



DAILY  
B I B L E G U I D E

# The Book of Job

*Days 156-167 of a Yearly Bible Reading Program*

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## Daily Bible Reading Plan

<b>Day</b>	<b>Passage</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Day 156	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 157	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 158	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 159	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 160	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 161	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 162	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 163	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 164	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 165	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 166	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 167	Job	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **Introduction to Hebrew Poetry**

The books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations are all written as Hebrew poetry. There are of course other portions of Scripture that contain poetry, but these are almost entirely that. In modern English, we use patterns of rhymes and accents to add artistic beauty to our poetry. In ancient Hebrew there is no rhyme or rhythm. The way I like to describe it is that it rhymes ideas. Each verse is either a couplet or triplet of ideas and imagery that enhances the meaning.

## Welcome to the Book of Job!

The Book of Job is one of the most daunting books in the Bible to approach. It is the story of the suffering of righteous Job and the search for meaning in it. Its beauty and effectiveness are more about the journey than the answer. Worldly wisdom and human understanding are put to the test through the perspective of Job's friends and Job proves them all false. It is only when God intervenes that new perspective is gained.

A few quick facts about Job:

- The author is unknown, but there is a tradition that it was written by Moses.
- We do not know exactly when this book was written. There is a lot of evidence for the events taking place during the times of the Patriarchs.
- The key verses are 19:25-26: "For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:"
- A brief outline:
  - Job's Suffering – Chapters 1-2
  - Conversation with Job's Friends – Chapters 3-37
  - God's Revelation – Chapter 38-42:6
  - Job's Blessing – 42:7-17
- Key events:
  - Job's Losses – Chapters 1-2
  - God's Answer - Chapter 38-42:6

## Chapter 1 Notes

In this chapter Job faces his first losses.

vs. 1-5 – Job (“persecuted”) lived in Uz, which is probably near Edom to the east of Israel. We are introduced to his sterling character and vast wealth. If there was ever a picture of blessed man, it was Job in these verses. We also note in vs. 5 that he acted as priest for his family. He was a spiritual man who faithfully served God.

vs. 6-12 – This is one of the strangest scenes in Scripture. We are transported to Heaven as the angels (sons of God) present themselves before the Lord. Among them is Satan, the old accuser of the brethren. He has been searching for a saint to attack and God points to Job. Satan says that if God would allow him to be attacked and loss his many blessing that Job would lose faith and curse God. But God, knowing the heart of man, knew that Job’s faith was stronger than the fires he was to pass through. To humiliate our adversary and to bring glory to Himself, God allows Satan to attack the possessions of Job but not the man himself.

vs. 13-19 – Blow after blow lands on poor Job. He loses his livestock to raiders and weather. A storm blows down the tent where his children had gathered, and all were killed. No man has ever lost so much so quickly.

vs. 20-22 – How would Job react to such loss? He mourns, humbles himself, and worships God. Though he lost all he possessed he maintain his steadfast faith in God. He did not question why. He trusted in God’s providential care. In Job’s reaction Satan’s accusations are proven false and God is glorified.

## Chapter 2 Notes

In this chapter Job's health is taken and his friends arrive.

vs. 1-6 – We have another scene in Heaven just as we had in 1:6-12. God again points out the faith of Job. Satan replies that if he could just ruin Job's health that Job would turn against God. God allows Satan to attack Job, only limiting him by saying that Job could not be killed. Again, God knew Job's heart and that his faith was strong enough to survive even this test. Satan would again be confounded and God glorified.

vs. 7-8 – The boils that Job is struck are reminiscent of those that struck the Egyptians in Exodus 9:9-11. Many commentators suggest that is Elephantiasis but that is only a guess. It could be something supernatural that defies medical diagnosis. Job sits in ashes, which is an ancient custom for mourning. The only relief he has is to scrape his sores with a pottery shard. Yet still his tongue refuses to curse God.

vs. 9-10 – As something of a final insult, now Job's wife turns on him. Perhaps Satan had spared her from direct attacks knowing she would aid in his cause.

vs. 11-13 – We meet the first of Job's four friends: Eliphaz ("God is his strength"), Bildad ("son of contention"), and Zophar ("sparrow"). A fourth named Elihu ("whose God is Jehovah") appears in Chapter 32. Their silence of 7 days could be in conjunction with a period of mourning (Genesis 50:10).

## Chapter 3 Notes

In this chapter Job begins to lament his existence.

vs. 1-10 – Job is the first to speak concerning his case. He does not attack or accuse God but begins by lamenting his birth. He wishes that he had never been born and that the anniversary of his conception to be marked as a cursed day. It is anguish and grief that are speaking with little substance here. He is not yet trying to understand his suffering.

vs. 11-23 – Since there is no profit in wishing he was not conceived, now he desires to have died in the womb or at birth. It is still a useless complaint and an expression of his grief.

vs. 24-26 – Now we come to Job trying to reason out the cause of his suffering. We must remember that he has not idea about the events in Chapters 1 and 2 concerning God and Satan. All he knows is the terrible things that have happened to him. Such losses were a concern that had lurked in his mind for some time before this. He does not know the cause, but still “trouble came”. He cannot understand why. We begin our journey now to try to discover the answer to that question, as his friends suggest their theories and Job responds to each.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 156

The Book of Job can be a daunting book to read. You need to pay careful attention to who is speaking and what they are saying. The arguments often build on each other as every person in the book tries to understand the reasons why saints may suffer. I want to say at the beginning that this book is more about the journey than the destination. We like clear, concise answers to our problems. Sometimes there are not any. In those cases, we must simply have faith in a God who is sovereign over all things. We do not always have to understand, but we should always trust that God has a plan.

