

CHAPTER 22

SEVEN SOCRATIC QUESTIONS OF ELIPHAZ 1-5

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said

- (1) "May a strong man be a valuable familiar to God in his strength because he is a valuable familiar among his own by practical and spiritual wisdom?"
- (2) "Is there pleasure or delight to Shaddai because you are righteous?"
- (3) "And is there gain to him when you complete your journey or are perfect in your path?"
- (4) "From His reverence of you will he decide your destiny or chasten you?" *These questions are like the familiar issues dealt with in hyper-Calvanism. Eliphaz is saying that God is not obliged in any way to man for His actions. He is also arguing that God need not lighten his punishment because of Job's good living. His argument suggests strongly that God does not delight in the righteous but because Christ's death enables that righteousness God does absolutely delight in the righteous.*
- (5) "From reverence of you will God go with you through judgment?" *Eliphaz is arguing in a Socratic style by these seven questions. This one lays it down as a principle that the judge does not appear on the side of the convicted - but again by the principle of mediatorial justification God does exactly this.*
- (6) "Is not your wickedness and calamity great?"
- (7) "Also is it not so that your iniquity has not yet ended?" *Eliphaz is charging Job with questioning God and impugning His righteous ways. The A.V. text in using the idea of "infinite iniquity" plays out in the NIV AS "endless" though the argument is that Job has not ceased to argue with God and Eliphaz takes this to be insolence and iniquitous.*

DIRECT ACCUSATIONS AGAINST JOB 6-9

For you will act corruptly against or bind by pledge or take a deposit from your brother gratuitously. *This indictment suggests Job takes unnecessary pledges or receives unjust interest on money he has lent. It is preferred incidentally and maliciously without ground on the basis of this being common practice. And you will cause the garments of those with little clothing to be stripped off. This callous action is in no way typical of Job. Modern enlightened Christians are not free from this specious form of argument based on man's sinfulness. Preachers accuse congregations of **particular sins** in the Eliphaz manner by the week though they are less keen to personalise their remarks. This malign procedure of Eliphaz carries instruction for us. So much for blatant sins of commission, now Eliphaz turns to that which Job has left undone.*

Now on the topic of sins of omission Eliphaz makes a citation. You will not cause the exhausted or weary to have water to drink and you will refuse bread from those suffering in famine or hungry ones.

Yet the strong armed man has the earth and the one who shows preferential treatment survives in it.

You will quickly send desolate silent widows away empty handed or without cause. *This indictment is against Job's exercise of judgment. It may be that judgment went against a woman because she had been in breach of law or it may again be a vague generalisation. The entire accusation is grounded in an allegation of Job's preferential treatment of which this unsubstantiated example is the sole case in point. Also the arms of the orphans will have been bruised so often. Eliphaz imagines the consequences for the children of a woman whose sons have to work hard and suffer to enable her to survive. He is very good at painting a picture that would draw tears but not a good case lawyer.*

GOD THE UNSEEN JUDGE OVERWHELMED BY THE FLOOD AND THOUGH JUDGMENT WAITS IT SURELY FALLS 10-20

Eliphaz continues his onslaught on Job's integrity.

For this cause snares encircle you. Also **sudden fear** has confounded and alarmed you or there is **darkness** so you will not be able to see though it and the **overflowing of water** will cover you. *Eliphaz makes the unlikely suggestion that Job the occupant of the desert will die in a flood. Is not Eloah at the lofty height of heaven? Then behold the sum or first of the stars for they are high. But you say "How does God know intimately?" "Will he judge aright behind the gloom or cloud?" Thick darkness is His covering and he will not see or regard gloom for He has been walking the circuit of heaven.*

You should watch closely the ancient highway or old way of life by which men of iniquity have travelled. Men who have been **taken away bound** [fmq] but not seasonably or in our time. Their foundations a flowing stream will have poured over. They said to the mighty God "Go away from us". And how mightily Shaddai should act toward them!

But He filled their houses with prosperity and the counsel of the wicked is far from me. The righteous see it and are radiantly happy. And the innocent or pardoned mock those *happy men who fell under judgment* when our **established prosperity** [mmq] is not destroyed but their remainder fire will consume.

Eliphaz has some grasp of prophecy in that he is aware that the former judgment of the flood has a yet more severe judgment of fire waits in the end days. His line of argument is that when all is well we joke about the flood or pour scorn on the idea but judgment of a fiery character will fall upon mankind in the last days.

ELIPHAZ' COUNSEL "KNOWING GOD AND PRAYING IS THE ANSWER" 21-30

Please make yourself familiar with Him and be peaceful and secure; in this way improvement will come to you. *Eliphaz views a relationship with God as one that will automatically bring health and healing to Job. He is nothing less than a hypocrite. Job maintains a vital living relationship with God through all.*

I pray you will take Torah guidance from His mouth and place His words in your heart. If or when you turn back to Shaddai you will be rebuilt and you will cause iniquity to move far away from your tents. You will also bury gold in the dust and precious Ophir gold as the embedded stones of the stream. **And Shaddai will be your gold!** *Here is a glorious truth lying like an ingot in the dirt for God is as gold-Christ is so precious-as pure gold to the believer.* Also silver will be your swift treasure. *Money will flow into your coffers.* For then you will have had enjoyment and delight in Shaddai and you will lift up your face to Eloah. You will make yourself entreat Him and He will hear you and you will recompense your vows. In addition you will decide or decree a word of promise and it will be established for you and light shall shine brightly [hgn] on your pathways of life. When they are cast low as the Shephelah or lowly you will say “There is a rising” or “You will come back” [hng has the significance of “back” and the “convex” replacing the “concave”, the hill or peak replacing the hole or valley] and he will be saviour of the lowly or the one who is prostrate before him. He will cause the coast or island or land of the innocent to escape or be free for it frees itself by **the purity** [rrb or rrb The term used here seems to be “purity but rb from rab has some alternative claim as the root word. It means “the engravings” or “expositions”] Eliphaz is saying that *Jobs holiness will lead to the salvation and freedom of poor islanders. In a like manner the purity and crucified hands of Jesus and His proclamation of the gospel has lead to the salvation of myriads. Thus the critical address with which Eliphaz began reaches a quite prophetic conclusion.*

