2 Compare Romans 11:35.

Chapter 42

Job 42 tells how Job answers the LORD: he knows that God can do all things, and he has spoken of things too wonderful for him. He had heard of God, but now his own eye has seen Him, and he repents in dust and ashes. The LORD tells Eliphaz that His anger burns against him and his two friends, because they have not spoken what is right about Him, as His servant Job has. They are to offer burnt offerings, and Job will pray for them. When Job has prayed for his friends, the LORD restores his fortunes and gives him twice what he had before. His family and friends come to comfort him. The LORD blesses the latter part of his life with great flocks and herds, seven sons and three daughters, Jemimah, Keziah and Keren-happuch, the most beautiful women in the land, who receive an inheritance among their brothers. Job lives a hundred and forty years more, sees four generations, and dies old and full of days.

1 Then Job answered the LORD:

2 "I know that You are able to do all things, and
that no plan of Yours can be blocked.
3 You said, 'Who is this who hides counsel without
knowledge?' So I have spoken of what I did not
understand, of things too wonderful for me, which
I did not know.
4 You said, 'Hear Me, and I will speak; I will ask
the questions, and you will inform Me.'
5 I had heard of You with my ears, but now my own
eye has seen You.
6 So I take back my words,[1] and I repent in dust
and ashes."
7 After the LORD had spoken these words to Job,
He said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My anger burns
against you and your two friends, for you have not
spoken what is right about Me, as My servant Job
has.
8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams, go to
My servant Job, and offer a burnt offering for
yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I
will accept his prayer and not deal with you as
your folly deserves. For you have not spoken what
is right about Me, as My servant Job has."
9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and
Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD
had told them, and the LORD accepted Job's
prayer.
10 After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD
restored his fortunes[2] and gave him twice as much
as he had before.
11 All his brothers and sisters and all who had
known him before came and ate with him in his
house. They showed him sympathy and comforted
him for all the trouble the LORD had brought on
him, and each of them gave him a piece of silver[3]
and a gold ring.
12 The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life
more than the first. He had fourteen thousand
sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of
oxen and a thousand female donkeys.
13 He also had seven sons and three daughters.
14 He called the first Jemimah, the second Keziah
and the third Keren-happuch.[4]
15 In all the land no women were found as beautiful
as Job's daughters, and their father gave them an
inheritance among their brothers.
16 After this Job lived a hundred and forty years,
and he saw his children and his children's
children to the fourth generation.
17 So Job died, old and full of days.

1 Or ‘I despise myself’. The Hebrew verb has no object.

2 Compare James 5:11.

3 Hebrew *qesitah*, a weight of unknown value; compare Genesis 33:19.

4 The names mean ‘dove’, ‘cassia’ and ‘horn of eye-paint’.