

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

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Job

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Job

1 In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job.
He was a man of complete integrity. He respected God
and so he avoided doing evil things. 2 Now Job had seven sons
and three daughters. 3 He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels,
1,000 oxen, and 500 donkeys. He also had many servants. Job
was richer than anyone else who lived in the area east of the
Jordan River.

4 Job's sons often held feasts in their homes. Whenever any
of them held a feast, he would invite all of his brothers and
sisters to share the meal with him. 5 After all of the sons had
each held a feast, Job would gather his children together.
He would ask Yahweh to cleanse them from any action they
might have committed during their feasting that would have
made them unacceptable to him. He would get up early in the
morning, kill animals, and burn them on the altar *as sacrifices*,
one for each *of his children*. *For* Job *always said*, "Perhaps my
children have sinned by saying something evil about God in
their thoughts. *If they have, I need to ask God to forgive them.*"
Job did this after each time his sons had all hosted feasts.

6 One day the angels came and gathered together in front of
Yahweh, and Satan came too. 7 Yahweh asked Satan, "Where
have you just come from?"

Satan replied, "I have come from the earth, where I was
traveling around *to see what was happening*."

8 Yahweh said to Satan, "Have you noticed Job, who
worships me? I mention him because no one else on earth has
such complete integrity as he does. He respects me and so he
refuses to do anything evil." 9 Satan replied to Yahweh, "Job
only worships you because of what you have done for him.
10 You have always protected him, his family, and everything
he owns. You make him succeed in whatever work he does.
As a result, he has built very large herds of livestock. 11 But if
you attack what he owns and take it away, he will certainly
curse you in front of everyone."

12 Yahweh replied to Satan, "All right, I permit you to take
away everything that he has. But do not harm him in his own
body."

Satan *agreed and then* left Yahweh *in order to carry out his
attack on Job*.

13 One day after that, Job's sons and daughters were
attending a feast at the home of the oldest brother. 14 *While
they were doing that,* a messenger arrived at Job's home. He
told Job, "Your oxen were plowing the fields and your donkeys
were grazing nearby. 15 But a group of men, Sabeans, came and
attacked us. They killed all of your servants who were working
in the fields. They took away all the oxen and donkeys! I
am the only one who has escaped to come and tell you what
happened."

16 While he was still talking to Job, another messenger
arrived. He said to Job, "Lightning from the sky struck and
killed all the sheep and all the men who were taking care of
them! I am the only one who has escaped to come and tell
you what happened."

17 While he was still talking to Job, a third messenger
arrived. He said to Job, "Three groups of robbers from the
region of Chaldea came and attacked us. They stole all the
camels and killed all the men who were taking care of them. I
am the only one who has escaped to come and tell you what
happened."

18 While he was still talking to Job, a fourth messenger
arrived. He said to Job: "Your sons and daughters were feasting
in the home of their oldest brother. 19 Suddenly a very strong
wind came from the desert and struck the house. The house
collapsed on your sons and daughters and killed them all! I
am the only one who has escaped to come and tell you what
happened."

20 Then Job stood up and tore his robe and shaved his head
because he was very sad. Then he lay down on the ground to
worship God. 21 He said,

> "When I was born, I was wearing no clothes.
> When I die, I will not take any clothes with me.
> It is Yahweh who gave me everything that I possessed,
> and it is Yahweh who has taken it all away.
> I find no fault with Yahweh."

22 So in spite of all the things that had happened to him,
Job did not sin by saying that what God had done was wrong.

2 On another day, the angels came again and gathered
together in front of Yahweh. Satan also came again.
2 Yahweh asked Satan, "Where have you come from *this time*?"
Satan replied, "I have come from the earth, where I was
traveling around *to see what was happening*."

3 Yahweh asked Satan, "Have you noticed that Job continues
to worship me? I mention him again because no one else on
earth has such complete integrity as he does. He respects me,
and so he refuses to do anything evil. He still does this even
though you persuaded me to *permit you to* attack him for no
reason."

4 Satan replied to Yahweh, "Job still worships you because
he is glad you destroyed his herds and family rather than
destroying him. People will give up everything they have in
order to save their own lives. 5 But if you harm his body, he
will certainly curse you in front of everyone!"

6 Yahweh replied to Satan, "All right, I permit you to harm
his body. But you must leave him alive."

7 Satan *agreed and he* left. He went and caused Job to suffer
from very painful boils all over his body. 8 Job took a piece of
broken pottery and scraped the boils on his skin. He sat down
in a pile of ashes *outside the city*.

9 His wife said to him, "You should not still be loyal to God!
You should curse God and then go ahead and die."

10 But Job replied, "You are talking the way people talk who
do not know God. We should be willing to receive whatever
God sends us." So in spite of all the things that had happened
to him, Job did not sin by saying that what God had done was
wrong.

11 Job had some good and wise friends. One of them was
Eliphaz from the town of Teman. Another was Bildad, who
was a Shuhite. A third friend was Zophar from the town of
Naamah. These men heard about the terrible things that had

happened to Job. So they each left their homes and went
together to visit Job to comfort him sincerely. 12 But when
they saw Job from a distance, they almost did not recognize
him. They wailed loudly, they all tore their clothing, and they
threw dust into the air that settled on their heads. *They did
these things to demonstrate how sorry they were for Job.* 13 Then
they sat on the ground with Job for seven days. *During that
time* none of them said anything to him, out of respect for how
greatly he was suffering.

3 At the end of those seven days, Job started speaking. He
cursed the day when he was born. 2 He said,

3 "I wish that the day of my birth had never existed!
I feel the same way about the night when my
mother conceived me.
4 I wish that there would only be darkness on that day
so that it would not even be a day.
I wish that God in heaven would not care
about that day
and so not make the sun shine on it.
5 I wish that that day were only darkness,
with clouds blocking out the sunlight
and many other things also making it very dark.
6 I wish that the moon and stars would not shine on the
night when my mother conceived me.
I wish that the day of my birth was not
part of any month.
Indeed, I wish that it was not a day in the year at all.
7 I mean it—I wish that no mother would ever again
bear a child on that date.
I wish that no one would ever again rejoice
over a child's birth on that date.
8 There are magicians who know how to agitate
the chaos monster. I want them to
curse the day of my birth!
9 I wish that the stars that shone early in the morning
of that day would never shine again.
I wish that it would never become light on that day.
I wish that not even the first rays of the rising
sun would appear on that day.
10 I wish that day did not exist, because my mother
gave birth to me on that day,
and because I became alive, I have now experienced
all these terrible things.
11 I wish that I had died right after my mother
gave birth to me!
I wish I had stopped breathing after being
alive for only a short time!
12 I wish that my mother had never held me on
her lap and nursed me!
13 If I had died shortly after my mother gave birth to me,
I would now be resting peacefully among all
the other people who had died.
14 *I would be resting* with great kings and their advisers.
They built beautiful tombs on spacious grounds
and are now resting in them.
15 Or *I would be resting* with princes
who owned great quantities of gold and silver.
16 I wish that I had died in my mother's womb
and never lived for even a moment.
Then people would have buried me privately.
17 After wicked people die, they do not cause
any more trouble.
That allows the people whom they were
oppressing to rest.
18 Those who were prisoners all rest peacefully *after they die*.
They no longer have slave drivers ordering
them around.
19 Everyone, whether rich or poor, goes to the
realm of the dead.
Those who were slaves no longer have to
obey their masters.
20 God should not allow those who are suffering greatly
like me to continue to remain alive!
God should not allow those who are very
miserable to live!
21 They long to die, but they do not die.
They desire to die more than people desire
to find buried treasure.
22 *God should not give life in the first place* to people who
are very happy when they finally die!
23 God should not give life to people if he is going to
keep them from knowing what to do
or from understanding what is really
happening to them!
24 I am wishing that I were dead because now I cry
so much that I cannot eat.
I just keep groaning loudly.
25 There were things that I always worried
might happen to me.
Those things have now happened!
26 I really have no peace of mind at all.
My troubles keep disturbing me."

4 Then Eliphaz, Job's friend from the town of Teman, replied
to what Job had said. Eliphaz said,

2 "Will you please allow me to say something to you?
I feel compelled to speak to you.
3 You yourself have given good advice to many people.
You have encouraged people who were discouraged.
4 When people were struggling, you were able to
say the right thing to help them.
You enabled them to be brave again.
5 But now that you yourself are suffering, you
have become discouraged.
You are not facing your troubles bravely *as
you have helped others to do*.
6 You should be confident because you honor God.
You should be hopeful because you conduct
yourself with integrity.
7 Think about this: God does not destroy people
who are innocent!
No, God never kills people who are doing what is right!
8 I know from experience that this is true:
When people plan to do bad things to others,
those bad things happen to them instead.
9 God becomes very angry with them *because of
the wrong things they plan to do*,

and so God commands that they will die,
and they do die.
10 Wicked people may boast and threaten,
but God destroys them.
11 Those wicked people will have nothing in the end,
like lions that starve to death because God
keeps them from catching any prey.
Different relatives will have to take care of the
children of those wicked people, as if they
were lion cubs whose parents caught no
prey and they had to separate from each
other in order to search for food.
12 I once heard a message that someone came
and whispered to me.
13 One night I fell deeply asleep and had a dream
that made me very perplexed.
14 I was so scared that I started to shake all over.
15 Then a spirit slid into view right in front of me!
This caused the hair on the back of my neck
to stand straight up.
16 The spirit stopped there, but I could not see
what it really looked like.
However, I knew that there was some
being in front of me.
At first it did not speak, but then it said,
17 'No human being can be more righteous than God.
No person can be better than his Creator.
18 Consider this: God recognizes that even his own angels
may not always do what is right.
If they do not act wisely, he corrects them.
19 So God is even more careful to discipline human beings,
knowing how very frail they are.
20 *Humans are so fragile that* they can be here today
and gone tomorrow.
And humans are so insignificant that a person
can die, never to return to earth, and
no one will even notice.
21 Humans are *fragile,* like tents that collapse if
someone pulls up their stakes.
And they may live their whole lives on earth
without ever learning to be wise.'

5 If you ask someone to judge between you and God,
no one will agree to do that for you.
Not even an angel would have the authority
or wisdom to judge your case.
2 People who do not respect God get angry with God
instead of considering how they have sinned.
Naïve people resent God *when they do not get
what they think they deserve*.
*Their anger and resentment lead them to disobey
God, so that* God punishes them severely
and even kills them.
So respect God and do not be naïve!
3 I have seen foolish people who seemed to be successful.
But immediately I recognized that they would
not prosper for long.
4 Their children are never safe.
They always lose to their opponents in court
because no one defends them.
5 People who do not respect God are not able to
harvest the crops that they plant.
Poor people come and claim the grain—right
to the edges of the field!
Yes, poor people see their crops and are
glad to have them.
6 After all, trouble does not come out of nowhere.
7 No, people cause trouble for themselves
throughout their lives.
This is as certain as the fact that sparks
shoot up from a fire.
8 If I were suffering as you are,
I would ask God for help
and trust God to help me.
9 God does great things that we can not understand.
We can not even count the marvelous
things that God does.
10 God is the one who sends rain onto the earth
so that it waters our fields.
11 God defends people who are humble.
He gives widows safe places to live.
12 God keeps devious people from being able
to do what they plan.
13 When people try cleverly to make others suffer,
God makes this cause suffering for them instead.
When people try to trick others,
God shows that it is a trick before it can fool the others.
14 God keeps wicked people from knowing how
to fulfill their plans.
It is as if the wicked people are always in the
dark, even during the day,
and they need to feel around with their hands
to try to find where to go.
15 When powerful people threaten or accuse weak people,
God rescues the weak people.
He keeps the powerful people from harming them.
16 *Because they know that God will help them,*
poor people can confidently expect that good
things will happen to them.
God proves that they are innocent
when people accuse them falsely.
17 Consider this: Anyone whom God corrects is
better off because of it.
So you should be thankful that God is disciplining you.
18 You should be thankful because
God allows people to suffer *in order to correct them*
and then he restores them.
19 Whenever you are in trouble, God will keep rescuing you.
God will keep bad things from happening to you.
20 When there is little food to eat, God will not
allow you to starve to death.
When there is war, God will not allow your
enemies to kill you.
21 God will protect you when people say bad
things about you.
God will protect you from things that could
badly harm you.
22 You will not worry about things like that
or about not having enough to eat.
You will not be afraid that wild animals will hurt you,

23 because you will be confident that those wild
animals will not attack you.
You will not have big rocks in your fields
that make plowing difficult.
24 You will know that things will go well for
you in your home.
When you check on your animals, you will
see that they are all there.
25 You will be certain that you will have many descendants.
They will be as numerous as blades of grass.
26 You will live a long life,
like grain that grows to become fully ripe
before it is harvested.
27 I can assure you that my friends and I have thought
carefully about these things.
We know that they are true,
so please pay careful attention to what I have said!
You also will realize that it is true."

6 Then Job replied to Eliphaz and the others. He said,

2 "If I could put all my troubles and misery
on a scale and weigh them,
3 they would certainly be heavier than all the
sand along the ocean shores.
That is why I spoke very rashly about the
day when I was born.
4 It is as if Almighty God had shot me with arrows.
It is as if those arrows had poison on their tips and
that poison had gone into my spirit.
The things that God has done to me are like
soldiers lined up to attack me.
5 Just as a wild donkey does not complain by braying
when it has plenty of grass to eat,
and an ox does not complain by bellowing
when it has food to eat,
I would not complain if you were really helping me.
6 People use salt to help them eat food that has little taste.
People do that with the white of an egg, for example.
I have been saying how I feel in order to help
me deal with my situation.
7 But regarding food itself,
I actually do not want to eat at all,
because my troubles are making me too upset to eat.
8 I wish that God would do for me what I
have asked of him:
9 I wish that God would agree to let me die!
God is certainly able to end my life.
10 If he did that, I would be comforted:
I would know that in spite of the unrelenting
pain I had suffered,
I would still always have obeyed God's commands.
11 I do not have the strength to endure until
these troubles are over.
I have nothing to look forward to, so I do not
want to live any longer!
12 I am not strong like stone,
my body is not sturdy like bronze,
so I will not be able to endure these troubles
for a long time.
13 I am no longer able to help myself.
My troubles are keeping me from doing that.
14 When a man has many troubles, his friends
should be kind to him,
even if he stops honoring Almighty God.
15 But you, my friends, have not helped me.
You are like streams in the wilderness
that travelers cannot depend on,
because they leave their channels empty
in the dry season.
16 These streams are full of water
when the melting ice and snow make them overflow,
17 but when the dry season comes, there is no water
flowing in those streams,
and the channels dry up.
18 Merchant caravans turn off the road to search for water.
However, there is no water in those stream beds,
so the merchants die in the desert.
19 The men in those caravans searched for some water
because they were sure that they would find some.
20 They were very disappointed,
because they had been sure that they would find water.
They traveled a long distance to the stream bed,
but there was no water in it.
21 Similarly, you three have not helped me at all!
You have seen that terrible things have happened to me,
and you are not helping me,
because you are afraid that God might do
similar things to you.
22 *After I lost all my wealth,* I did not ask any of
you to give me money.
I did not plead with any of you to spend some
of your money to help me.
23 I never asked any of you to rescue me from my enemies.
No, I did not ask you to save me from people
who were oppressing me.
24 Answer me now, and then I will be quiet;
tell me what wrong things I have done!
25 I would be willing to listen to what you had to say, even
if it were painful, as long as it was helpful.
But though you are trying to correct me, you
are not really helping me at all.
26 I am a man who has nothing to hope for,
but you try to correct me, and you think what
I say is as useless as the wind!
27 In fact, you are treating me as callously as if you
were gambling for an orphan
or arguing over the price of a friend you
were selling into slavery!
28 Please look at me! I will not lie while I am
talking straight to you.
29 Please stop saying that I have sinned! Stop
criticizing me unfairly!
You should realize that I have not done
anything wrong.
30 You must not think that I am lying!
I know what is right to say and what is wrong to say.