SYNOPSIS

1. **Eliphaz’ general moral catechism suggestive of Job’s sin and continued evil way**
2. **He accuses Job of stripping the poor and mistreating the widow**
3. **He reminds Job of the deluge and shows that unseasonable judgment proves wickedness**
4. **Eliphaz commends prayer and purity treating Job as one needing to get to know Shaddai**

CHAPTER 23

I WISH I COULD FIND THE LORD - HE WOULD STRENGTHEN ME 1-7

Then Job answered and said “My meditation is also bitter today. Inspiration or strength is burdensome on top of my grief or sorrow.” *Job’s initial comment is that the attempt to console is turning into an added burden for him to bear.* Who will provide me with the know-how to find Him? I will (gladly) go to **His seat or base of power.** [hmk] I will set a just cause in array for my mouth to action. I will fill my mouth with matters to be corrected or pleadings [jky] I wish I knew the final words [lm literally the “cutting off words” or even “fresh words”- the term comes to be employed from lm a term for “new mown grass” and so it is often used of “poetic or fragrant words] with which He will answer me. And I would comprehend what he would say to shed light for me. Will “**the greatness of strength**” take issue in strife standing against me? No! He would definitely place *himself* beside me!

There the straight man contends for himself or pleads with him! And I will escape as a new laid egg from my judge.

I CANT FIND HIM ANYWHERE - HE KNOWS MY WAY - I OBEY HIM. HE IS MORE THAN FOOD 8-12

Behold I will go into His presence or eastward and He is not there and I go back or westward and there is no umpire belonging to Him. *Job is thinking of the world he lives in and he has contemplated all the men of his time from east to west and there is none that truly represents the Lord he believes the Holy Spirit has revealed to him.* At the right hand he is in the house of His work but I cannot grasp and get hold of him; He will conceal himself in a mantle or languish on the left and I cannot see Him. *Job knows God is actively at work in power and that he is hidden and haply even in sackcloth for the sorrow of his servant but unseen.* But He is fully aware of the path alongside me or of the road I remain on and alongside. In my testing or assaying I will come out as shining gold.[On April 2 of 2011 I chatted with a gentlemen touting for unwanted gold in a Leicester mall and previously with a banker who sported quite scintillating gold jewellery from the emirates. The latter wore superior glistening gold which was 22 carat as distinct from the much duller 9 and 18 carat popular jewellery of today. During earlier travels in Greece my wife and I also inspected some rare and very glorious crowns of the Alexandrian period made of such refined gold] *Job is remarking that trials have a refining capability and that his life would stand the test before his judge because of grace given to suffer.*

My foot has held fast his guiding or footprint [rva] I have watched his pathway and not turned from it or wrested away. I will not cause myself to **depart** [vmm - a word not much used-in Genesis 27.21 it is used of Isaac feeling his son Jacob and also in Psalm 115.7 of idols that do not “handle”] from the commandments of His lips. The enlightening words of His mouth I have treasured above my appointed meals.

HE DOES HIS OWN WILL SO JOB IS AFRAID YET THE LORD ALLOWED HIM TO LIVE 13-17

But He is in one being or unity and who can change or turn Him about and the desire of his soul He accomplishes. For He causes to be complete or finishes that appointed me and great things like these are in his hands. For that very reason I am agitated or terrified [lhb] of His presence I have constantly discerned or been wise to his presence or understood and umpired and been terrified. *Job confesses He has been very aware of God and attempted to mediate for himself but felt the terror of that act.*

But God in His power causes my heart to become timid and tender and Shaddai caused me to be alarmed or agitated and hasten off. But I was not cut off in extinction from the face of darkness or obscurity and calamity [jvj] and He has not continually hidden the darkness [lpa] at sunset from my face. *Job consoles himself that he was allowed to live. He demonstrates by the image of sunset that he suspects there is light still to shine on his life in its eventide and still hope in his later days. For those of us who look for His appearing this remains our most vibrant vision.*

SYNOPSIS

Job feels out of touch

The LORD knows the way he is going and he believes he will be refined

He desires the LORD more than bread

He is afraid of the LORD but He has allowed him to survive by His grace

CHAPTER 24

JOB: WHY IS THERE NO VISION? 1

Why since we are aware that seasons or long periods are not able to hide escape or lurk from Shaddai and **why do those who are aware not prophecy His days or perceive them?** *The Qere or oral reading ׀[dy] “those who know” clarifies the written textual ׀[dy] “they are aware”. The Question expresses the concern that the times and seasons that are known are not revealed. It is not certain whom Job inveighs against. Job is asking “Why leave God’s plans hiding as ambushers lying in wait for the unwary - let them be known?” “Why do men neglect the coming of the LORD and his day of Judgment? This is one of the most insightful queries of the whole book!*

MEN RUN TO EXCESS OF SIN AND ARE CRUEL TO THEIR OWN 2-4

(1) They reach to the borders or limits or remove the boundaries (or landmarks); they rob the arrayed or ordered flock and they will cause evil havoc. *The initial question seems disjointed from the sequel. A series of wanton acts follows the query. The A.V has inserted “Some” to differentiate those who know God’s plans and are aware of His seasons from the evil who act unjustly.*

(2) They guide away the ass of the orphans; they bind the ox of the widow by a pledge from her.

(3) They turn or lead the abysmally poor from the way; the needy of the earth conceal or flee secretly to hide as one or united.

THE ASS LIVES MORE PURPOSEFULLY THAN MAN 5-8

(a) Behold the wild asses in the wilderness; they go through their preparations and undertakings by rising at dawn feed. The plain arid tract of the Arabah has bread for it and it’s young. *The ass uses mixed grain and shakes out its own hay. They reap the mixed fodder through the field. They gather the last fruits of the cultivated olives or grapes of the wicked. The asses are up early - they take gleanings of the field and finish off the vintage of the fruit farmers by a night visit. In nothing do they come behind - yet they are not managed by man.*

(b) They spend the night or lodge naked and without outer garment or robe and they have no coverings in the cold.