7 Life is very difficult for all of us on this earth!
Like manual laborers, our days are long and hard.

2 We are like slaves who keep wanting to be
in the cool of evening.
We are like workers who have to wait to be paid.
3 Like a slave, I am enduring a time when it
feels useless to be alive.
I have been experiencing many miserable nights.
4 When I go to bed I say, 'I hope I will be able
to sleep for a long time!'
But I never really get to sleep. I am restless
right through to the morning.
5 My body is covered with maggots and dirt;
pus oozes out of my open sores.
6 I am running out of days faster than a shuttle
releases yarn into a loom,
and I have no reason to hope that my life will end well.
7 God, remember that my life will soon end.
I do not think that I will ever be happy again.
8 God, you see me now,
but *after I die,* you will not see me anymore.
You may look for me then, but *you will not find
me, because* I will not exist.
9 Just as a cloud never appears in the sky
again once it fades,
so when people die and go to the place where dead
people are, they never return to earth.
10 They never return and live in their houses again.
11 So I will say everything I want to say.
I will speak because I am so upset.
I will complain because I am so bitter.
12 God, you do not need to watch what I am
doing so closely!
I am not a dangerous sea monster!
13 Sometimes I think that if I could just go to sleep,
I would stop suffering;
my pain would be less while I was sleeping.
14 But then you make me have terrible nightmares!
15 And I wish someone would kill me by choking me
so that I would not have to stay alive *and suffer so much*.
16 I hate being alive *and suffering so much*!
I do not want to live any longer!
Stop afflicting me, because I will only be
alive for a short time.
17 We human beings are not very important!
You should not think that we are so important that
you need to pay attention to what we do.
18 You do not need to check every morning to
see what we are doing!
You do not need to evaluate us at every moment!
19 I wish you would stop watching me
and leave me alone for at least a little while!
20 You watch me constantly,
but if I sin, that certainly does not harm you!
I feel as if I am your target and that you
are shooting at me!
You act as if I am bothering you all the time!
21 If I have done wrong things, you could just forgive me.

I am going to die soon.
When I do, then if you decide you want
us to be friends, it will be too late,
because I will be dead."

8 Then Bildad, Job's friend who was a Shuhite, responded to Job. He said,

2 "Job, you should not continue to talk like this.
You are saying a lot of things, but they are not sensible.
3 God always does things fairly.
Yes, Shaddai always does what is right.
4 Your children sinned against God.
This is evident, because God has punished them
for the evil things they did.
5 But as for you, you should pray to God. Yes, you
should ask Shaddai to help you.
6 If you are genuinely good,
then God will certainly do something good for you.
He will give you back the abundant prosperity
that good people have.
7 God would make you so wealthy later in life
that it would seem as if you were not very
prosperous before!
8 You should really consider the wise teachings of
the people who lived before us.
Yes, you should think about what our ancestors
learned about life.
9 I advise you to consider the wisdom of our ancestors
because we have only been alive for a short time
and we know very little.
This is because our time here on the earth is very short,
like a shadow that appears briefly and then goes away.
10 But if you consider the wisdom of our ancestors,
you will learn useful things.
Indeed, you will learn very profound things.
11 Papyrus certainly does not grow away from marshland.
No, reeds certainly cannot grow where
there is no water.
12 If their water dries up while they are blossoming,
they wither, while plants that do have water
keep flourishing.
13 People who do not pay attention to God are
like those reeds.
Such people hope for good things, but they
do not get them.
14 Godless people confidently expect good things to happen
to them, but those things do not happen.
Godless people trust certain other people to help
them, but those others prove unreliable.
15 Godless people think they are secure because
they are wealthy,
but ultimately they can not rely on their
wealth for security.
When they begin to fail despite their wealth, they
try to preserve their status,
but they fail anyway.
16 Godless people are like plants that formerly
flourished in abundant sunshine,
whose branches once spread out over the ground.

17 Godless people are like plants whose roots once twisted
securely around piles of stones
and clung tightly to rocks.
18 But a person can still pull a plant completely
out of the ground even if it is that
healthy and securely rooted.
Then it will be as if the plant was never
there in the first place.
People who do not pay attention to God will
perish just as completely.
19 So people who do not pay attention to God
will be sad in the end.
Other people will come and take their places.
20 So I tell you, Job, that God will help you if
you do what is right.
But God will not help you if you do what is wrong.
21 God can still make you happy,
yes, very happy.
22 *When God blesses you,* everyone who opposed
you will be very ashamed.
God will completely destroy wicked people."

9 Then Job replied to Bildad and the others. He said,

2 "I certainly know that what you have said is true.
But a person can not prove that he has
done the right thing
and that God should not punish him.
3 If someone wanted to argue with God about that,
God would ask him many questions
and that person would not be able to
answer any of them!
4 God thinks very deeply and he is very powerful.
No one who has tried to argue against him
has ever been able to win.
5 God moves mountains *in earthquakes* without anyone
knowing in advance what he is going to do.
God knocks down mountains when he is angry.
6 God causes earthquakes far below the surface of the earth
that shake the ground and make it move.
7 On some days, God makes it so cloudy that people
can not see the sun in the sky.
On some nights, God makes it so cloudy that
people can not see the stars shining.
8 God created the sky all by himself.
God defeated the forces of chaos *so that he could
make an orderly universe*.
9 God arranged the stars in the sky to make constellations
such as the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades.
God arranged stars into many other
constellations as well.
10 God does amazing things that people can not understand.
God does more marvelous things than people
are able to count.
11 If God passed by where I was, I would not
be able to see him.
Yes, he might be going by, but I would not notice him.
12 If God wants to take something away, no one can
stop him from doing that.
No one can require God to defend what he is doing.
13 God would continue to be angry *even if someone
tried to calm him down*.
No one can oppose him; he *even* defeated the forces
of Rahab, the great sea monster.
14 So I could hardly think of the right words to say
in order to argue a case against God!
15 Even if I were innocent, I would not be able to
argue a case against him.
All I could do would be to ask God, as my
judge, to be merciful to me.
16 Even if he agreed to hear my case,
I would not believe that he was genuinely
considering my arguments.
17 He keeps causing troubles that batter me.
He hurts me many times for no good reason.
18 He causes me to suffer all the time.
It is as if he will not even let me get my breath again
before he causes the next disaster.
19 Suppose I did make a case against him. And suppose the
winner would be the one who was stronger.
Then he would win, because he is far
stronger than I am.
And it would not matter who was right,
since no one could make him obey what
a judge decided.
20 Even though I was innocent, he would find grounds
in what I said to punish me.
Even though I had not done anything wrong,
he would still decide, based on what
I said, that I was guilty.
21 I have not done anything wrong, *but that does
not matter anymore because* I do not
care what happens to me.
I do not care whether I live or die.
22 God punishes everyone the same way.
As I have been saying, God destroys everyone
whether they have done wrong or not.
23 When people experience disaster and it causes
them to die suddenly,
God laughs when he sees them suffer, even
if they are innocent.
24 God has allowed wicked people to control what
happens to everyone else.
It is as though God has caused judges not
to be able to judge fairly.
If it is not God who has done that,
who, then, has done it?
25 I am approaching the end of my life more quickly than
a messenger runs to bring news.
It is as if the days of my life are running away from me.
Good things do not happen to me.
26 My life is going by very rapidly,
as fast as a sailing boat made from reeds,
as fast as an eagle swooping down to seize an animal.
27 If I decide that I will just forget what I am
complaining about,
if I decide to stop looking sad and try to be cheerful,
28 I still become afraid again
because I know that God does not consider me innocent
and so I think that he will punish me.

29 He will condemn me anyway,
so why should I keep trying in vain to defend myself?
30 If I washed my body with pure water from melted snow
and cleansed my hands with strong soap
to show how innocent I am,
31 God would just throw me into a filthy pit *to show how guilty he considers me to be*.
My body would become so dirty that it would be as if my own clothes did not want to be on it!
32 God is not a human, as I am,
so I could not refute him to prove that I am innocent
if we went together to have a trial in a courtroom.
33 There is no one to mediate,
no one who has authority over both of us.
34 There is no one who could keep God from causing me to suffer,
who could keep God from doing terrifying things that frighten me.
35 *If someone could protect me and judge between us,*
I would declare that I am innocent without being afraid of God.
But I can not do that now.

10 I am tired of living,
so I will freely express everything I want to complain about *without worrying about what God will do to me*.
Yes, I will say exactly how unhappy I am.
2 I will say to God, 'If you are going to punish me,
you should tell me what I have done wrong!'
3 You seem to think that it is all right to harm me
and to abandon me, whom you created.
But at the same time, you seem pleased to allow
wicked people to do the things that they plan to do!
4 Certainly you know and understand more than what people can see with their eyes! *So you should understand my true motives and know that I am innocent.*
5 You do not live for only a short time as people do!
6 So you do not need to act as if you would run out of time
if you did not discover all of my sins right away!
7 *You do not need to work hard to discover any sins that I may have committed,*
because you know that I am not guilty.
And there is no one who could help me get away from you *if you decided you should punish me*.
8 You personally created every single part of me.
So it is not right for you to destroy someone whom you created yourself.
9 Please recall how you made me! You molded me the way people mold objects out of clay.
If you destroy me, I will crumble into dust *and you will lose your marvelous creative work*.
10 You made me through a careful process,
the way people carefully make cheese out of milk.
11 You attached my bones together with tendons,
and then you covered them with flesh inside my skin.
12 You are the one who made me alive.
It seemed that you were faithfully taking care of me.
It seemed that you were protecting me.
13 But you kept secret what you were planning to do to me.
I am certain that you were planning to do these things to me!
14 You were watching me to see if I would sin
so that you could punish me for sinning.
15 If I am a wicked man,
then I hope that terrible things will happen to me.
But even if I am a good man,
I must still act ashamed
because you are punishing me as if I had sinned.
16 If I did act like the good man that I am,
you would *conclude that you should punish me further and you would* hunt for me the way a lion hunts for some animal to kill.
When you caught me, you would do even more things to harm me greatly.
17 You would claim that I had committed even more sins.
You would become even more angry with me.
You would keep punishing me in new ways.
18 God, you should not have allowed my mother to give birth to me!
I wish that I had died at birth!
Yes, I wish that my parents had never shown me to anyone.
19 I wish that I had never even existed!
I wish that I had died at birth so that people had buried me right away.
20 I am not going to live very much longer!
So please leave me alone and let me have a little peace.
21 *Let me have some peace now because*
soon I will go to the place from which I will never return.
In that place *where dead people go* it is always gloomy.
Yes, it is very dark.
22 Yes, in that place it is very dark, the way it is in deep shadow.
Things are very chaotic there.
Even the small light that is there is like darkness."

11 Then Zophar, Job's friend from the town of Naamah, responded to Job. He said,

2 "I would like to respond to the long speech that you have just given.
You talk a lot about how innocent you are, but that does not mean that you truly are innocent.
3 You have boasted that you are innocent,
and I need to talk back in response.
You have said disrespectful things about God.
I need to tell you that you should be ashamed!
4 I need to correct you because you have told God,
'I believe the right things,
and you know that I have done the right things.'
5 If only God would speak
and say something to correct you!
6 If only God would tell you the secrets that he knows because he is so wise!
You need to realize that God knows far more than you do.
If you could understand as God does,

you would realize that God is punishing you
less than you deserve!
7 You will never be able to understand God by
thinking hard about him.
No, you will never be able to find out
everything about Shaddai.
8 God's wisdom is so much greater than ours,
it is as if it is higher than the sky.
So there is nothing you can do to understand it all.
It is as if God's wisdom is deeper below the earth
than the place where dead people go.
So it is impossible for you to know it all.
9 There is so much to know about God
that it is as if that knowledge is longer than the earth
and wider than the ocean.
10 If God wants to arrest you and put you on trial,
no one can stop him from doing that.
11 *God is a trustworthy judge* because he knows which
people have bad character.
When God sees people doing wicked things,
he punishes them.
12 Some people simply have no understanding.
They will become wise when humans start having
wild donkeys as babies*—that is, never!*
13 Job, I urge you to repent humbly
and pray sincerely to God.
14 If you have been doing evil things, stop doing them.
If you do nothing wrong in any part of your life,
15 then you will be able to act as a person who is
not ashamed of anything.
You will be strong, and you will not be
afraid of anything.
16 You will not be afraid, because you will forget all the
bad things that happened to you.
They will all be gone, like the water that
flows away down a river.
17 Your life will be happy again.
It will be as if the sun were shining on you as
brightly as it shines at mid-day.
You have had many troubles, but they will end,
just as night ends when the sun rises.
18 You will feel safe because you will be confident that
good things will happen to you.
You will think about your life and realize that you
can go to bed and sleep peacefully.
19 You will lie down to sleep and nothing will scare you.
Many people will come and ask you to be kind to them.
20 But God will punish wicked people by making them die.
They will not be able to escape from God's punishment.
They will hope to live, but they will die anyway."

12 Then Job replied to Zophar and the others. He said,

2 "You are speaking as if you were the people to
whom everyone should listen.
You seem to believe that you are the only wise
people who are now alive.
3 But I have as much good sense as you do.
I am just as wise as you are.
People certainly know, in general, the things
that you have said.
4 Before, when I prayed to God for help, God
would help me.
But now*, because God is not helping me in my
suffering,* other people laugh at me.
I am righteous and I honor God, but they laugh at me!
5 People like you who have no troubles think that others
are suffering because of their sins.
You think that God is punishing us and that
is why we are suffering.
6 Meanwhile, bandits get rich by robbing people.
Those who defiantly disobey God live peacefully.
Such people believe that God cannot stop them
from doing what they want to do.
7 But if the wild animals could speak,
and if you asked them *what they know about God*,
they would tell you *that God is responsible when
someone suffers as I am suffering*.
If the birds could speak,
and if you asked them *the same question*,
they would tell you *the same thing*.
8 If the ground could talk, and if you asked it about God,
or if fish could talk and you asked them,
they too would tell you that God is responsible
when people suffer.
9 All of them certainly know that it is Yahweh himself
who has caused me to suffer.
10 He controls whether all living creatures live or die,
including whether any person dies or continues to live.
11 We decide whether our food is good or bad by tasting it.
In the same way, we think carefully about what
we hear people say in order to decide
whether it is good or bad advice.
*I have listened carefully to you, and I have decided
that you are giving me bad advice!*
12 Older people have usually become wise.
Because they have lived a long time, they
have learned many things.
13 God himself is wise and very powerful.
He has good sense and he understands everything.
14 Indeed, if God tears something down, no one
can build it back up again.
If God puts someone in prison, no one can
enable that person to escape.
15 Yes, God is so powerful that if he prevents rain from
falling, then the water on the earth dries up.
If God causes a lot of rain to fall, then water
floods onto the land.
16 God is the one who is truly strong and wise.
He does not let anyone get away with doing wrong or
with convincing others to do wrong.
17 *God is so powerful that* he can remove royal
advisors from their positions,
and he can cause judges to become fools.
18 God can take away the ruling authority that kings have
and make those kings become slaves instead.
19 God can remove priests from their positions
and take the power away from those who
have long ruled others.

20 God can cause trusted counselors not to
know what to say,
and he can cause wise elders no longer
to have good sense.
21 God can cause princes to lose the respect of others,
and he can cause those who are powerful
to become weak.
22 God can enable people to understand
things that are very difficult to understand.
23 God causes some nations to become very great,
but later he destroys them.
God enables some nations to enlarge their
territory greatly,
but later he allows others to conquer them and take
their people away as prisoners.
24 He causes some human rulers to become foolish.
As a result, they try one thing after another
without success,
as if they were lost in a desert without roads.
25 It is as if they were trying to feel their way
in complete darkness.
It is as if they were staggering around drunk."

13 "I can assure you, my friends, that I already know
everything that you have been telling me.
Yes, I have heard and understood all that
you have said.
2 I know everything that you know.
I do not know less than you do.
3 But I would like to speak with Almighty God*, not with you*.
I would like to convince him *that I am innocent*.
4 As for you, you are telling so many lies about me
that other people can hardly recognize
what I am really like.
Your advice is so worthless
that you are all like doctors who sell people
useless medicine.
5 I wish that you would just stop talking.
Then you would really seem to be wise!
6 Please pay attention to what I am telling you!
7 You are speaking on God's behalf,
but you are not telling the truth!
You are speaking deceptively,
but you think that you are helping God!
8 You are not being fair to me.
Instead, you are acting as if you are God's
lawyers defending him in court!
9 If God investigates what you are doing,
he will find that you are doing wrong.
No, you can not deceive him
as you might deceive a human being!
10 God would certainly rebuke you when he discovered that
you were pretending to be fair but were
actually being unfair.
11 He would certainly bring the full force of his
power against you.
That would make you very afraid of him!
12 You are quoting traditional sayings,
but they have no value in my situation.
Your arguments in support of your position
are very easy for someone to refute.
13 So stop talking to me. Allow me to speak.
I do not care what God does to me as a
result of what I say.
14 I will be risking my life.
I will be taking the chance that God will
execute me for what I say.
But I have good reason to do that.
15 Indeed, God might kill me *for starting to argue
a case against him*,
but I hope that he *would still judge me fairly after I die*.
So I am going to defend my behavior to him in person.
16 I believe that arguing a case against God
will actually help convince God that I am innocent.
After all, no wicked person would dare to
approach God personally."
17 "God, listen very carefully to what I say.
Pay attention to me as I speak.
18 Please pay careful attention because I will
be defending myself
by telling you things I have thought carefully about.
I have examined myself,
and I am convinced that I am innocent.
19 I do not believe that anyone could prove
that what I am going to say is false.
If I knew that it was false, I would not argue this case.
I would accept dying *as my fair punishment*.
20 However, I must ask you to stop doing two things to me.
Then I will be able to speak with you in person.
21 The first thing I ask is that you stop punishing me.
The second thing I ask is that you stop scaring me.
22 *If you agree to stop punishing me and stop scaring me, then*
go ahead and start questioning me, and I will respond.
Or allow me to question you first, and then
you respond to my questions.
23 Tell me what I have done that is wrong.
Tell me what sins I have committed.
Show me how I have disobeyed you.
24 I do not understand why you are avoiding me.
I do not understand why you are treating
me like your enemy.
25 I am as insignificant as a leaf that the wind blows,
so you do not need to punish me *as if I were
a dangerous criminal*.
I am as unimportant as a bit of dry chaff,
so you do not need to chase me.
26 *From the way I am suffering, it appears that you
are punishing me because*
you consider that I have done terrible things.
It seems that you are punishing me even for
the wrong things I did when I was young *and
I did not know any better*.
27 It seems as if *you are judging me too strictly, as if*
you had put chains on my feet *to keep
me from going anywhere*.
It feels as if you are watching everything
that I do very closely.
It is as if you will only let me do a few specific things.
28 *But you do not need to watch me so closely.*
I am a mere human being

with a body that is as fragile as rotten wood
that is falling apart,
as fragile a piece of cloth that the larvae
of moths are eating.

14 Human beings live only a short time,
and during that time they experience much trouble.
2 People live brief lives, like flowers that appear quickly
but then wither and fall to the ground.
Yes, people's lives are temporary, like shadows
that appear only for a short time.
3 God, you do not need to watch fragile
humans so carefully.
You do not need to judge everything that I do.
4 No one can make something that is acceptable to God
out of something that is not acceptable to him.
5 You have decided how many days each
human life will last.
Yes, you have decided how many months
each person will live.
No one can live any longer than the time
you have decided.
Because this is true,
6 please stop watching people so closely.
Give them relief so that they can live out
their brief lives in peace.
7 Now even after people cut a tree down,
it is possible for it to start growing again and
make new branches.
8 Its roots in the ground may be very old,
and its stump may be decaying,
9 but when rain falls on it,
it may revive and send up shoots just as a
young plant does.
10 But even the strongest people die.
They grow weak and stop breathing,
and then they are gone forever.
11 Just as water evaporates from a lake,
and just as a riverbed dries up,
12 so people die and do not become alive again.
Until the heavens do not exist any longer,
people who die will not come back to life.
No, no one will be able to make them alive again.
13 I wish that you, God, would put me safely in the place
where dead people go and forget about me.
That way I would not suffer any more until you
were no longer angry with me.
I wish that you would decide how much time
I need to spend there
and then come and rescue me from that place.
14 I do not believe that we humans live again after we die.
If I knew that I would live again, I would wait
patiently throughout this difficult life.
I would know that after I died, things would
become different for me.
15 *After I had been in the place where dead people go for
the time you had determined,* you would call
for me, and I would answer you.
You would be eager to see me, one of the
creatures that you had made.
16 Yes, then you would protect me wherever I went,
and you would not be watching to see
whether I sinned or not.
17 You would forgive the things I had done wrong.
Yes, it would be as if I had not done them at all.
18 But just as mountains erode away and rocks
tumble down slopes,
19 just as water wears away stones and floods
wash away soil,
so you make all people die, even though they
hope to keep living.
20 You make us age the whole time we are living,
and then we die.
Yes, you make our faces show that we are
old and about to die,
and then you make us go to the place
where dead people go.
21 When we die, we do not know whether our children
will grow up and do things that will cause
other people to honor them.
If they do shameful things instead, we do
not know that either.
22 When we die, we feel sorry for ourselves, but no
one else feels sorry for us.
Yes, we grieve for ourselves, but no one
else grieves for us."

15 Then Eliphaz, Job's friend from the town of Teman,
replied to what Job had said. Eliphaz told him,

2 "If you were truly wise, you would not have
said such useless things.
You have said a lot, but it has all been insignificant.
3 You should not be saying things that do not
benefit anyone.
No, you should not speak things that are not helpful.
4 You are actually encouraging others not to respect God.
Yes, you are discouraging people from honoring him.
5 You are wicked, and that is why you say what you do.
You are talking in the way that deceptive people talk.
6 Everything that you say shows that God
should punish you.
It is not necessary for me to prove that.
7 *You should not think that you know so much*
You were not the first person whom God created.
God did not make you when he first formed the world.
8 You do not listen as God makes his plans.
You should not think that you are the only
person who is wise.
9 We know everything that you know.
We understand everything that you understand.
10 My friends and I are saying the same things
that old, wise people say,
people who were born before your father was.
11 God wants to comfort you
and speak gently to you,
but you do not appreciate that.
12 You should not be allowing yourself to
become so emotional.
No, you should not be allowing yourself
to lose your temper.

13 You have become angry with God,
and so you are saying harsh things against him.
14 No human being can be sinless.
No one on this earth can be completely righteous.
15 God does not even trust his own angels *to do the right thing every time*.
He does not consider the heavens to be completely pure.
16 So God certainly does not consider people to be pure who commit terrible wrongs,
who do evil deeds as often as they drink water.
17 Job, I want to explain *why you are experiencing so much suffering*.
Please listen to me.
I have learned many things,
and I want to explain them to you.
18 These are things that wise people have passed down from their ancestors.
These wise people have declared all these things openly.
19 God gave the land *of Edom* exclusively to my wise ancestors.
No one came from another country and caused them to think wrongly about God.
20 Wicked people suffer great pain the whole time that they are alive.
God has determined that this will happen constantly to those who oppress others.
21 Wicked people constantly experience terrible things.
They may become wealthy, but they will lose that wealth.
22 Wicked people lose hope that their troubles will ever end.
They are always afraid that they are going to die violently.
23 They have to go and search for food to eat. They do not know where to find it.
They know that they will certainly experience disasters soon.
24 Wicked people are always afraid that bad things will happen to them.
Their fear keeps them from taking actions that might protect them,
as if an opposing king had defeated them in a battle *and they had become helpless*.
25 These things happen to wicked people because they oppose God.
They think they are strong enough to defeat Shaddai.
26 Wicked people stubbornly oppose God
as if they had a strong shield to protect themselves against God.
27 But they are so fat that they would not be able to fight!
28 Wicked people have to live in cities that others have deserted.
They live in homes that others have abandoned.
Those homes are about to collapse into a pile of ruins.
29 Few wicked people become rich, and those who do become rich do not stay rich for very long.
No, they do not acquire great wealth.
30 Wicked people will always be in trouble.
They will be like trees whose branches burn up.
When God gives the command, they will die.
31 Wicked people are often foolish and want to get things that are actually worthless.
In the end, all they have are those worthless things.
32 While they are still young, they will die.
They are like branches that have broken off a tree and dried up.
33 Wicked people are like vines whose grapes fall off before they are ripe.
They are like olive trees whose blossoms fall off before they produce any fruit.
34 Surely wicked people will not have any descendants.
Those who took money from bribes will not have any money left in the end.
35 They plan to cause trouble and to do evil things.
They continually think of ways to deceive other people."

16 Then Job replied to Eliphaz and the others. He said,

2 "I have heard many things like that before.
All of you, instead of helping me, are only causing me to feel more miserable.
3 I wish that you would stop saying these things that are not helping me.
Eliphaz, I do not understand why you feel that you must keep replying to me.
4 I could say the same things that you are saying if you were the ones suffering instead of me.
I could make great speeches to criticize you,
and I could shake my head at you *to ridicule you*.
5 I would think that I was encouraging you by what I said.
Yes, I would think that I was relieving you by speaking with you
6 But as it is, if I talk, I continue to suffer just as much,
and if I do not talk, that does not reduce my suffering either.
7 But now *I will speak to God*.
God, you have taken away all my strength,
and you have killed all of my children.
8 You have made me sick, and I have lost a lot of weight,
and people think that shows that I am a sinner.
They see how thin I am,
and they think that proves that I am guilty.
9 God is so angry with me that he has attacked me and hurt me.
Now he is moving his teeth back and forth because he is still so angry with me.
He is watching me closely *to see how he can attack me again*. 10 People look at me with their mouths wide open in order to humiliate me.
They hit me in the face because they think I have done wrong.
They crowd around me to threaten me.
11 God has allowed people who do not honor him to mistreat me.
He has allowed wicked people to do whatever they want to me.
12 Previously, I was living peacefully,
but then God caused great trouble for me.

It is as if he grabbed my neck and shook me to pieces.
It is as if he set me up as a target
13 and people were surrounding me and shooting
arrows at me.
It is as if those arrows cut open my kidneys
and caused the gall from my liver to spill
onto the ground.
God is not having any mercy on me at all!
14 It is as if I were a wall that God was breaking
down in many places.
It is as if God were rushing at me like a soldier
who was attacking his enemy.
15 *I am grieving so deeply that* it is as if I have sewn rough
mourning cloth right onto my skin!
I feel weak and humiliated.
16 My face is red because I have cried so much.
I have dark circles around my eyes because I
have not been sleeping well.
17 All this has happened to me even though I have
not violently harmed anyone
and even though I pray sincerely to God.
18 I feel as if I am the victim of a violent crime, and
I want people to show concern about
what has happened to me.
I do not want anyone to stop me while I am
demanding that God act justly toward me.
19 But even now, I know that there is someone in
heaven who will testify for me.
He will confirm that what I have done is right.
20 This person in heaven is my friend,
and he will plead with God for me.
At the same time, I will also plead with God
so earnestly that I will weep.
21 My friend will plead with God for me in heaven
the same way one person pleads for another
person here on earth.
22 *I want God to treat me justly now, while there is still time,*
because within a few years I will die.