(c) They are wet from the sheeting downpours of the mountains and embrace the rock or stand sluggish at the rock from lack of refuge or **that they can trust** [*hsh*]

WILFUL SIN NEGATES APPEALS TO GOD 9-13

(4) They will take the orphan from a breast and apply a pledge above or over the needy.

(5) The needy walk or go naked without a garment or robe and they lift the omer or two litres of corn that belongs to the hungry.

(6) Between their walls [*the walls of the rich*] they [*the poor*] press oil and walk the wine-presses and are thirsty or desirous of a drink and food.

From the city “stretched men” or “cloaked or hidden men” will lament and groan and the soul of the wounded will shout **but Eloah does not establish grant or act upon the impiety or unsavoury thing.** (7) They are living by being **rebels or Nimrods** of the light. They do not cause them to care about or have regard for its ways and they do not live or rest and dwell in its raised or beaten paths [*btñ*]

THREE EVILS WHICH SUCCEED BEST IN AVOIDANCE OF LIGHT 14-17

(8) The **murderer** or manslayer [*jxr*] rises at first light and kills the needy and the beggarly poor and in the night he lives as a thief. *Murder searches for cover of darkness*

(9) Also the eye of the **adulterer** waits for the breeze and dusk of the evening when he can say “not an eye shall watch or spy on me” and he puts a disguise on his face. *Adulterers are affianced to darkness.*

(10) In the darkness they (**thieves**) break into houses seal or set up for themselves for days before; they have no acquaintance or real personal awareness of the light for the morning is united for them to the “shadow of death” for he will cause himself to know or recognise the troubles or terrors of death. *The nefarious engagement of the wicked is destroyed by light which is unwelcome as death. Thieves of the ancient sort literally “dug into” houses and their preferred tool was an earth-cutting tool.*

MARKS OR TERRORS OF DEATH 18-25

(1) Swift is he upon the face of the waters. *There is a series of three hyphens connecting these words in the Hebrew text to imprint the speed of death on the reader’s mind. The device reflects Job’s emphasis. Their lot in the earth will have been cursed. Those who die have no further earth heritage - all is lost.*

(2) He does not turn his face toward the vineyard path. *Country walks and wine are no more.*

Desert like drought and flaming heat will strip off cooling snow water. As the parched land swallows the floods from Hermon so the body in death overwhelms all cold fomentations as Sheol claims those who have kept up the run or flow of sin [*Piel repetitio of afj*]

(3) The womb shall forget him; the worm will find him sweet yet presently it will not remember *him*. So crass evil will be shattered like a tree *crashing down*. *His mother is gone and his first residence her protective womb forgets his little embryo; then even the little worm forgets his buried earthly remains.*

(4) He is bad to the remaining stump or trunk that did not bear fruit and will show no kindness to the widow.

(5) He draws the mighty brave and stout hearted to his place by his power; he rises up and he is not assured of his life or confident in his life.

He will give him to be confident and He will or would lend support but His eyes are upon their ways. *God would make a man confident in life and support him but he wants that man to walk with Him. They ride high for a little and are no more. They have been wasting away [Jkm] as all do; they will shut up or have themselves buried [xpq]. The last office they perform is to arrange their own funeral. The act of closing a tomb or filling in a grave is suggested by the verb “to close”. Thus life finds physical closure. They are cut down or cut off like a branch or ear of corn or flood of water [tlbv “shibboleth” has these three meanings although when used in the famous password of Judges 12.6 it probably referred to the Jordan in flood.] And if not then who will convince me I am wrong and render my declaration [l/m] folly or impiety?*

SYNOPSIS

Why do men not recognise what God has revealed – his days of grace and judgment?

The wild ass lives better than most men

Murder adultery and theft sustain their momentum always

God instructs by the inevitability of death.

God would love to uphold and give sustaining faith but evil works fly in God's face.

CHAPTER 25

BILDAD 1-6

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

1 “The Kingdom or sovereign rule and reverent dread are with Him; He makes recompense or peace in His lofty or heavenly places. *Bildad is orthodox enough on sovereignty but at fault on salvation which had to be purchased by the “divine stoop”*

2 Is there a full count of his troops or hosts? And over whom does His light not rise?

3 And how will man in his *malady [vma]* be justified with God? *Again Bildad is at sea on salvation.*

4 And how can he be pure or cleansed that is born of woman? Look as far as the moon and it does not cause to shine or praise and the stars are not pure in his sight. *Bildad is saying that the moon calls forth no praise from God. Solomon spoke of the church as “pure as the moon” but even that phrase is dampened in glory by the fact that the moon fails to exalt God. No doubt foreign cults have used the moon as indeed the Muslim countries display it on their emblems. Bildad's address which exalts the sovereignty of God stands as a perennial reminder that righteousness and purity are of God alone and that it is in God's heaven that judgment and sure salvation sources. Bildad is correct about idolatry but has no vision of the church that is to be.*

Furthermore sinful man is a worm that lifts itself up and the son of Adam a long stretched out worm.

The image of God is forgotten and the doctrine of man is seriously at fault. This very brief speech reveals exactly what Job had been speaking about - man is blind to the days when God interacts with mankind. Job will answer promptly for Bildad's mind is seeking truth but it is out of his range and beyond his grasp – like the Ethiopian eunuch he needs someone to tell it plainly to him.

SYNOPSIS

God is sovereign

Man cannot be pure by nature

Like a worm man presumes to rise and extend himself

CHAPTER 26

JOB QUESTIONS BILDAD ON HIS COMPETENCE TO COUNSEL 1-4

Then Job answered and said

(1) “How have you helped him that has no fierce lion-like strength to exert [jk “natural strength as that of Samson or the lion”]?”