17 My time to live is almost over. I have no strength left.
I am just about to die.
2 The people who are around me are continually
making fun of me.
I have to watch them taunt me.
3 God, even though you would be trying my case,
please also guarantee to yourself that I will appear in
court and behave as a defendant should.
There is certainly no one else who will do that for me.
4 My friends will not vouch for me,
because you have prevented them from
understanding that I am innocent.
Nevertheless, you will not prove them right
by declaring me guilty.
5 *I know that you will treat me justly because you*
make sure that people act justly.
For example, you punish people who give
false testimony against their neighbors
in exchange for a bribe.
You make their whole families suffer if they do that.
6 But because God is punishing me,
people use my name to mean someone who was
formerly prosperous but who experienced
disaster because he was wicked.
People even spit in my face *to insult me*.
7 Because I am very sad, it has become hard for me to see.
My whole body has become so thin that it
is as if I am not even here.
8 When people who are truly righteous see what has
happened to me, it shocks them.
It makes them want to punish people who
really disobey God.
9 Those who are truly righteous will continue
to do what is right,
and those who are innocent will continue
to become stronger.
10 But as for you friends of mine,
we could continue talking,
but I do not think that I will conclude that
even one of you is wise.
11 My time to live has almost ended.
I have not been able to do the things that
I planned to do.
I can no longer hope that the things I most
desired will happen.
12 My friends say that the troubles I am experiencing
are actually a good thing
because God is using the troubles to correct me.
My friends say that because my troubles
have become so bad,
that means they must nearly be over.
13 Suppose the only home I could hope to have was
the place where dead people go.
Suppose I were going to stay in that dark place.
14 Suppose I considered the grave to be my family home,
and suppose I considered the worms that live
in graves to be my family.
15 Then that would show that I truly do not have
good things to hope for.
Everyone would recognize that I was not
really hoping for anything.
16 It would be as if everything I hoped for were going to
the place where dead people go.
Yes, it would be as if people were burying the things I
have hoped for with me in a grave."

18 Then Bildad, Job's friend who was a Shuhite, responded
to Job. He said,

2 "Please stop talking!
If you would stop talking and listen, we could
tell you something.
3 You seem to think that we are as stupid as cattle.
4 But by being so angry, you are only hurting yourself.
You seem to think that everyone should abandon
the earth because life on earth is no
longer worth living for anyone after
what has happened to you.
You seem to think that there should be a great
earthquake *as a sign of what an awful*
thing has happened to you.

5 But actually, what has happened to you is
not momentous.
Wicked people are bound to lose their prosperity.
They will not continue to enjoy happiness.
6 It will be as if the light went out in the tent
in which they were living,
so that they could not enjoy living there.
7 Wicked people become weaker *because of the troubles they cause for themselves*.
They try to take advantage of other people,
but they hurt themselves instead.
8 Yes, it is as if they walk into a net that they
do not realize is there
or fall into a pit that someone has concealed as a trap.
9 It is as if their feet get caught in a trap
that does not let them go.
10 It is as if a loop of rope that someone has
hidden on the ground
springs up and seizes them when they walk onto it.
11 Everywhere they go, things cause them to be terrified.
It is as if those things are pursuing them and
biting at their heels.
12 They will become weak, as if they did not have
enough food to eat.
They will always be at risk of disaster.
13 Diseases will spread all over their skin.
Yes, a horrible disease will cause their bodies to decay.
14 They have a secure life, but it ends suddenly.
They die without being able to do anything
to save their lives.
15 Then all of their possessions will belong to other people.
Wicked people will have nothing left, as if God
had burned up everything they had by
making burning stones fall on it.
16 They will be lifeless, like trees whose roots have dried up
and whose branches have all withered.
17 No one on the earth will remember them anymore.
No, no one anywhere in the world will recall
what they were like.
18 Suddenly wicked people will die and no longer be alive.
They will no longer be able to live in this world.
19 They will have no children or grandchildren living
in their people group after they die.
They will have no descendants living where
they previously lived.
20 Anyone who hears about what happened to them
will be shocked.
21 This is certainly what happens to unrighteous people.
Yes, this is what happens to people who
do not honor God."

19 Then Job replied to Bildad and the others. He said,

2 "The three of you must stop hurting me
and discouraging me by saying that I am wicked!
3 You have insulted me repeatedly.
You should be ashamed for speaking so harshly to me!
4 Even if it were true that I had done wrong,
that would be my concern, not yours!
5 If you truly think that you are better than I am,
and if you are claiming that I must be guilty
because I am suffering,
6 you should realize that it is God who has
caused me to suffer.
It is as if he had a net and caught me in it, like
an animal he wanted to trap.
7 Listen to me: I protest that God is punishing me unfairly,
but no one agrees with me.
I cry for help, but no one, not even God, treats me fairly.
8 It is as if God has blocked my road
so that I can not go anywhere.
It is as if God has forced me
to try to find my way in total darkness.
9 He has taken away my good reputation.
It is as if he has taken a crown of authority off my head.
10 He is ruining everything that I have.
I no longer hope to experience good things in this life.
I expect that I will soon die,
as if I were a tree that he had pulled completely
out of the ground.
11 He attacks me because he is very angry with me.
He treats me as if I were his enemy.
12 It is as if he were sending an army against me
that has surrounded me and is getting
ready to destroy me.
13 God has caused my family to abandon me.
Those who know me now act like strangers toward me.
14 My relatives have left me
and my good friends ignore me.
15 People who were guests in my house and even
my female servants
act as if they do not recognize me.
They treat me like a foreigner whom they do not know.
16 When I order my servants to come, they do not obey.
I have to beg my servants to help me.
17 My wife stays away from me,
even though I was a good father to our children.
18 Even young children disrespect me.
When I stand up to talk, they laugh at me.
19 All of my intimate friends now detest me.
The people I love are hostile to me.
20 I have become so thin that my bones are
visible beneath my skin;
I am barely alive.
21 I plead with you, my three friends, pity me
because God is making me suffer greatly.
22 You should not be making me suffer as well,
as if you were God and had to punish sin.
You seem to think that you need to keep accusing
me of doing things wrong!
23 I wish that someone would now write what
I have been saying
in a book *so that people could read it*.
24 *Or else,* I wish that someone would carve what I
have said onto a rock with a chisel
and highlight it with lead so that people
could always read it.
25 But I know that there is someone who will defend me
and that some day he will appear here on the
earth and declare me innocent.

26 Even after I die and people bury me and my body decays,
still, in my body I will see God.
27 I will see him myself!
Yes, I will see him personally!
My emotions overwhelm me as I think about that!
28 But if you three men still think that you need to
accuse me of doing wrong
because you believe I am responsible for the
sufferings I am experiencing,
29 then you should fear that God will punish you,
because God becomes angry with unfair people
like you and he punishes them.
When that happens, you will know that God
punishes people fairly."

20 Then Zophar, Job's friend from the town of Naamah,
responded to Job. He said,

2 "What you have said troubles me greatly,
so I want to reply to you right away.
3 You have insulted me by what you have said.
But I have had a good idea about how I
should respond to you.
4 People have known this for a long time,
for as long as they have existed:
5 Wicked people are only briefly successful;
people who refuse to honor God are happy
only for a short time.
6 They may seem for a while to be very great
and very powerful,
7 but they will disappear forever like refuse that
people throw away.
People who knew them will wonder where
they have gone.
8 They will disappear the way a dream ends abruptly
when a person wakes up.
They will no longer exist.
Yes, they will vanish just like the dreams that
people have at night.
9 Those who once saw those wicked people will
never see them again.
Those wicked people will no longer live
where they once lived.
10 They will have to return the valuable things that
they stole from poor people.
If they die before they can do that, their
children will have to do it.
11 Wicked people will die before they grow old
and others will bury them in the ground.
12 For wicked people, doing wrong things is like having
sweet food in their mouths
that they want to continue tasting.
13 They do not want to stop doing wrong things,
as if those things were delicious food that
they enjoyed eating.
14 *But they will regret doing those wrong things.*
They will feel like people who eat what they
should not eat
and get a badly upset stomach
that feels as if it is full of poison.
15 Wicked people try to get as much money as they
can but they do not keep it,
just as people who eat too much throw up
the food that they ate.
God makes sure that they lose their wealth.
16 A person who does evil deeds will die as a result,
as certainly as the bite of a poisonous
snake kills a person.
17 A wicked person will not experience the
abundant blessings
that flow like a stream from God.
18 Wicked people will have to give back the things
that they acquired dishonestly.
They will not be able to continue using those things.
They will not have the opportunity to enjoy the
things they got by doing business,
19 because they oppressed poor people and
refused to help them,
and they took other people's houses by cheating them.
20 No matter how much they got, they still remained greedy,
and as a result, they lost the things that
they enjoyed having.
21 When they finish eating their food, there is
never anything left over,
because they greedily eat it all.
That is why they do not remain wealthy.
22 While they are still very wealthy,
they will suddenly experience trouble.
Many people will be hostile to them and hurt them.
23 Even as wicked people are enjoying luxuries,
God will show that he is very angry with them.
He will punish them with great suffering,
even as they are indulging themselves.
24 Even as they are trying to escape from
smaller punishments,
they will experience greater punishments.
25 It will be as if God had shot an arrow through
a wicked person's body
and he had to pull it out of his back.
But the shiny point of the arrow would have
cut a gash in his liver,
and he would know that he was going to die.
26 God has decided that he will destroy the valuable
possessions that wicked people have.
It will be as if a fire that God starts will burn them up.
Yes, God will destroy every last thing that
they have in their homes.
27 The sins that those wicked people have committed
will become apparent.
If the sky could speak, it would tell all the
wrong things it saw them do.
If the earth could speak, it would also be
a witness against them.
28 On the day when God punishes people,
he will take away all the possessions of wicked people.
It will be as if a flood had washed them away.
29 That is what God will do to wicked people.
That is what God has decreed will happen to them."

21 Then Job replied to Zophar and the others. He said,

2 “Please listen carefully to what I say.
That is something that you can do to comfort me.
3 Be patient with me, and allow me to speak.
Then, after I have finished speaking,
you can continue to make fun of me if you wish,
although I hope you will not.
4 I am not protesting to people about my suffering,
I am protesting to God!
And so it is certainly acceptable for me to be impatient!
5 If you consider my situation, it will shock you.
That should make you put your hands over your
mouths *and say no more*!
6 When I think about what has happened to me,
I am frightened and my entire body shakes.
7 I do not understand why wicked people live long lives
and become very powerful.
8 They live to see their children grow up
and start their own households nearby.
9 Wicked people live safely in their homes
without being afraid.
God does not punish them.
10 Their bulls mate with their cows successfully.
Their cows give birth to calves. They do not miscarry.
11 Wicked people are able to send their young children
outside to play *without worrying about
what will happen to them*.
Their children dance playfully.
12 The children play tambourines and lyres *as they sing*,
and they also play flutes happily.
13 Wicked people enjoy having good things
while they are alive,
and then they die peacefully and go to the
place where dead people go.
14 While they are alive, they say to God, ‘Leave us alone;
we do not care about how you want us
to live our lives!’
15 Those wicked people also say, ‘It does not matter
whether we worship Shaddai.
We would not get any advantage by praying to him.’
16 Wicked people wrongly think that they have become
prosperous because of what they have done.
I want to think completely differently from
the way they think.
17 It often happens that wicked people die
without experiencing any disasters.
I do not think that God actually becomes angry
with them and punishes them.
18 God does not destroy them like straw that the
wind blows away.
It is never as if a whirlwind carries them off.
19 You say, ‘When people have committed sins,
God remembers and punishes their children
for those sins.’
I say that God should punish the people who
sin, not their children.
That way sinners will know that God is punishing
them for their own sins.
20 Wicked people should have the experience of
God destroying them.
They should know what it is like for Shaddai
to punish them in his wrath.
21 After all, once wicked people die,
they are no longer concerned for their families
who are still alive.
22 Since God judges everyone, even those who
are in heaven,
no one can teach him anything.
23 Some people die while they are still very healthy.
They die when their lives are peaceful and they are
not afraid that bad things will happen to them.
24 Their bodies are fat.
Their bones are strong.
25 Other people are very miserable when they die.
They die before good things have happened to them.
26 Both kinds of people die, and other people bury them.
Their bodies all decompose.
*Everyone dies, so it is clear that dying is not always
the punishment for being wicked.*
27 Listen, I know what you three are thinking about me.
You are wrongly applying to me things that are
true about wicked people.
28 I know you are wrong because you say, ‘God does
not allow evil rulers to keep living!
God does not allow wicked people to keep living!’
29 If you want to know what life on earth is really
like, you should ask people who travel
much *and see many things*.
You will have to admit that the things they see and
describe show what life is really like.
30 *Travelers will report* that wicked people do not suffer
when there are great disasters.
They will report that wicked people escape
from God’s punishment.
31 No one dares to accuse wicked people openly
of doing wrong.
No one punishes them for the evil things
they have done.
32 When wicked people die, others carry their bodies to
their graves in a solemn procession.
Then people guard their graves to protect them.
33 It would please wicked people to see how others build
mounds over their graves to honor them.
It would also please them to see how many people
take part in their funeral processions.
Many people walk in front of their bodies and
many others walk behind them.
34 Since all of this is true about wicked people, what
you have been telling me does not make
sense, and it has not comforted me.
You have been trying to answer me by telling
me things that are not true!”

22 Then Eliphaz, Job’s friend from the town of Teman,
replied to what Job had said. Eliphaz told him,

2 “No one can do anything to benefit God!
No, people can only do things to benefit themselves,
and only if they are wise.