(2) How do you not save the arm that had no heroic robust strength? [zz[“fierce” “prevailing strength” which may come from the **mouth of babes** as did the testimony of the children in the temple which overwhelmed the resistance of the elders - so characterised by ‘boldness’]. *Job is asking why Bildad did not help those who don't have strength to exercise and those who cannot or will not face their foe. The first have no “firmness” or power and the second have no “fierceness” or boldness of mind.*

(3) How would you counsel one who lacks practical or spiritual wisdom?

(4) How have you gained awareness of the enterprise or wisdom [hvj] of the skilled master?

(5) To whom have you given the explanation of difficult and deep utterance or discourse?

(6) And whose mind and spirit came at its beginning from you?

THE GIANTS - A REMINDER OF OUR CREATURELY VULNERABILITY AND THE NEED FOR HUMILITY 5-6

The Rephaim or giants will have been waiting or brought forth from [*axy* may also encompass their **going out** largely with the deluge] “before the flood” [literally “below waters” which defines a **hidden place** or may simply be an historical notice as I take it] and **they continue to dwell** or are familiar with man. Sheol is naked before Him and there is not hiding place or pardoning for Abaddon. *Job deals in this short reference with an event to which he was closer than moderns and of which he could speak readily - the matter of the judgment of the angels who sinned and the giants whom they produced. The latter died beneath the waters but even in the days of the conquest some remained of which Goliath was one example. Because like the Dodo there remain no current examples as far as we know in the gene pool this mixed race of creature is not spoken of in theology. Theology has contemplated that the Antichrist may enshrine something of a sinister demonic order in his being. Staying within the textual confines we have to observe the weakness of the received text and also recognise that Job employs this argument to direct us to our limitations and to the sovereignty of God to which precise topic he returns in his closing chapters.*

GOD WHO CONTROLS THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE IS TRULY WISE 7-10

He (God) is the one **who still stretches** out the north over the dark chaos [*hht*]. He is the one **who still suspends** [*Hebrew participle hl t like a weight suspended on a balance*] the earth on “nothing whatsoever” or “what - nothing” [*hmyl b*]. He is the one who still binds waters in thick clouds and the cloud cover does not tear itself open or break under them. *Job is speaking of that grace which does not empty the whole hydrosphere upon man.* He it is who holds in check the face of his throne [*His anger*] and spreads over it his cloud cover. *Job now speaks of God concealing his anger and his glory.* He has drawn a circle of edict or ordinance that subscribes the face of the waters until light and dark are at an end or cease. *Job is referring to the Noahic covenant which reads “While the earth remains day and night shall not cease” and which is coupled with the promise “I will no more destroy man whom I have made” (Genesis 8.21-22 & 9.14-16)*

THE EPIC ACTS OF GOD - REMINISCENT OF THE FLOOD 11-14

The abiding pillars [*like our phrase “structures that are in place”*] or **ministers** of the heavens will have been shaken or will have a shake and will be **traumatised** [*The Hebrew term hmt is a word which probably represents our modern word in one of the world’s ancient languages*] from his rebuke. By his natural power he caused commotion or mighty sudden movement [*qr means “motion” and “in a wink” so “sudden movement”*]. By his natural strength He has set the sea in commotion of contracted the sea [*either or both meanings bear upon the action of God at the time of the deluge*] and in the house of his understanding he crushes or dashes “pride” to pieces [*literally RAHAB which has been taken to connect to the myth of Rahab and the serpent but actually relates to “the” pride of Satan who had the audacity to challenge and dare to change the nature of humanity - so Bildad ought to be more careful*]

By His Spirit he continues to make bright and beautiful with curvature [*Hebrew rpv is the same word used for the “ram’s horn” with its beautiful series of ongoing curves. It may well be that the heavens are one or several massive ram’s horn like curves*] the heavens. By his hand he created from nothing the continually twisting serpent. *The reference here is to Satan’s constant turning and twisting out of rebellious deliberations as judge of man’s behaviour as opposed to God’s constancy of love and favour.*

Behold these are *some* cuttings from his paths and how little a hint or whisper of a word has he caused to be heard of Himself but the “roaring sea” or “thunder” [*xmv*] or his warrior strength who will have been able to understand or mediate? *This most notable chapter of scripture is one of the majestic purple passages of Job. It ends by the virtual elimination of anyone who might try to explain God and his ways. However as Job has already pointed out there is a living Redeemer whose knowledge of the Father makes him alone the one who can explain the Father’s ways and open the seals of history.*

SYNOPSIS – An argument from the flood

Job questions Bildad’s fitness to counsel from limited experience.

Job refers to the giants whose pride attracted the deluge judgment.

Job commends the universal wisdom of God that holds sovereign control.

Job reminds Bildad that judgment is instantaneous.

Job speaks of the twisting and turning of Satan and the straight ways of God.

CHAPTER 27

JOB BELIEVES GOD RELAXED HIS DEFENSIVE GUARD ON HIM 1-2

So Job added to take up his teaching parable and said, by the living God caused my just defence to be lacking or and Shaddai who makes my soul bitter for all the time my breath is still in me and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils I vow my lips shall not speak iniquity and I vow my tongue shall not murmur deceit or craft. May I be accursed if I give you cause to be justified.

JOB WILL NOT DIVERT FROM LIVING AS PERFECTLY AS POSSIBLE 3-6

Until I **expire** [*mq poetic Hebrew signifying “breath my last”*] I will not **turn away or remove** [*rws is used of taking a ring off at death*] my integrity or completeness from my living. In my righteousness I will make myself hold fast and I will not relax or abate. My heart shall not expose me to contempt from the days I live.

JOB LEARNED TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.7-11

My enemy shall be as the wicked and the man who rises against me as he who turns aside or is perverse. What is the hope the profane sighs for? Though he has plundered for spoil [*xb* “cut off his web from the loom” so “finished a complex operation of deceit”] what is there when Eloah shall ask for his soul?