3 It does not give Shaddai any extra pleasure if you live in
the way you are supposed to live anyway.
It does not make him better off if you improve
the way you are living.
4 God would not be punishing you in this way
if you truly honored him.
God would not judge you to be guilty for doing that.
5 No, God must be punishing you because you
are very wicked.
You must have done a great number of evil things.
6 You must have unfairly forced poor people to
give you things to guarantee that they
would pay money back to you.
You must have taken the cloaks that they
needed to keep them warm.
7 You must not have given water to people
who were thirsty.
You must not have given food to people
who were hungry.
8 You must have refused to help others even though you
were a wealthy man who owned a lot of land.
You must have enjoyed a life of privilege *without
being concerned for others*.
9 When widows came to you for help, you must have sent
them away without giving them anything.
You must have oppressed orphans.
10 Because you did all those things, now you are having
difficulties in many different areas of your life.
Things are happening all of a sudden that scare you.
11 And so you do not know what to do, as if it had become
very dark and you could not see anything.
You cannot solve your problems; it is as if you
were drowning in a flood of water.
12 But God lives high up in the heavens.
He looks at the earth from a place that is
even higher than the stars.
13 So you should not say, 'God does not know
what people are doing.'
You should not say, 'Dark clouds keep him from
seeing us, so he cannot judge us.'
14 You should not say, 'Since he walks on the
dome that covers the sky,
where there are thick clouds around him, and
he can not see what we do.'
15 You should not continue to conduct your life
in the way that evil people have done for many years.
16 God makes evil people die suddenly while
they are still young.
They go away completely, as if a flood had
swept them away.
17 Those evil people told God, 'Leave us alone!'
They also said defiantly, 'Shaddai can do
nothing to harm us!'
18 Even so, God mercifully gave them many things to enjoy.
Nevertheless, I want to think completely differently
from the way evil people think.
19 When good people see that God punishes evil
people, they are glad.
People who have not done wrong say that those evil
people are getting what they deserve.
20 Those good people say, 'Now God has destroyed
our enemies!
It is as if a fire has burned up everything they owned.'
21 So, Job, I urge you to ask God to forgive you.
Restore your relationship with him.
If you do that, good things will happen to you.
22 Do pay attention to what God teaches you.
Meditate on what he says.
23 If you come humbly to Shaddai, he will restore you.
God will certainly do that if you stop doing the evil
things that you have been doing.
24 Stop trusting in your wealth.
It should be as if you are throwing away your gold,
even the finest gold you have, onto the dirt and rocks.
25 If you do that, then Shaddai will be more precious to
you than your gold and your silver ever were.
26 If you do that, then your relationship with Shaddai
will make you very happy.
You will be able to approach God confidently.
27 When you pray to God, he will do what you ask him to do.
You will have many things to praise God for.
28 The things that you decide to do will be successful.
It will be as if a light were shining on the road in front
of you so that you knew just where to walk.
29 People may cause great difficulties for you.
But when you pray and humbly ask God to help you,
he will save you.
30 God will even help people who have done wrong
things if you pray for them.
God will answer your prayer because you will
not have done wrong things."

23 Then Job replied to Eliphaz and the others. He said,

2 "I must still complain about many distressing things.
There is much more that I could have protested about.
3 I wish that I knew where I could find God.
If I knew that, I would go to the place where he lives.
4 I would present much evidence to God that I am innocent.
I would offer many arguments to prove that.
5 That way I would know what God would say
in reply to everything I would say to him.
6 He would not use his great power to defeat me.
He would listen to me fairly.
7 I am an honest man, so if I met with God
personally, I would be able to discuss
things with him reasonably.
If we could do that, he would declare that I am innocent.
After that, he would not punish me again
as if I had sinned.
8 *But I do not know where to find God.*
If I went to the east, he would not be there.
If I went to the west, I would not see him there.
9 He makes natural things happen beautifully in the north,
but no one there sees him doing those things.
He must also go to the south,
but no one sees him there either.
10 Still, he knows how I have conducted my life.
When he has finished testing me,

he will see that I am as pure as gold whose
impurities fire has burned out.
11 I have lived faithfully in the manner that God
wants people to live.
I have not stopped living that way.
12 I have always obeyed the commandments
that he has given.
I would rather go without food than disobey
what God has told us to do.
13 But God seems to have made up his mind
that I am a sinner,
and no one can make God change his mind.
Whatever he wants to do, he does.
14 So it seems that God will keep on punishing me until I die.
If my present troubles do not kill me, I am sure that
God will cause many more troubles for me!
15 So the thought of coming into his presence
greatly frightens me.
When I think about what he can do, that makes
me very afraid of him.
16 I am afraid because I am no longer brave after
what God has done to me.
Shaddai has made me very frightened.
17 I have lived to experience terrible things, and that
is why I am so frightened.
I can only imagine that the future will be
just as bad as the present.

24 Shaddai should set times when he judges evil people.
The people who obey God never seem to see
him judge evil people.
2 Some evil people remove boundary markers so that
they can steal other people's land.
Some evil people steal other people's sheep and
put them in with their own sheep.
3 Some evil people take away donkeys that belong to
children who have no fathers to protect them.
They make loans to widows, and then they take
oxen that belong to them to guarantee that
the widows will pay back the money.
*But without the oxen, the widows cannot grow
crops, so they cannot repay the loans, and
the evil people keep the oxen.*
4 Poor people do not want evil people to know where they
are, so they do not walk on the main roads.
Poor people stay in hiding places in order
to avoid evil people.
5 In fact, poor people have to search in the desert plain
for food to feed their children,
as if they were wild donkeys.
6 The poor people pick up leftover grain in
other people's fields.
They gather leftover grapes from vineyards
that evil people own.
7 During the night they do not have thick garments
to cover their bodies,
so they are not able to stay warm.
8 *Poor people have no homes, so* when rain showers come
from the mountains, they get very wet.
They have to huddle under rock ledges to shelter
themselves from the rain.
9 Some evil people even take babies away from their
mothers while they are nursing!
They take the babies as a guarantee that their mothers
will repay money that they have lent them.
10 Poor people do not have adequate clothing.
They also do not have adequate food,
even though they carry around bundles of
grain because they work to bring in
other people's harvests.
11 Evil people hire poor people to make oil from olives that
grow on olive trees on their property.
The evil people also hire poor people to tread
on grapes that grow on their vines
to make juice for wine.
But they do not allow the poor people to drink any of
the wine when they are thirsty.
12 In the cities, poor people groan because
they are suffering.
People whom evil people have wounded cry
out to God for help.
But God does not seem to care about what the
evil people are doing to them.
13 These evil people are like others who do not obey God.
They do not try to understand what God
wants or to do it.
14 Murderers go out in the dim light of morning so they
can kill vulnerable people *without being caught*.
They are like thieves who steal things in the dark
of night *in order to avoid being caught*.
15 Men who want to commit adultery watch for
evening to come.
They say, 'I am going to make sure that no one
recognizes me,' and they disguise themselves.
16 During the night, robbers find ways to get into other
people's houses and steal things.
But during the day, they stay in their own homes.
They do not like being out where it is light.
17 These evil people all stay at home during the day
because morning is as scary for them as the
dark of night is for other people.
They stay up at night because they like being awake at
night when things happen that terrify others.
18 However, those wicked people will not live long lives.
God will keep anything from growing on the
land that they own.
No one will go and work in their vineyards.
19 Just as water from melting snow dries up when
it is hot and there is no rain,
those evil people will go to the place where
dead people go.
20 When they die, maggots will eat their corpses,
and no one will remember them.
Even their mothers will forget about them!
Those wicked people will be like trees that
fall down and rot.

21 Those evil people mistreat women who do not
have children to care for them.
Those evil people never help widows.

22 But God, by his power, gets rid of people who hurt others
because they are stronger than those others.
When it is clear that God is going to punish those evil
people, they know that they are going to die.
23 God allows them to think that they are secure,
and so they do not worry,
but God is carefully watching how they live.
24 Those evil people may prosper for a little while,
but suddenly they will be gone.
God will show that they were not greater than others.
God will make them die like all other people.
Then they will be like stalks of grain that
farmers have cut off.
25 What I have said is certainly true.
Now that I have explained it,
there is no one who can show that I am a liar
and prove me wrong."

25 Then Bildad, Job's friend who was a Shuhite, responded to Job. He said,

2 "God is very powerful.
Everyone should honor him greatly.
God causes everything to be orderly high up in heaven.
3 No one can count all the stars in the sky.
When the sun rises, it shines on everyone.
4 Since God is so great, no person can be righteous
compared with him.
No human being is innocent by his standards.
5 Consider this: God is so glorious that he does not even
consider the full moon to be bright!
Even the white light of the stars does not
seem pure to him.
6 So God would certainly not consider mortal
humans to be pure!"

26 Then Job replied to Bildad and the others. He said,

2 "I am struggling, but you have not really helped me.
I am not able to overcome my difficulties, but
you have not rescued me.
3 I need good advice, but you have not given me any.
You have said many things, but they have
not been helpful.
4 I suppose you think that God helped you tell
me important things.
But God was not really speaking through you.
5 *Let me tell you how great God really is.*
The spirits of dead people tremble with fear at God.
They are deep in the earth,
below the waters where the sea creatures live.
6 God knows all about those who are in the place
where dead people go.
Nothing prevents God from seeing what is there.
7 God created the dome of the sky to make
an orderly world.
God created the dry land where previously there
was nowhere for people to live.
8 God uses clouds as containers for rainwater,
and he prevents that water from bursting the clouds.
9 God can make clouds so thick that even the bright
moon cannot shine through them.
10 God has set the horizon in place as the outer
edge of the oceans.
The horizon is at the place where the sky
meets the earth.
11 Sometimes even the mountains that hold
up the sky shake,
as if God were scolding them and they were afraid.
12 God used his power to restrain the oceans;
by his skill he destroyed Rahab, the huge sea monster.
13 God can make the sky clear by blowing away the clouds.
God brings order everywhere in creation by
overcoming the forces of chaos.
14 But I have described only a little bit of what God does.
It is as if we can only hear someone whisper about him.
When we hear mighty thunder, we realize that God
is far too great for us to understand."

27 Job kept speaking to his three friends. He said,

2 "I will promise you something as surely as God exists,
even though he has treated me unfairly.
I will promise you something as surely as
Shaddai exists, even though he has
made my life so unpleasant.
3 I will insist on it for as long as I am alive.
Yes, for as long as I am still breathing, I will insist on it.
4 I promise that I will not say the wrong thing!
I promise that I will not say anything to
deceive anyone!
5 And so I will never say that what you three
have said about me is true.
Until the day that I die, I will insist that I have been
living as God wants people to live.
6 I will insist that I am innocent. I will never
say anything different.
That way, for as long as I live, I will not feel badly
about saying something that was not true.
7 I want to be just the opposite of an evil person.
I want to disagree with the way anyone who
is a bad person is living.
8 I want to be the opposite of an evil person because
when God decides it is time for that person to die,
he can only expect that God will then punish him
for the wrong things that he has done.
9 When evil people are in trouble,
God does not rescue them when they pray for help.
10 Evil people are not happy about what Shaddai does.
They do not speak with God in prayer in good
times as well as in bad times.
11 I need to teach you three something
about how God actually deals with the
people of this world.
12 You three have certainly seen for yourselves
how God treats people.
So you should not have been telling me things
that have made so little sense.
13 I will tell you how God punishes evil people.
This is what Shaddai does to those who mistreat others:

14 Even if they have many children, those children
will die in wars,
or they will die because they do not have
enough food to eat.
15 Any children who are still alive after their evil parents
die will perish from diseases.
Not even the wife of an evil man will mourn
for him if he dies.
16 Sometimes evil people accumulate a large
amount of money
and they acquire many valuable articles of clothing.
17 But even if evil people become rich, they will die,
and then righteous people will get their clothes.
Honest people will get their money and share
it with one another.
18 The houses that they build are as weak as spider webs.
Their houses are flimsy, like the huts that watchmen
live in while they guard people's fields.
19 God makes evil people lose their money.
It is as if they are rich when they go to bed one night,
but the next morning they wake up to find
that their money is all gone.
20 When evil people realize that God is punishing them,
they become very afraid, as if those fears were
water in which they were drowning.
God soon destroys the evil people, as if a whirlwind
carried them away in the night.
21 It is as if a windstorm from the desert picks them up and
carries them away from their homes.
No one ever sees them again.
22 It is as if a wind like that blows steadily against them
while they are running away, trying to
escape from its force.
23 It is as if such a wind were clapping its hands
at them to mock them.
It is as if such a wind blew them out of their houses
and stayed there laughing at them.

28 There certainly are places where people
dig to find silver.
There certainly are places where people refine gold
that they have dug from the ground.
2 People get iron from ore that they dig out of the ground.
They get copper by heating and melting
ore that contains it.
3 People use lamps so that they can see while they
work far down under the ground.
They search for ore in many places where
it is very dark.
4 People dig shafts deep into the ground in places that
are far from where other people live,
As they work underground, the people who walk
above them are not aware of them.
People have to climb down ropes in order to descend
into the deep shafts they have dug.
5 Food grows on the surface of the ground.
But deep below the ground, miners make fires
to break apart the rocks.
6 The stones that people dig from under the
ground contain sapphires.
The dirt they dig up contains bits of gold.
7 Even birds that have very good eyesight can not
see deep down into these mines.
Even birds such as falcons have not looked into them.
8 Strong beasts can go wherever they want, but they
have never gone to those places.
Not even lions have gone there.
9 Miners dig through even very hard rock.
It is as though they are turning mountains
upside down in order to get at the ore
that is at the bases of them.
10 Miners cut tunnels through rocks
in order to find many precious things.
11 They dam up small streams to stop the
water from flowing.
That allows them to find things that were hidden
beneath the water of the streams.
12 *It takes great effort to find valuable ore.* It is even
more difficult to obtain wisdom.
Yes, it is very difficult to obtain understanding.
13 Humans do not know how to obtain wisdom.
Wisdom is not available on earth, where people live.
14 It is as though the ocean depths and the water
of the seas said,
'There is no wisdom here!'
15 People can not buy wisdom
by paying for it with gold or silver.
16 Wisdom is worth much more than fine gold that
comes from the land of Ophir.
Wisdom is worth much more than very valuable stones.
17 Wisdom is worth much more than gold or
beautiful quartz.
It is more expensive than an article made of pure gold.
18 Wisdom is worth more than coral or jasper.
The price of wisdom is higher than the price of rubies.
19 Wisdom is worth more than topaz from the land of Cush.
One can not express the value of wisdom
even in terms of gold.
20 So, then, wisdom is very difficult to obtain;
understanding is indeed a very valuable thing to get.
21 Living creatures are not able to see it.
Not even the birds can see it while they
are up in the sky.
22 Even after people die, they do not have a better
experience of wisdom
in the different place to which they go.
23 God is the only one who knows how people
can become wise.
24 God knows this because he can see everything on earth,
even in its most remote places.
God can see everything that is below the sky.
25 He decided how strongly the winds should blow
and how much rain should be in the clouds.
26 God decided where rain should fall
and what path lightning should take from the
clouds down to the ground.
27 At that time, he identified wisdom and recognized
that it was very valuable.
He was delighted by its capabilities and made it a
permanent part of his creation.

28 Then God told human beings, ‘Listen! You will become
wise to the extent that you respect me.
If you want to understand what you should
do, you must first decide that you will
not do anything wicked.’”

29 Job kept speaking to his three friends. He said,

2 “I wish that I could be as I was previously
during the time when God was taking care of me.
3 During that time, it was if God was shining a light on me
so that I could see where I was going even
in the darkness.
4 At that time I was young and strong.
Because God was my friend, he protected where I lived.
5 Shaddai was still present with me during that time
when all my children were still alive and
living near me.
6 My herds provided me with plenty of milk.
My olive trees provided me with plenty of oil.
7 I used to go to the place where the elders
gathered at the city gate.
The people had reserved a seat for me there,
and I would sit in it.
8 When young men saw me, they stepped
aside respectfully.
When older men saw me, they stood up respectfully.
9 The leaders of the people used to stop talking
when I arrived.
They made sure they did not say anything,
*because they knew it would not be as good
as what I was going to say*.
10 Even the most important leaders became quiet.
It was as if they were not even able to speak.
11 When people heard what I had to say,
they said good things about me.
They recognized that I had given wise counsel,
and they approved of me
12 *They approved of me* because I had helped those who
were poor and who were calling for help.
They also approved of me because I aided orphans
who had no fathers to help them.
13 People who had been suffering and were about to
die praised me *for rescuing them*.
I made widows very happy by helping them.
14 It was in my character to make sure that I and
others did what was right.
Yes, it was in my character to make sure that people
treated one another in a way that was just.
15 I helped people who could not see, as if I
were seeing for them.
I helped people who could not walk, as if
I were walking for them.
16 I protected poor people the way a father
protects his children.
In the courts, I defended even people who
were strangers to me.
17 I made wicked people stop oppressing others.
It was as if I were breaking the jaws of a wild animal
to make it drop its victim from its teeth.
18 At that time I thought, ‘I am certainly going
to live a long life,
and then I will die at home with my family.
19 I am like a tree whose roots reach down into the water
and whose branches become wet with dew each night.
20 People continually honor me,
and I stay strong like a new bow.’
21 When I spoke, people waited to hear what I would say.
They remained silent until I advised them
what they should do.
22 After I finished speaking, they did not say anything,
because what I had said was so satisfying.
23 They were as eager to hear me speak as farmers
are for it to rain.
They listened to me with great appreciation,
just as the ground seems to welcome
the rain that falls in the spring.
24 I helped people who felt discouraged.
I remained cheerful even as I helped them
deal with difficult situations.
25 As their leader, I decided what things would
be good for them to do.
They respected me, just as soldiers respect the
king who commands their army.
I was kind and sympathetic, like someone who
comforts people who are mourning.

30 But now, men who are younger than I
am make fun of me.
They are men whose fathers I would not even have
hired to help my dogs guard my sheep!
2 And I would not hire any of those young men
to work for me either.
They are already feeble.
3 *No one hires them,* so they are poor and go hungry
and have become thin.
They have to eat roots
that they find in places where no crops have
grown for a long time.
4 They look among bushes to find leaves that they can eat.
They pull up broom trees and eat their roots.
5 *When they come near villages,*
people shout at them, as they would at a thief,
to make them leave their area.
6 They have to live in riverbeds,
in holes in the ground,
and in caves on the sides of cliffs.
7 *During the day* they huddle under thorn bushes.
There they howl like animals because they
are so hungry.
8 They are people without good sense,
and they have never achieved anything significant.
People force them to leave their towns.
9 But these despicable young men sing songs
to make fun of me!
If they think God is punishing someone for being a
sinner, they call that person ‘another Job.’
10 They hate me and they stay away from me,
but if we happen to meet, they spit right in my face.
11 I am not able to defend myself against these young men,
because God has taken away my strength.

He has humiliated me.
So they can do whatever they want to me.
12 Gangs of these young men threaten me.
They shove me aside when they pass by.
They think of new ways to hurt me.
13 I am not able to escape from them,
even as they keep doing worse things to me.
No one else would do the things they do to me.
14 It is as if I were a city and they were an army that
had broken through its wall
and sent in waves of troops to destroy the city.
15 I am afraid of many things.
I have no dignity left,
and I do not expect that I will ever get
out of this situation.
16 I feel as if I am about to die,
but in the meantime, I am suffering greatly.
17 My body aches during the night.
I feel pain continually.
18 I have such a serious disease that my skin no
longer looks the same.
It seems as if I will always be sick.
19 God has made me suffer so much that I have been
sitting here on the ground.
I am even beginning to look like the dust and
ashes in which I have been sitting.
20 Even though I pray to you, God, you do not respond.
I try to get your attention, but you do not
do anything to help me.
21 You used to be kind to me, but you are not
kind to me anymore.
You are using your mighty power to make me suffer.
22 It is as if you have sent a great wind to pick
me up and carry me away.
It is as if you are making a violent storm
blow me around.
23 Certainly I know that you are going to make me die.
That is what happens to everyone who ever lives.
24 However, when someone falls down, he certainly
reaches out with his hand for help.
When someone is in trouble, he certainly calls for help.
25 *So it is appropriate for me to ask for your help now, God.*
After all, I wept for people myself when they
were experiencing troubles.
I felt sorry for poor people.
26 I am asking for help because although I expected
good things to happen to me, evil
things happened instead.
It was as if I was waiting for dawn but another
night started instead of a new day.
27 I am very distressed all the time.
I suffer during every day.
28 I look as if I have to work outside all day to make a living.
I humble myself by pleading openly for
people to help me.
29 *No one wants to come near me.*
It is as if I am a jackal or ostrich living
out in the wilderness.
30 My skin has become dark, and it is peeling off.
I have a fever that causes my body to feel
as if it were burning up.
31 Previously, if you came to my house, you would hear
musical instruments playing happy songs.
If you came now, you would only hear people
crying and singing sad songs.

31 I have made a solemn promise to myself that I will
not look at a woman in a lustful way.
So I would not look at a woman who was not my wife
and want to have sexual relations with her.
2 *If I did not do what I promised,*
God who is in heaven would certainly punish me.
Shaddai in heaven would make sure that I
got what I deserved.
3 *I would not have done wrong in that way, because I know*
that unrighteous people experience calamities.
People who do what is wrong experience disasters
when God punishes them.
4 I know that God sees everything that I do.
He is aware of each individual action that I take.
5 I solemnly declare that I have not lied to others
and that I have not tried to deceive others.
6 I only ask God to judge me fairly.
If he does that, he will find that I am innocent.
7 I solemnly declare that I have continually acted properly.
I have not seen wrong things to do and then done them.
I am not guilty of committing sin.
8 If I have been lustful or deceptive, I hope that
when I plant seeds, someone else will
harvest the crops and eat them.
Or may someone uproot the crops that are
growing in my fields!
9 I solemnly declare that I have not been attracted
to another man's wife.
I have not made secret arrangements with a
woman to have sexual relations with her
while her husband was away.
10 If I have done that, I hope that my own wife will
be attracted to another man
and that she will have sexual relations with him.
11 If I had sexual relations with another man's wife,
that would be a terrible sin.
If I were caught and her husband brought me
to court, the judges would certainly
decide to punish me.
12 *I would have to pay a fine that would cost me*
everything I owned.
It would be as if a fire had burned everything
I had right to the ground.
It would be as if someone pulled out all the crops
that were growing in my fields.
13 I solemnly declare that when my male or female
servants complained to me about something,
I took their complaint seriously and made sure
that I treated them fairly.
14 I knew that if I did not treat my servants fairly,
I could not expect God to be merciful to
me when he judged me.
If God came to help my servants,

I could offer no excuse for the way I had treated
them. 15 *I am no different from my servants, so*
I have no right to mistreat them.
The same God created each one of us.
16–18 I solemnly declare that from the time that I was young,
I have taken care of orphans and I have
protected widows.
I have not failed to provide poor people with
the things that they needed.
I have not caused widows to lose hope.
I have not eaten all of my food by myself and
not shared it with orphans.
19 I solemnly declare that I provided clothes for
poor people when I saw that they were
suffering from lack of clothing.
I have provided warm outer garments for
needy people.
20 I gave them warm clothes that my servants had
woven from the wool of my sheep.
The poor people thanked me for helping them.
21 I solemnly declare that I never threatened an orphan who
brought a case against me in the public square.
Even if I knew that the other elders would favor me,
I made sure that the orphan received fair treatment.
22 If I have neglected poor people or oppressed orphans,
may the arm *that I did not use to help them but*
used instead to threaten them
fall right out of its socket!
23 I have not done wrong things such as I have
been describing,
because I respect God and I know that he punishes sin.
I would not sin against such a majestic God!
24 I solemnly declare that I have not depended on wealth
as a source of security and power.
25 I solemnly declare that I did not think that I
was better than other people
because I had many possessions and because
I had become very rich.
26 I solemnly declare that I never looked at the
sun when it was shining
or at the beautiful moon
27 and made a gesture to worship them.
I never wanted to do that.
28 If I had worshiped the sun or the moon and
people found out that I had,
the judges would certainly decide to punish
me for that too,
because I would have been worshiping a false
god instead of the true God.
29–30 I solemnly declare that I have not been glad when
my enemies have suffered misfortunes.
I have not thought that I was better than they were
when they experienced disasters.
I have not sinned by praying that God would
curse people who hated me
and cause them to die.
31–32 I solemnly declare that I have invited travelers
to stay in my house.
Visitors have not had to sleep in the streets.
My servants talk about how I give food to
anyone who needs it.
33 I know that people generally try to hide their sins.
But I solemnly declare that I have not done that.
34 I did not let fear of what people would say
about me or think of me
keep me from admitting that I had done wrong
and making amends.
35 I wish that I had someone who would judge
my case against God!
I hereby declare that all that I have just said is true.
Now I wish that Shaddai would state his case.
I would like to see his written statement
of charges against me.
36 If Shaddai wrote out his charges against me,
I would not be ashamed, because I know
that I am innocent.
I would display the charges publicly*, because they would*
actually list what I had not done.
37 I would explain to God in detail
how I was innocent of each charge.
I would approach him as a ruler would:
without being afraid.
38 I solemnly declare that I have not defrauded the
people who farm my land.
They have no reason to cry out for justice against me.
39 I solemnly declare that I have taken only a fair share of
the crops that people have grown on my land.
I have made sure that the people who grew
crops on my land kept enough of them
to feed their families.
40 If I have cheated the people who farm my land,
then I wish that thorns would grow in my
fields instead of wheat.
I wish that bad weeds would grow there
instead of barley!"
After this, Job said nothing further to defend
himself to his three friends.

32 Then Job's three friends stopped replying to him, because Job was confident that he was innocent. 2 Then a man named Elihu*, who had been listening as Job spoke with his friends,* became very angry with Job. Elihu was the son of Barakel. He was a Buzite and he belonged to the clan of Ram. He became angry because Job continued to claim that he was innocent and that God had been wrong to punish him. 3 Elihu also became angry with Job's three friends. He became angry because they had insisted that Job must have done many things that were wrong, but they had not been able to prove any of their accusations. 4 Now Elihu was much younger than Job's three friends. That was why he had let them speak to Job first. 5 But when Elihu realized that the three men had nothing more to say to Job, he became very angry.

6 This is what Elihu said. (He was the son of Barakel. He was a Buzite.)

"I am young, and you all are much older than I am.
So I was hesitant. I was afraid to tell you
what I was thinking.

7 I said to myself, ‘I should let the people who
are older speak.
Older people should be able to explain how
to understand things wisely.’
8 However, even as I was saying that, I felt the Spirit
of God stirring within me.
Yes, I felt Shaddai inspiring me so that
I could understand.
9 Humble people can also be wise.
Younger people can also recognize the
right thing to do.
10 So now I want to ask you, ‘Please listen to me.
Let me too say what I have been thinking.’
11 Now I let the three of you speak first.
I waited while you thought carefully about
what you should say,
and I listened to your arguments.
12 I paid careful attention to what you were saying.
But in the end, none of you was able to prove
that what Job said was wrong.
None of you could respond to his arguments.
13 So do not tell yourselves, ‘We have discovered
what is wise!’
It is God who must show Job that he is wrong.
Someone relying on human thinking will
not be able to do that.
14 You were angry with Job, and so you have
not answered him well.
But Job has said nothing to make me angry, so I
will not answer him the way you have.
15 The three of you are just sitting there in a daze,
not saying anything more,
because you cannot think of what to say to Job.
16 And since you are not speaking, since you have
stopped answering Job,
I do not feel that I need to wait any longer
before speaking to Job myself.
17 So now I too will respond to Job.
I will share my view of his situation.
18 I must speak, because I have plenty to say,
and something inside me is forcing me to say it.
19 I feel as if I am a container of wine that is
stretching more and more
and that will soon burst because of the fermentation.
20 I must speak, and then I will be able to rest from the
effort of restraining myself from speaking.
So I will now say something in reply to all of you.
21 I will not favor either Job or you his friends.
I will not try to flatter anyone.
22 Indeed, I have not gotten into the habit of
flattering people,
because I believe that if I did that, God would
quickly destroy me.

33 So now, Job, I ask you to listen carefully
to everything that I am going to say.
2 I am ready to speak to you and tell you what I think.
3 What I say will express my sincere feelings
of concern for you.
I will only tell you what is genuinely true.
4 You can trust me as someone whom God’s Spirit created.
You can trust me as someone whom
Shaddai made alive.
5 *Once I have spoken,* respond to me if you can.
Think carefully about how you will reply to me.
6 Now you wanted God to answer you, and I
will do that for him.
But I am human, just like you,
7 so you do not need to be afraid of me.
I will not speak to you harshly.
8 I listened carefully to you as you spoke,
and this is what I heard you say:
9 ‘I am righteous. I have not committed any sins.
I am innocent. I have not done things that are wrong.
10 Nevertheless, God looks for excuses to punish me.
He treats me as if I were his enemy.
11 He judges me by very strict standards.
He closely observes everything that I do.’
12 However, what you have said is incorrect.
I will explain why.
You do not realize what God is actually doing, since it
is beyond human understanding.
13 You should not be protesting that God does not
respond to what anyone says.
14 God actually does speak to people in various ways.
People just do not realize how he is doing that.
15 Sometimes God speaks to people at night in
dreams and visions
when they are sound asleep in bed.
16 God reveals things to people at those times.
He shows them that they need to change the
way that they have been living.
17 God speaks in that way to get people to stop
doing evil deeds.
God wants to prevent people from sinning because
they have become proud.
18 In this way, God prevents people from dying.
Otherwise, someone might kill them violently.
19 God also corrects people by making them so ill
that they have to lie in bed.
They feel constant agony in their bodies.
20 They feel so sick that they do not want to eat anything,
not even their favorite foods.
21 They lose so much weight that there appears to be no
flesh between their skin and their bones.
22 They become so sick that they are about to die.
The angels who cause people to die start
coming to get them.
23 However, sometimes a special kind of angel
may come to a person
and tell him on behalf of God how he can
change the way that he has been living
so that he will not die.
24 *If the person changes the way that he has been living,*
then God will forgive him.
God will tell the angels who cause people to die,
‘Do not cause this person to die!
I can see that I should allow him to live, because
now he will do what is right.’