Will God hear and act on his cry when adversity comes upon him? Or will he have been delighting in Shaddai? **At every time of trouble** will he call Eloah? I will instruct or point you ahead with the hand or strength of God. That which is with Shaddai I will not smear over or deny. *Job is speaking plainly about what God quite rightly may do in developing our lives by trial short of what we cannot bear. He is also stating that there is no excuse ever for charging God with wrong doing. Further he counsels that a man must be constantly in touch with God. Above all there is not time a man should forsake his communion with the LORD. Paul who came through many troubles wrote “pray without ceasing” (1Thessalonians 5.17)*

VANITY BEGAN WITH CAIN AND ABEL AND BECAME ADAM’S LOT 12-17

Look you have all seen the vision so what is this vanity you will all vainly do? *The concept of vanity in Hebrew is the name of Adam’s second son “ABEL” It seemed his life was vain. Vanity is a mist, a vapour, a foolish act, a sin. This is the lot of guilty impious Adam in the company of God and the inheritance that fierce and violent tyrants will receive from Shaddai. If his sons are numerous it is for someone’s sword and his issue that spring from him shall not be filled with bread. His remnant that escape will be entombed in death and his widows will not weep. The end of the godless is grim. Job speaks of some children dying in war and the rest coming to an early grave whilst even their women are heartless and shed no tears.*

DIRT RICH 16-18

Though he treasure up silver as dust and establishes robes or clothing like a heap of clay - he may do the preparation but the just will wear it and the innocent will inherit the silver. He builds his house as the moth and as a shack that the watcher of sheep or vines makes. *It was Job who coined the phrase “Dirt rich” when he compared riches to dust and a muck heap.*

THE DEMISE OF THE RICH DECEIVER 19-21

- (1) The rich man shall lie down to rest and not add more. He will open his eyes and be no more.
- (2) Terrible calamities overtake him as flood waters;
- (3) A storm takes him like a thief at night.
- (4) The east wind will carry him off and he is gone.
- (5) And he is rushed away in a tempest from his classic place

THE DECEITFULLY RICH AN OBJECT OF DIVINE DISPLEASURE & HUMAN DERISION 22-23

For God shall overthrow him or cast him off and will not pity him as an object of affection [*lmj*]. He would bolt from his hand or power in his spirit or in vanity or tempest. They shall applaud with their hands and they will hiss him from his classic location as an object of contempt. *The saint is a lover of the Saviour and the souls of men the deceiver is in flight from God and will be hissed from his home by men. There is nothing so sad as to have not a friend in the world.*

SYNOPSIS Job continues

1. *Trials demand a continued walk with God and continuing integrity*
2. *Trials require a daily prayer life with God*
3. *Adam from the guilt of deceit experienced a terrible vanity in Abel’s death*
4. *All the wealth in the world won’t buy a placed in heaven or true friends on earth.*

CHAPTER 28

SIMPLE PROCESS LIES BEHIND THE BEAUTY & UTILITY OF METALS AND THEIR VALUE TO MAN WARRANTS THE WORK. GOD IS AT WORK FOR HE VALUES MAN 1-6

But then there **EXISTS a foundry** for silver and a **site** to refine and pour out gold and with iron **clay** from which it is taken and a **stone** mould for the casting of molten brass. *Job is reminding us that arrangements are made to create these riches. There is work behind them and locations where they exist in abundance at which places they are refined and made. There is a vast purpose in industry.*

He appoints an end to darkness when it is cut off at harvest. **He examines all that is completed or fulfilled.** The stone of sunset or day’s end and shadow of death. The torrent (like judgment) breaks out from beside the sojourning stranger **neglected forgotten things** allotted or apportioned to his past [*i.e. where his foot once trod,*] They are hanging like old cords or the sparse hair of the head; they agitate or shake men.

The earth from her appointed portion (*the arable surface*) brings forth **bread but underneath she changes** or is converted to the likeness of fire. Her stones from that fiery place are sapphires and the dusty ore of gold belongs to it (*the earth*). *The inner turbulence of the earth is often forgotten. As a boy I read that we walk confident and even proudly on an earth crust of 50 miles thick over a sea of molten iron.*

A SECRET BEYOND THE EYE OF THE VULTURE OR LION 7-9

There is a by-way or trodden path that no rapacious bird is aware of; where is this that the vulture’s eye has not cast a glance? [*pzv*]. The pride of the uplifted proud lion has not been trained to walk that path and the black Syrian lion had not

passed by to ornament [hd[]] it. He (God) sent his powerful hand against the flint rock. He overturned or converted the mountain from their roots. *Job is testifying to the areas far beneath earth's surface. He is also reminding all-comers of the future that God has already shown his power in the deluge by tearing the strongest rocks of earth's plates apart and turning vast phalanxes of its mountains upside down.*

THE LORD SUPERVISES RIVER AND SEA AND HIDDEN THINGS 10-14

He keeps cutting the canal like streams in the rocks and his eye is constantly watching everything that is precious beloved and noble and rare [rpy]. Over and over again (Piel) He restrains [vbj] as a horse is restrained by reins] the shining currents or mighty flowing rivers from weeping over *their banks. Job is speaking poetically and in place of banks he understands eyelids.* He also brings the hidden thing to light. [Hiddenness hml at is uses of the **aion** ahead also of **virgins** who were covered with veils and of **secrets** of the heart]. And will **spiritual wisdom** be found from not being present and where is this special place of understanding or mediation? Man is not truly aware of its array [hence "power"] or value and it will not be found in the land of the living. The depth said "It is not in me" and the sea said "It is not with me"

WISDOM OUT-VALUES 12 PRECIOUS COMMODITIES 15-19

- (1) It cannot be given or received for less than the finest gold
- (2) And silver will not weigh its price in shekels.
- (3) It will not be weighed for carrying away with the Ophir gold hidden away in treasuries
- (4) Nor with the precious sardonyx
- (5) Nor the sapphire.
- (6) That which is polished and crystal cannot be put in array for demonstration with it
- (7) And its marketing arranged with items or vessels of pure gold.
- (8-9) Red coral and crystal shall not be recorded...
- (10) **For to get hold of [jvm "drawing it out"] wisdom is harder than obtaining pearls.**
- (11) The Topaz of Cush or Ethiopia cannot be set against it.
- (12) And it shall not be weighed for purchase with pure treasury gold.