25 When that happens, the person will become
healthy again and his skin will appear
as fresh as the skin of a child.
He will be as strong again as he was when
he was young.
26 Then God will once again treat him as a righteous person.
He will pray to God, and God will answer his prayer.
He will come into God's presence joyfully.
27 He will sing a song of thanksgiving and tell the
people who are listening,
'I sinned; yes, I did things that were not right,
but God did not punish me in the way that I deserved.
28 He has saved me from going to the place
where dead people are.
And so I will continue to enjoy being alive!'
29 Indeed, God does this for many people.
30 He keeps them from going to the place where
dead people are.
That way they can continue to enjoy being alive.
31 So Job, please listen to me.
Do not say anything right now; just allow me to speak.
32 *After I have spoken, then* if you have something more
that you want to say to me,
say it, because I would like to show that
you are innocent.
33 However, if you have nothing more that you want
to say, then just listen to me.
I will explain to you how you can understand
your situation in a wise way."

34 Then Elihu continued to speak, and he said,

2 "I want everyone who is wise to hear what I
am about to say.
I want everyone who knows a lot to listen to me.
3 I want you to listen carefully to me because when
people hear others speak,
they need to decide whether what the others
are saying is right or wrong.
They do this just as people taste food to decide
whether it is good or bad.
4 I would like all of us to decide together who
is right, Job or his friends.
I would like us to find out together what is a good
way to understand his situation.
5 We need to consider this carefully together because
Job has said, 'I am innocent,
but God has not judged me fairly.'
6 Job has said he would not lie about whether
he has done what is right.
He has spoken as if God had shot him with an arrow
and wounded him so badly that he will die,
even though he is innocent.
7 I have not heard anyone else speak the way Job does.
People drink water to satisfy their thirst, and
mocking God seems to satisfy Job.
8 His friends are people who do what is wrong.
He spends time with wicked people.
9 We know that this is true about him because he has said,
'It is useless for people to want to please God.'
10 So, all of you who understand things well, listen to me!
God would never consider doing anything
that was wicked!
No, Shaddai would never consider doing
anything that was wrong!
11 We can be confident that God treats people fairly because
we can see that he rewards or punishes people
properly for what they have done.
God gives people what they deserve for the
manner in which they have lived.
12 No, God never does anything wicked.
Shaddai always treats people fairly.
13 God did not need anyone to give him the authority to
rule the people who live on the earth.
He did not need anyone to put him in control
of all the people in the world.
14 If God ever thought only about himself and not also
about the world he created, if God ever
stopped keeping people and animals alive,
15 then every living thing would die immediately,
and the bodies of people would soon become soil again.
16 So, Job, if you truly want to understand,
then listen carefully to what I am about to say.
17 God could certainly not hate what is right
and still rule the world.
So you really cannot say that God, who is righteous
and powerful, has done something wrong.
18 God tells some kings that they are worthless,
and he says to some officials that they are wicked.
19 God does not treat rulers better than he
treats other people.
God does not treat rich people more respectfully
than he treats poor people.
After all, God created all people.
20 If people use their power to oppress others,
God punishes them by killing them.
Those people are not expecting to have troubles and
die, and humans do not kill them,
but God kills them very quickly.
21 God punishes oppressive people because he sees
everything that people do.
God is aware of each individual action
that a person does.
22 Wicked people can not escape from God
by hiding in places where it is very dark.
23 Now God does not need to examine a person further
before passing judgment on that person.
24 God does not need to investigate what people have done.
He knows whether important people have done
wrong, and he destroys them if they have.
He then appoints others to take their places.
25 Because he already knows what they have done,
he removes them quickly and gets rid of them.
26 God kills them because of the wicked things
that they have done.
Many people see him do it.
27 God kills them because they stopped doing
what he wanted them to do
and did not pay attention to his commands.
28 They mistreated poor people.

Those poor people prayed to God for help,
and God answered their prayers.
29 Yet even if God decides not to punish wicked
people right away,
no one can criticize him.
If God does not reveal what he is doing,
no one can understand it.
God controls every nation and every person.
30 God makes sure that those who rule honor him.
He makes sure that rulers do not oppress the
people whom they rule.
31 Suppose someone says to God,
'I recognize that I am suffering because I have sinned.
I do not want to sin any longer.
32 Please show me what sins I have committed.
I will stop doing anything that is evil.'
33 If a person said that to God,
do you think that God would continue to punish him?
Now you have been saying that God does
not treat people fairly,
so it is important for you to decide what you
think God would do.
I will not suggest the answer myself.
We would like to hear you say what you
think about this.
34 *But unfortunately, I believe that* when people
who have good sense
and people who are wise hear my question
and your answer,
they will say to me,
35 'Job is speaking ignorantly.
What he says does not make sense.'
36 It would be good if God put Job on trial
and investigated every last detail of his case.
God should do that because Job has been speaking
just as wicked people speak.
37 God should put Job on trial because in
addition to sinning,
he is saying that God does not treat people fairly.
Knowing that we were watching, he clapped
his hands to insult God.
He has made long speeches to say that God
has punished him unjustly."

35 Then Elihu continued to speak, and he said,

2 "Job, it is not right for you to say that you have
been doing what is right
but God has been doing what is wrong.
3 You are basically saying that when you ask,
'What good things have I received because
I have not sinned?
How am I better off than I would be if I had sinned?'
4 I will answer those questions for you,
and I will also respond to what your three
friends have said.
5 Job, look up at the sky.
See how high the clouds are above you!
God is far higher than that!
6 So if you sin, that does not harm God at all.
Even if you do many wrong things, that
does not hurt him.
7 On the other hand, if you do what is right, that
does not make God better off.
No, you are not giving God something that
he does not already have.
8 The only ones who suffer if you are wicked
are other people.
The only ones you might help by being good
are other humans.
9 People call for others to help them because of
the many things that wicked people
do that make them suffer.
They call for help because of the things that
powerful people do to oppress them.
10 But people do not ask God, their Creator, to help them.
People do not expect God to enable them to sing
joyful songs because he has rescued them.
11 People do not realize that God wants to teach
them how to live wisely.
God does that for people, not for wild animals
or for the birds in the sky.
12 Even when people do pray to God for help,
God does not answer them,
because they arrogantly continue to do what is wrong.
13 God, the Almighty One, does not respond at all
when people pray but do not really mean
what they are saying.
14 You are telling God that you have made your
case against him
but that you are still waiting for him to
answer your accusations.
You are saying that God has not been helping you.
Since you say those things, you should certainly
not expect God to respond to you!
15 You also say that God does not pay much attention
when people commit sins,
and so he does not become angry and punish them.
16 My friends, you see that Job has said things that
are completely useless.
He says many things without knowing what
he is talking about."

36 Then Elihu said some more things to Job:

2 "Job, be patient with me a little longer as I
explain things to you.
Be patient, because I have more to say in order to
show that God does not do anything wrong.
3 I will tell you what I have learned from many sources.
I will show that God, who made me, always
does what is right.
4 You can indeed listen patiently because I will not
say anything to you that is false.
I am here with you as someone who
understands things well.
5 Truly, God is very powerful, but he values every person.
He understands everything completely.
6 He does not allow wicked people to remain alive,

but he helps people whom others have
been oppressing.
7 He always protects people who are righteous.
He makes them prosper as if they were kings,
and he causes others to honor them continually.
8 Sometimes people suffer great troubles because
they have done wrong things.
9 When they do, God shows them what they
have done wrong.
He shows them that they committed these sins
because they were proud.
10 He enables them to understand what he is teaching them.
He commands them to stop sinning.
11 If they obey him and once again live as he wishes,
they will prosper and be happy for as long as they live.
12 But if they do not obey him,
they will die violently
because they did not seek to understand how
God wanted them to live.
13 People who do not respect God continue to
be angry with God.
They do not ask God to help them
even when they are suffering because of their sins.
14 They can only make a living in a dishonorable way,
and they die while they are still young.
15 God actually uses suffering to keep people from
perishing because of their sins.
By making them suffer, he causes them to listen
to what he is telling them.
16 Job, I believe that God wants to bring you
out of your troubles
and allow you to live without distress.
He wants you to be happy and prosperous.
17 However, you are still saying bad things about God
the way a wicked person would.
That is why God is punishing you so severely.
18 You are angry with God, but do not let that lead you
to say disrespectful things about God.
If you did that, God would not accept even a
very large bribe to pardon you.
19 God would not want your money and so pardon you.
He would not take gold or a great deal of
money as a bribe.
20 You should not wish that you could die so that
your suffering would be over.
Once people die, they are gone.
21 Be careful not to commit sin.
It seems that you would rather defy God than learn
what he wants to teach you through suffering.
22 Truly, God is so powerful that he can do great things.
He is better than any other teacher.
23 No one has ever told him what he should do.
No one has ever had to tell him that what
he was doing was wrong.
24 People have often sung songs to praise him.
You too should remember what he has done
and praise him for it.
25 Everyone has seen what God has done,
but even so, people only understand it a little.
26 How great God is! We are not able to understand
how great he is,
and we are not able to determine how old he is.
27 Indeed, God draws water up from the earth
and puts it in clouds
and causes it to become rain.
28 This rain pours down from the clouds
and abundant showers fall on the earth,
where people live.
29 No one can really understand how the clouds
spread across the sky
or how it thunders in the sky where God lives.
30 See how God causes lightning to flash all around him!
The lightning is so bright that it lights up
even the deep ocean.
31 Because his storms are so great, God uses them
to punish wicked people.
But he also uses the rain from these storms to provide
abundant food for righteous people.
32 It is as if God picks up lightning in his hands
and sends it to strike where he wants it to.
33 God makes thunder to announce that there
will be a storm.
We also know that a storm is coming when we
hear cattle making extra noise.

37 My heart really pounds when I think about that!
I feel as if it is jumping around inside me.
2 Listen, all of you, to the thunder!
It is as if God is roaring!
3 God makes such loud thunder that people can
hear it throughout the land.
God makes such bright lighting that people
can see it from far away.
4 After lightning flashes, we hear thunder,
which sounds like God speaking very loudly.
Then, after the thunder, God makes more lightning.
5 When we hear thunder, it is as if God is shouting
in an amazing way.
God does things that are too wonderful
for us to understand.
6 For example, God can cause snow to cover the ground,
and when he tells a rain shower to rain even
harder, it becomes a downpour.
7 When God makes it rain so hard, everyone has
to stop working outside.
This shows all people, whom he has made, what
great things he is able to do.
8 When it rains, the animals go into their hiding places
and they stay there until the rain stops.
9 Storms come from the place where they start,
and cold winds come from the north.
10 In the winter, cold winds turn water into ice.
The water in lakes freezes solid.
11 God truly fills the clouds with water droplets.
He makes lightning flash from many clouds.
12 He causes the clouds to move around over the
places where people live
so that they can accomplish everything that
he wants them to do.
13 God may send storms to punish people.

God may send storms to water the land that he made.
God may send storms to help people by providing
rain to make their crops grow.
God makes all of these things happen.
14 Job, listen to what I am saying.
Just think about the wonderful things that God does.
15 Are you able to explain how God arranges the
clouds in the sky and makes lightning
flash down from them?
16 Are you able to explain how God is able to make
clouds float in the sky?
Can you understand all of the wonderful
things that God does?
God understands everything completely!
17 Are you able to explain how God can bring in
stifling air from the desert
and make it so hot that you cannot stay cool
if you wear clothes?
18 Are you able to explain how God made the sky
so that it would stay firmly in place above the earth?
19 I doubt that you could tell us what to say to God.
People do not know enough to be able to defend
themselves if they spoke with God.
20 I would not dare tell God that I needed to speak with him!
If I did that, then he might destroy me!
21 You know that people can not look directly at the sun
when it shines brightly in the sky after the wind
has blown the clouds away.
22 When God appears, he has glittering light all around him.
His glory is so bright that it makes us afraid.
So if we cannot even look at the sun, how
could we look at God?
23 Shaddai has very great power,
and we do not know how to get near to him.
He always acts righteously,
and he never mistreats anyone.
24 That is why everyone should have great respect for him.
Any people who think that they are wise
do not impress him."

38 Then Yahweh spoke to Job from inside the storm that had been approaching. He said to him,

2 "You have been speaking ignorantly, and as a result,
you have been making it harder for people
to understand my actions.
3 I am going to ask you some questions,
so get ready to answer them directly.
4 Where were you when I began to create the earth?
Since you claim to know so much, tell
me how I did that.
5 Who decided how large the earth would be?
Who made sure that it was the right size?
If you know as much as you claim, you ought
to be able to tell me that.
6–7 What keeps the earth from collapsing?
Who made sure that everything on the earth
would be in the right position?
The earth was so beautiful when I made it that it was as
if the first stars all sang a song to celebrate it.
All of the angels gave a great cheer when
they saw the earth.
8 When I made the land, the sea could have flowed over it.
Who prevented the sea from flooding the earth?
9 Now the clouds in the sky float over the
sea as if they were its clothing.
Night and day happen at sea just as they do on land.
10 I decided how much of the area under the sky
the sea would cover.
I made barriers at the shore of the sea to
keep it off the land.
11 I proclaimed that the sea could only come up so far on
the shore and not come any farther.
I said that its great waves could only flow up
to a certain place on the land.
12 Job, have you ever commanded a day to begin?
Have you told the sun where it needed to
rise on a certain day?
13 When day comes, wicked people all around the world
stop doing the bad things they do at night
when no one can see them.
14 In the light of day, people can see the hills and
valleys on earth clearly.
The earth seems to take shape the way clay takes
shape when people press a seal onto it
or the way folds form in clothing.
15 When daylight comes, wicked people do not have
the darkness that they like.
They are no longer able to hurt other people.
16 Job, have you traveled to the springs at the
bottom of the sea?
Have you gone and seen what is at the very
bottom of the oceans?
17 Has someone shown you how to get to the place
where dead people are?
Do you know where the entrance to that dark place is?
18 Do you know how big the earth is?
Tell me, if you know all these things!
19 Do you know how to get to the place where
light comes from?
Do you know where darkness comes from?
20 Would you know how to get to those places
so that you could bring light and darkness to them?
21 If you had been alive when I created the world, then you
would know the answers to these questions.
But you are not that old, so you certainly
do not know the answers.
22 Have you gone into the place where I keep snow,
or have you visited the place where I keep hail?
23 I keep snow and hail so that I can use them to
defeat one of the armies
when people are fighting wars.
24 Would you know how to get to the place where the
sun should rise each morning?
Would you know where the east wind should
begin to blow over the earth?
25 Could you make rain fall in a certain place?
Could you make a rainstorm go in a certain direction
26 so that it would rain out in the desert,
in a place where no one lives?