20-28 WHENCE WISDOM?

So where will wisdom come from? And where is this place of understanding? So it has hidden itself from the eyes of all living and kept concealed from the fowls of heaven. Abaddon and death have said and continue to say "We have heard her repute with our ears. God causes her way to be understood and He is well aware of her location for He will be looking with expectation to the ends or harvest and cutting off of the earth. And He will be watching under the whole heaven to give a value in weight for the Spirit and indeed for the wind and to examine the waters from His standard measure in creating an ordinance for the heavy watering rain and a path for the lighting of thunderous voices. *These meteorological references translate into spiritual significations. The time of the giving of the Holy Spirit and the righteous ruling of the earth along with spiritual awakenings and final judgment is apparent to the prophetic eye in Job's remarks. Their first frame of reference is the physical world but the theme of Job necessitates an underlying wisdom that is both practical and spiritual which is the precise meaning of hmkj "wisdom".*

Then (in ancient time) he saw it and wrote of it. He caused it to be established and also searched it out. To Adam and man he spoke with illumination. **Behold the fear of the LORD - it is spiritual wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding.** *Job tells us that the spiritual path was announced to man and to Adam after he had sinned obedience with reverence and repentance of sin was and continues to be the path of wisdom. Job is sufficiently aware of man's beginnings and adequately acquainted with the message of God by tradition as to make this fundamental statement.*

SYNOPSIS Job continues

From dirt to gold

God's eye scans secrets hidden from the vulture and lion

Wisdom excels earth's most precious commodities in value

Wisdom is a derivative of divine illumination and consequent upon relationship to God

CHAPTER 29

JOB'S HOME AS A SPIRITUAL CENTRE 1-6

Then Job added to lift up his poetic similitude.

At this stage I take time to point out that Job is written in an ancient poetic form. The poem is an argument and carries compelling reasons from nature and life and inserts much personal data and historical features to enforce the teaching. That teaching is MASHAL - an ancient form which sets physical and practical fact beside the story of God in human life as illustration. What is happening is that Job is drawing out a series of similitudes that hardly make an allegory but provide a cumulative set of proverbs like the NT PAROIMIA of Jesus that passed into popular discourse. I will transliterate the beginning of this resumption and the third of Job's current teaching. The purpose of the MASHAL was to render students like the teacher - to convey wisdom. Job was proactively endeavouring to bring his comforters to a relationship with God such as he deeply enjoyed with others of his family in the past and still maintained.

ENGLISH RENDERING OR VERSES 1-6

Who would give me anything like the months gone by like the days when God was watching over me?
In the glory of His **searching lamp** over my head with His light I would walk through darkness and misery.
Who would give me back life as in the days of my fruitfulness when the “**assembly of God**” was over my tent?
When Shaddai was still with me and **my young ones around me**?
When I washed my goings with **curdled milk** of sweet words and the rock (oil-press) would pour out steady reliable streams of oil? *Job expresses the wish that the clock could be turned back just months to the harvest when there was so much family joy. His tent was a kind of tabernacle church and God favoured and kept him and he walked on through much calamity unscathed. His family was intact and food was in abundance.*

HEBREW TRANSLITERATION OF VERSES 1-6

Mi yithnēni qedem qime eloah yishmerēni
Behiḷo gero ale roshi leaoro elech hoshech
Qasher hayiythi bime harphi besod eloah ale ahali
Beaod Shaddaw imadi sebibothaw nearaw
Birhotz haliqaw bahemah wetzur yatzuq imadi palge samen

You will notice the repeated sound along the line that renders Hebrew language poetic. It could be sung easily to a sort of chant or plainsong that was pleasantly suited to the guitar-like instrumentation of the east. You have to imagine that the text of Job is set out like this from chapter 3 to 41 inclusive and only chapters 1-2 and 42 are written in a prose style.

JOB'S POPULAR ESTEEM & DEFENCE OF THE WEAK 7-13

At my passing the gate of my city [trq] - I would take my appointed seat in the wide street - the youths saw me and hid them and the **parents or older** ones [vʿv not “elders”] rose and stood to attend me. The military chiefs or princes restrained their speech or discourse and put the palm of their hand to their mouths. The noble leaders lowered their voice and their tongue was welded to their palate [jj]. When the ear listened it gave me pleasure and the eye that watched caused witness about me because I caused the poor to escape from crying “help” and I delivered the orphan and those with no-one to help him. The blessing of those lost in an abyss came to me and I caused the widows heart to rejoice in celebration.

JOB AS JUDGE

HIS SELF-ASSURED CONTEMPLATIONS 14-19

I clothed me in a covering of righteousness; my righteous judgment was as a long mantle of dignity and a turban. I lived to be eyes for the blind and I was legs to the limping and lame. I was the father of the abysmally poor and a contention I was not aware of I searched and examined. But I shattered the **grinding teeth** of the wicked. [tʷ][lʷm “grinders” – a word used three times once in Job and once each in Proverbs and Joel. I guess that Solomon who was a wordsmith found it in Job and brought it into currency. In connection with Solomon it is apropos to say that his MASHAL proverbial poetic style through 31 chapters of Proverbs is virtually identical with Job's for which reason I believe he produced the final written and music edition of Job's original script] **Also I would tear out the pieces of prey from his teeth. So I said “with my comfortable nest I shall expire but my days shall be multiplied as the sand.”** My root was wide open to the waters and the dew lodged by night upon my branch. *Job on the one hand describes his effective and timely defence of those who were robbed and his prosperity he compares on the other to a tree planted by the river.*

JOB AS A PUBLIC ORATOR AND PREACHER 20-24

My glory was staying fresh and new with me and my bow was revived or renewed in strength daily. *Job went on from strength to strength.* They were in expectation to listen to me **and they went quiet for whatever address I would give.** *Job had liberty to speak perhaps especially on spiritual topics to audience that afforded him wrapt attention.* After my oracle or decision they did not go beyond and my declaration or mandate would distil like myrrh upon them. *Job's words were as prophecy and fragrant.* **They lived in hope and expectation of me as for heavy rain and they opened their mouths as for the latter rain.** *Job is now speaking of his attentive audience as he spoke as a preacher of explained what he understood about the future as revealed by God.* I would laugh in jest or joke with them; *of course* they would not believe it and they did not cause the joyous radiance of my countenance to fall.

JOB AS A PATRIARCH MILITARY LEADER WITH EQUAL ABILITY TO COMMAND AND COMFORT 25

I chose their path ahead and would sit as first among them and I would be living as a king in the army; as one that would myself comfort those who mourned. *As prime ministers write to the war dead in comfortable terms Job would personally bring comfort to the wives of soldiers of his people.*

SYNOPSIS

Job turns to explaining his privileged position

- (a) *As a spiritual leader*
- (b) *As a judge*
- (c) *As a preacher and orator*
- (d) *As a chieftain and virtual king in charge of his troops used to giving comfort in death.*

CHAPTER 30

A GENERATION OF YOUTH THAT TURNED THEIR VITRIOL ON JOB 1-4

But now **those younger than me** in days *and experience* laugh at me; those whose fathers I would have rejected to set over the dogs that belonged to my flocks. *Job explains that youths whose fathers would not be trusted with sheep now despise him.* What is the use to me of the natural strength of their hands - one in respect of whom full age is perished and gone. *Job has no further use for servants - his flocks are gone and he does not need to provide for a family; it has been taken from him.* In want and destitution and through hunger they are lean and famished - last night it was desolation and ruin they were gnawing or chewing hard food. They pluck off sea purslain or salt wort [*suggesting that Job's home was not far from the sea.*] and the foot of the broom or juniper for food. They will have been driven out from their nation and they shouted an alarm after them as a thief. *Job is explaining that the sons of men who would have been sheep-stealers came to poverty and were reduced to eating seaside plants and to theft - so that they were chased from their homeland and sheltered as the next verses show in caves and rustic hideaways. They lived to see Job's fortunes change and to play fun at him in their cruelty.*

THE IRASCIBLE YOUTHS ADOPTED A GIPSY LIFE 5-8

They were driven out to live in terrifying ravines [*literally "river ravines"*] and dry cavities of the earth. They brayed like the ass between the bushes. *They were foraging like wild donkeys for food.* On account of or "sinking to" eating nettles they would gather together [*jp*] "*nettles are a traditional source of iron and can produce a good soup which attracted the youth and was easily boiled into a pleasing nutritious gruel.*" They were sons of the fool even sons who belonged to no name. They were smitten from the earth or frightened from the earth.

THE PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS OF THIS TROUBLESOME GROUP 9-14

But now I am their song and a topic of their debate. They detest me; they keep distant from me but they have not restrained spitting in my face.

Because His cord is loosed and I am afflicted they have loosed the bridle or halter from my face. *Job compares himself to a horse already without the lead of the LORD and now wicked youth try to prevent him living a disciplined life.* On my right hand a flourishing brood arise and take my feet from under me. Then they raise up against me the highway of their changed and bent ways of destruction [*clwa*].

They are destroying my way of life; they forward my sickness; for they are no help. As a broad breach of a battle line they are coming; under a battle tumult they have rolled themselves upon me.

MORE SOLEMN AND SERIOUS - GOD APPEARS OPPOSED TO ME 15- 27

He has caused calamitous terrors to tumble upon me. You will pursue my willing mind or free-will or will to be generous as the wind and as a cloud my salvation or security passes away. So now my soul or very life will have been poured out - fully spent or given away and days of affliction or poverty will get a powerful grip on me. At night my bones are continually piercing me [*rqm Piel*] within and my nerves will not rest. By the great strength of illness my garment is stretched [*vpj*]. It holds me restricted like the mouth of my shirt. It has caused me to be cast down to the mud heap. I will have become (*a proverb of*) light dust and ashes [*As in 13 .12 a figure of "mourning"*]. I will cry for help to You but You do not answer. I have confided or ministered but you have not mediated on my behalf. You turn or change to be fierce and cruel to me. With the strength of your hand You are persecuting me. You lift me to the wind; you make me ride on it like on an animal. *The picture is very illuminating. As the wind veers and drops him so terrible corners and shifts and great turbulence has been shaking his life.* You keep on causing me to melt [*qmm*] in despond [*jwv*]; for I know you will cause me to turn to death and the house of assembly and **family festival** [*d[wv from d[y]*] of all the living. Certainly He will not send forth his hand in perversity though they cry "help" for themselves. **Suppose I did not weep for the harsh difficult day.** Was my soul not sad for the grievously poor? When I looked for good evil came; when I waited for light thick darkness came. My bowels were agitated [*j tr*] "*bubbling with hot agitation like a pot*" and were not at rest and silent. The days of affliction and humility were before me. *For Job it was a real fear that lowly and grief filled days lay ahead at every sunrise. This by mercy was not to be so. We should as David said "still hope in God for I shall yet praise Him".*

THE FASHION OF JOB'S MOURNING 28-31

A mourner I kept on travelling [*Piel of j | h*] without the sun. *The LXX has "restraint". It appears Job mourned day and night. It may be that he did not feel the warmth of the sun for he stayed indoors and mourned on his own.* I arose in the congregation and would cry again and again [*Piel of [w]*] for help. I live as a brother of Tannim or crocodiles and sea monsters. *Whether Job is speaking about his tears and comparing them to the spouting whale or his being plunged into the depths or whether he is speaking of his ceaseless cries and comparing them to the croak of the crocodile the meaning is the same - he is perpetually sad.* And I am the companion of the daughters of the owl. *The screech owl's daughters make a woeful dirge and Job felt like they had become his adopted family.* My skin is black over me and my bones are burning from the amount of dryness. My harp has become *an instrument* of mourning and my organ had become an accompaniment for the voice or note of weeping.