27 Would you be able to send rain there to water those
barren areas where nothing has grown,
so that grass would begin to grow again?
28 Do you even know where rain comes from?
Do you know how dew forms on the ground overnight?
29 Do you know how water becomes ice in the winter?
Do you know why dew turns into the frost that
covers the ground in the winter?
30 Do you know why the surface of lakes freezes
in the winter?
You cannot see the water below the surface; it is as if
there is a layer of stone on top of it.
31 Can you make stars cluster together, as they do in
the cluster you call the Pleiades?
Can you make stars move apart so that they no
longer make constellations such as the
one you call Orion? 32 Can you make the
constellations of stars appear in the sky
at the right time of the year?
Can you make the Big Dipper with its handle
appear in the right place in the sky?
33 Do you know how the sun, moon, and stars should
move through the sky?
Do you know how they should provide heat
and light on the earth?
34 Could you shout an order up to a cloud
to make it pour rain down on you?
35 Can you tell flashes of lightning to strike
wherever you want?
Would the lightning do what you commanded?
36 Can you determine where it should be cloudy and
where it should be sunny?
37 Are you able to count how many clouds there are?
Can you make it rain
38 after it has not rained for such a long time
that the ground is hard and dry?
39–40 Suppose a lioness and her cubs were crouching in their
den or hiding in some bushes, waiting for
some animal to pass by that they could kill.
Could you make an animal go by that the
lioness could kill
so that she and her cubs could eat the meat
and not be hungry anymore?
41 Suppose some baby ravens in a nest were chirping
loudly because they were hungry.
Suppose they had not eaten in so long that
they had become weak.
Could you provide a dead animal whose meat the raven
could bring home to its baby birds?

39 Job, can you tell when female mountain goats
are about to give birth?
Have you watched the wild deer while their
calves were being born?
2 Do you know for how long these female animals
will be pregnant? Do you know when
they will have their babies?
3 They crouch down to give birth,
and their babies come out.
4 The young animals grow up in the open fields.
Once they are strong enough to leave their mothers,
they do not return to them again.
5 Do you know why some donkeys wander around wild?
Do you know why they are not still working for people?
6 I have given them a home in the desert plain.
They are able to live in places where much
grass does not grow.
7 These wild donkeys do not like the noise in the cities.
In the desert, they do not have to listen to the shouts
of those who used to force them to work.
8 They wander over the hills to find food.
They look for any plant that they can eat.
9 There are also oxen that are wild.
You could not get one of those to work for you!
It would not stay penned up at night by the place
where you put food for your animals!
10 You could not make a wild ox pull a plow
so that it would dig furrows in your fields.
11 Even though a wild ox is very strong,
you could not depend on it to do difficult farm work.
12 A wild ox would not help you
to grow more crops than you could grow by yourself.
13 Now think about ostriches.
They run very fast, flapping their wings as they go.
But they do not take good care of their offspring.
14 Female ostriches are bad mothers, because lay their
eggs and leave them on the ground.
The eggs do stay warm in the sand.
15 But this is still not a good thing to do.
Some wild animal could step on the eggs
and crush them.
16 Ostriches do not care well for their chicks.
They act as if the chicks do not belong to them.
They do not seem to be concerned that their
chicks might die
and they would have laid their eggs for nothing.
17 Ostriches act this way because I did not give
them good instincts.
I did not enable them to understand how they
should care for their eggs and chicks.
18 However, ostriches are still awesome birds.
When they run, they can easily run faster than horses!
19 But I made horses to be very strong.
I put beautiful flowing manes on their necks.
20 I enabled them to leap through the air as if
they were locusts.
They snort so loudly that they cause people
to be afraid.
21 As horses prepare to rush into battle,
they paw the ground, showing off their great strength.
22 Horses seem to disregard danger as they go
bravely into battle.
They do not run away when enemy soldiers
attack them.
23 As horses run into battle,
the quivers containing their riders' arrows
rattle against their sides.
The spears and javelins that they are carrying
flash in the sunlight.
24 Horses rush into battle as soon as an officer blows a
horn to signal that the army should advance.

The horses run very quickly, and they speedily
reach the enemy lines.
25 When they hear someone blow the battle horn,
horses neigh excitedly.
They can smell a battle even from a distance.
They hear commanders shouting orders to their
soldiers *and they know the battle will begin soon*.
26 Now think about birds that hunt small animals
and other birds.
Do you know how hawks are able to stay in the
air as if they were floating?
Do you know how they sense when it is time to
fly to a warmer place for the winter?
27 I gave eagles the ability to fly high up into the
cliffs and build their nests there.
28 Eagles live on cliffs.
They are safe among the high, pointed rocks there
because no animals can get to them.
29 From that great height, eagles look for animals
that they can kill and eat.
They can see animals that are far away.
30 Eagles kill small animals and bring them back to
their nests to feed their chicks.
Eagles also go and eat dead bodies that they
see lying on the ground."

40 Yahweh continued to speak to Job. He said,

2 "Do you still think I am wrong and want to
keep arguing with me?
If you want to keep criticizing me, then answer
the questions I have asked you!"

3 But Job replied to Yahweh,

4 "Now I realize how insignificant I am. I am not
able to answer your questions.
I will not say anything in response to them.
5 I have already said more than I should have said.
So now I will say nothing more."

6 Then Yahweh again spoke to Job from inside the storm.
He said,

7 "I am going to ask you some more questions, so get
ready to answer them directly.
8 Do you still want to govern the universe instead of me?
Do you still want to insist that I am doing things
wrong and that you would do them right?
9 Do you have the same amount of power as I do?
Does your voice sound as loud as thunder,
as mine does?
10 If you want to govern the universe, you must show
that you are dignified and noble.
You must show that your character is
glorious and beautiful.
11 You must express holy wrath against the
people who deserve it.
You must recognize which people are being
sinfully arrogant and take them out
of important positions.
12 Yes, you must not allow arrogant people to remain
in important positions.
Destroy wicked people quickly!
13 Punish all of them by killing them.
Then send them to the place where dead people go.
14 If you did that, I would congratulate you
and admit that you could save yourself by
your own ability.
15 *But to show you how insignificant you really are,*
I want you to think about a great animal that
I created, Behemoth.
I made you, and I also made it.
Even though this great beast has the size and
strength to hunt and kill other animals,
it eats plants as oxen do.
16 Think about how strong the legs of Behemoth are!
And the muscles in its belly are very powerful.
17 Behemoth can make its tail as stiff as the branch of a
cedar tree and hold it up in the air.
It has very strong legs.
18 Its thigh bones are so strong that they are like
tubes made of bronze.
Its legs are so strong that they are like
bars made of iron.
19 Behemoth is one of the strongest animals that I made.
I gave it sharp tusks so that it could cut down
plants and eat them.
20 It needs those tusks because it comes out of the
river where it lives in order to eat the
plants that grow nearby.
But other animals do not have to be afraid of it, so
those animals do not run away or hide.
21 Behemoth lies under the trees that grow near
the river where it lives.
It sometimes shelters in the tall reeds that grow
in the swamps of the river.
22 Behemoth stays in the shade of trees that
grow near the river.
It stays in the midst of the trees that grow
near the water.
23 Even when the river in which it lives become strong and
turbulent, this does not disturb Behemoth.
It does not mind even if the level of the water
in the river rises very high.
24 No one could capture Behemoth even if he could get
close enough to stand right in front of it.
No one can make Behemoth a tame animal.

41 *And now I want you to think about another great
animal that I created, Leviathan.*
You cannot catch Leviathan with a fishhook,
and you cannot tie rope around its jaws to
hold them closed!
2 You cannot hook its jaws to catch it
and then put cords through its nose to control it.

3 Leviathan would certainly not plead with you to
act mercifully toward it!

It would not use sweet talk to try to get
you not to harm it!
4 Leviathan would certainly not make an agreement
to work for you
as your slave for as long as it lived!
5 You could not turn it into a pet, as people do with birds!
You could not put a leash around its neck so that
the young women in your household
could take it for walks!
6 People who work together to catch fish could never
catch Leviathan and then decide what share
of it belonged to each of them.
They would never get the chance to cut Leviathan
into pieces and then sell its meat!
7 People cannot throw harpoons hard enough at
Leviathan to pierce its hide!
People cannot throw fishing spears into its head!
8 If you try to fight with Leviathan, it will give you a
battle that you will never forget!
You will never try to do that again!
9 It is useless even to hope to subdue Leviathan.
Just the sight of it is enough to make a person
become so afraid that he falls down.
10 No one is so foolhardy that he would wake up Leviathan
if it were sleeping. *It would angrily attack him.*
Since that is true, it is even more foolhardy to
challenge me*, as you have done*.
11 *Even if people are righteous,* they have not
done anything for me
that obligates me to make only good things
happen to them.
Everything in the created world belongs to me*, so no one
can give me anything that I have to repay.*
12 And now I want to speak to you further.
*You said that you wanted to wake up Leviathan! As
I said, that would be very foolish.*
It has agile legs and great strength and
a graceful shape.
13 It has a tough hide that no one can strip off.
It has powerful jaws.
14 Those jaws have terrible teeth in them!
No one can pry them open when they are
closed*, and no one can release them
when they bite onto something.*
15 It has rows of scales on its back
with no gaps between them.
16 Those scales are so close together
that it seems as if not even air can get between them.
17 Those scales join very closely to each other
and they do not pull apart.
18 When Leviathan makes a loud sound, fire comes
out of its mouth as well as noise.
It has bright, scary eyes that seem to glow with fire.
19 When it breathes,
it shoots out flames and fiery sparks.
20 Smoke pours out of its nostrils
the way steam pours out of a pot of boiling
water over a hot fire.
21 Flames shoot out from its mouth,
so when it breathes on wood, the wood catches fire.
22 Its neck is very strong.
Wherever it goes, it makes people very afraid.
23 Leviathan does not have a soft belly as other animals do.
Scales wrap around its belly and hold it
tightly to its body.
24 It does not feel any compassion,
any more than a stone would feel compassion
or the lower millstone on which people grind
grain would feel compassion.
25 When Leviathan rises up out of the ocean,
the bravest people become terrified.
When sailors see it churning up the water,
they sail away as fast as they can.
26 People cannot injure it with swords.
They cannot injure it with spears, arrows, or other
weapons that have sharp points, either.
27 An iron weapon could not hurt it any more
than straw could.
A bronze weapon could not hurt it any more than
a weapon made of rotten wood.
28 Shooting arrows at it does not cause it to flee.
Hurling stones at it from a sling is like
hurling bits of chaff at it.
29 A club that someone might use against it would not
hurt it any more than chaff would.
It can ignore any spear that someone might throw at it.
30 Scales as sharp as broken pieces of pottery cover its belly.
When it drags itself through the mud,
these scales tear up the ground.
31 As it swims through the deep water of the ocean,
it churns it into foam,
as if it were boiling water or ointment that
someone was stirring.
32 As it swims through the water, it creates a
glistening wake.
The churning water is like white hair on
top of the deep sea.
33 There is nothing in the world like Leviathan.
I created it in such a way that it would not
be afraid of anything.
34 Nothing else scares it, no matter how powerful
that thing may be.
It is greater than the greatest of other creatures."

42 Then Job replied to Yahweh. He said,

2 "Now I realize that you can do anything you want.
No one can stop you from doing what you want to do.
3 You told me that I had been speaking ignorantly, and
that as a result, I was making it harder for
people to understand your actions.
I will admit that I was speaking about things
that I did not understand.
Those things were very amazing,
and I did not really know what I was talking about.
4 You told me that I should listen and let you talk because
you were going to ask me some questions.
You wanted me to try to answer them.
*But I will admit that I am not able to answer
the questions you asked.*

[5] I had previously heard many things about you.
But now I have actually seen you!
[6] Therefore I am ashamed of myself for what I said.
I am sitting in dust and ashes to show that I
am sorry for what I said."

[7] When Yahweh had finished speaking with Job, he spoke to Eliphaz, Job's friend from the town of Teman. He said, "I am very angry with you and your two friends. I am angry because you did not say true things about me the way Job did. He serves me faithfully. [8] So now you must bring seven young bulls and seven rams to Job, that man who serves me faithfully. While he is with you, kill these animals and burn them as a sacrifice for yourselves. Then Job will pray for you, and I will do what he asks me to do for you. I will not punish you for speaking foolishly about me. You deserve for me to punish you because you did not say the right things about me as Job did. He serves me faithfully." [9] So Eliphaz, Job's friend from the town of Teman; Bildad, Job's friend from the Shuhite people group; and Zophar, Job's friend from the town of Naamah, did what Yahweh had commanded them to do. Then Job prayed for his friends, and Yahweh forgave them as Job asked him to do.

[10] After Job had prayed for his three friends, Yahweh healed him and made him wealthy again. Yahweh gave him twice as much wealth as he had before. [11] Then Job's family and friends came to his house and had a feast with him. All of his brothers and sisters came, and all of his former acquaintances also came. They cheered him up now that all of the troubles were over that Yahweh had allowed to happen to him. Each of them gave Job a valuable piece of silver and a gold earring.

[12] Yahweh blessed Job more in the second part of his life than he had blessed him in the first part of his life. Job acquired 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 pairs of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. [13] Job also had seven more sons and three more daughters. [14] He named the first daughter Jemimah. He named the second daughter Keziah. And he named the third daughter Keren Happuch. [15] Job's three daughters were the most beautiful women in the whole land of Uz. As their father, Job declared that his daughters would each receive an inheritance from him, just as their brothers would.

[16] After God restored Job's prosperity, he lived for 140 more years. His new children had children of their own. Then his grandchildren had children of their own, so Job was even able to get to know his great-grandchildren. [17] Job finally died after living a good long life.