SYNOPSIS Job continues

Youths with bad background mistreat Job

The youths once fled the country in fear but are back to make trouble

God seems to oppose Job

*Job urges that he would have compassion on one enduring hardship as he expects God would
 Job tells how he often called for help in the gathering of his people
 Job the musician still plays harp and organ - but with solemn mournful strains.*

CHAPTER 31

JOB'S INTEGRITY OF THOUGHT 1-4

I cut a covenant with my eyes so why should I continue in future to pay attention to the virgin damsel who lives apart in her father's house. For how much allotment of Eloah is from above and how much inheritance of Shaddai is from on high! *I have taken the route of exclamation not query in interpreting these phrases. It seems the point being made by Job is that there is a far greater purpose in life and eternity than marriage and man-woman relationships that must not be subservient to the former.*

Is not ruin coming to the wicked as dessert and does not know but strange [rkñ] punishment belong to those who work indefatigably in evil. Does He (God) not see my way and will He not number the steps of my march [d[x]

JOB'S BUSINESS INTEGRITY 5-8

- (1) If I have walked with vanity or mischief in my designs and my feet have hastened to obtaining goods by fraud let me be weighed as silver in balances of righteousness then or so God knows that I am completely sound [mmt "without defect"].
- (2) If my "going" has inclined from the way and my heart has gone after my eyes and any blemish stuck to my hands may I sow and another consume the food and let my issue be rooted out.

JOB'S MARITAL INTEGRITY 9-12

- (3) If my heart has opened itself to a woman or
- (4) If I have stealthily ambushed a neighbour's door then let my wife grind the hand-mill for another and let others bend prostrate over her for this is wickedness, it is an evil to be punished by the judges' judicial sentence for it is a fire that eats up till Abaddon destruction and would take out by root all my income and stored treasure. *Job testifies to the loss incurred through litigation and family disputes which tend to waste huge fortunes on settlements and incur added steep fines.*

(5) If I show contempt and reject the right of my servant or maid in their dispute with me then what will I do when God arises and when He visits what answer shall I return Him? Did not the maker who made me in the belly make him and one and the same (God) fashion us in the womb?

(6) If I should restrain **the poor** from his delight or concern and I should cause the eyes of **the widow** to pine or languish or have eaten my tasty cake on my own and the fatherless have not shared a portion of what I eat. From my youth he grew up with me as a Father and from the womb of my mother I have guided her. *Job is referring to two persons an orphan and a widow in whom he took a lifelong interest to care for their estate.*

(7) If I have seen any perishing from want of clothes and any with no garment through poverty

(8) If his bones and joints do not continually bless me and if he should have been warmed from the wool of my lamb

(9) If I have lifted or waved my hand against the fatherless when I saw my ally in the gate. *This is a case of getting false testimony arranged by another witness against the fatherless; something that Job never did.*

Then may my shoulder [ptk] fall from my shoulder blade [mkv]

For dread of God in his power was strong and or a smoking firebrand [dja] to me and I was incapable of bearing its burden.

(10) If I have set gold my as my confidence and foolish hope [lSk] or said to fine gold "You are my basic confidence"

(11) If I should rejoice with radiance because wealth might and prosperity is great and because my hand has found abundance

(12) If I should look at light because it is glorious and the moon that goes with dignity *in heaven* and my heart or mind has been persuaded in secret [a sort of spiritual ambush of emotion] and my hand following my heart should kiss my hand even this is a deep evil for the judges for I would be failing and false to God from above (*the sun and moon*). *In Job's society as in the theocracy the worship of the stars was idolatry and a criminal act. This suggests he represents a line of people closely linked with Abraham or maintained ancient godliness.*

(13) If I should rejoice at the destruction of him who hates me or should have aroused myself with excitement because evil or calamity discovered him but I have not allowed myself palate [ykj "the taste for sin"] to sin by asking an imprecation on his soul. *Throughout his dealings with adversaries Job is witness to the solemn rights of the human soul to divine illumination and salvation. This is a fundamental.*

Suppose [literally “whether not”] **the men of my tent said “Who will give us his flesh?” I would not cause myself to swear an oath.** *This telling demonstration of the heart of Job shows there was not a retaliatory spirit in him and that he was most Christ-like. He would be as Jesus in the memorable encomium of Peter “When he was reviled he reviled not again and when he suffered he threatened not.”*

The stranger did not overnight outside; I would open my doors to the travelling men.

(14) If I have hidden my transgressions as Adam by storing up or treasuring iniquity in my bosom for should I be terrified of a big raging crowd and should shame of families cause me to be confounded and would I be silent not going out of my door? Who will give me audience? Behold my signature [hwt] “Shaddai will answer” *Job directs his comforters to his written sign whether on a board or above his tent or on a flag - “Shaddai will answer”. What glorious faith and scintillating testimony!* But the man who strives with me is writing a book. *Job as a fine piece of literature was eventually written. Was this man of contention writing against Job? Did this writing in time come to be adapted by Job so that his autobiography which was originally written from an adversarial standpoint was adapted? Surely I will lift it upon my shoulder as a burden. I would bind it as a tiara that is mine. I would explain to him the number of my steps on my march or progress. Like a leader or noble I would draw near to him to contest my story.*

(15) If my land should cry out against me and the furrows should weep as one

(16) If I have eaten its strength without paying in silver and I have caused the owners souls to expire let thorns grow instead of **wheat**; let weeds or sour grapes [vab] grow instead of **barley**.

The words of Job are ended. *Thus Job rested his case with 16 indictments he could effectively challenge and 6 imprecations which he would gladly suffer should he be capable of being indicted.*

SYNOPSIS Job concludes

Job protests that he retains total integrity in thought and business and marriage

Job further protests that he has cared for the poor and fatherless

Job urges he has disdained wealth as his trust and has no idols

Job says he fears no shame and that his critical autobiography he considers a crown of glory

Job claims he has been fair to his workers and paid for all he has obtained.

END OF THE THIRD CYCLE OF SPEECHES

Bob Coffey
A Bible Companion