## Hymn for Day 156

Our hymn today, “My Times Are in Thy Hand”, was written in 1824 by William Freeman Lloyd. It reflects Job’s faith in God midst the losses and suffering at the beginning of his book.

*My times are in Thy hand;  
My God, I wish them there;  
My life, my friends, my soul I leave  
Entirely to Thy care.*

*My times are in Thy hand;  
Whatever they may be;  
Pleasing or painful, dark or bright,  
As best may seem to Thee.*

*My times are in Thy hand;  
Why should I doubt or fear?  
My Father’s hand will never cause  
His child a needless tear.*

*My times are in Thy hand,  
Jesus, the crucified!  
Those hands my cruel sins had pierced  
Are now my guard and guide.*

*My times are in Thy hand,  
Jesus, my advocate:  
Nor shall Thine hand be stretched in vain,  
For me to supplicate.*

*My times are in Thy hand,  
I'll always trust in Thee;  
And, after death, at Thy right hand  
I shall forever be.*

## Chapter 4 Notes

In this chapter Eliphaz begins his case against Job.

vs. 1-5 – Eliphaz begins by accusing Job of inconsistency and weakness. He points to Job former pious actions and cannot reconcile his suffering with them. Should he not have been stronger in the day of adversity? Why had the one that had been a pillar of support for so many crumbled under the weight of his own affliction?

vs. 6-11 – Eliphaz accuses Job of hypocrisy. His argument is based on the assumption that the innocent would be blessed by God and not punished like Job had been. Therefore, Job must not be innocent. It is the principle of Numbers 32:23 that your sin will eventually find you out.

vs. 12-21 – Eliphaz appeals to a vision in which reinforced the idea that man could not be as holy or even holier than God. This is at its core a true statement – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23). The problem is the assumption that follows from it: that all suffering is directly as result of personal sin. Yes, there are wages of sin that are spiritual and eternal. Yes, we can trace all problems in our world back to the effects of sin. However, the logic Eliphaz is uses fails when taken to its logical limit. If it were true that only the righteous avoided suffering, we would all still suffer because none are truly righteous. His version of assigning guilty is not the same as used by God. Nor does it reflect that God may exercise grace and mercy.

## Chapter 5 Notes

In this chapter Eliphaz continues his accusation against Job.

vs. 1-16 – Eliphaz appeals to his observations and experience which both show that God's wrath is only poured out on the wicked. The righteous, even the righteous poor, God will uphold. The insinuation is that Job's suffering must be caused by unrighteousness in his life.

vs. 17-27 – One of the difficult things about dealing with the words of Job's friends is that oftentimes they are not wholly wrong. Here Eliphaz calls upon Job to confess his sins, willingly endure the chastening of the Lord, and then enjoy his restoration after his purging. After all, he has concluded, the only reason that Job is suffering is because God is reproving him of his sin. Therefore, Job should exorcise the sin and submit to God's correction. This would be sound advice if it were true that Job's sin was the cause of his suffering. It was not and this defied the practical experience and observation of Eliphaz.

## Chapter 6 Notes

In this chapter Job begins his defense against Eliphaz.

vs. 1-7 – Job begins his defense against Eliphaz’s charges by wishing they were true! If only his sin was the cause of his suffering. Then he could confess and repent in order to find restoration with God. Job’s suffering does not follow the logic of Eliphaz, who presumes that suffering only comes because of sin. Job knows his innocence.

vs. 8-13 – Job adds to his lament from Chapter 3. His desire is for his suffering to end. If that means death, so be it. It would be better, he decides, to be in Heaven removed from earth’s heartaches than to endure his state. It is a very dark place to be in such despair. If Job has a sin in this book, it is first detected in vs. 10 when he says, “I have not”. Here is the first suggestion of self-righteousness in justifying himself. This will become more developed as the book progresses.

vs. 14-30 – Job now responds with a critique of his friends’ actions. How had they helped Job? They had offered no comfort, no aid, no consolation. What they brought to Job was more heartache. In vs. 15 he compares them to the seasonal streams of the Promised Land, called wadis. There is a riverbed there, but the water only flows occasionally. Imagine the relief of a traveler in that region at seeing signs of water to parch their thirst, but the disappointment at finding now relief there. That is how his friends have acted to him, showing signs of comfort but failing to deliver it.

## Chapter 7 Notes

In this chapter Job continues his defense against Eliphaz.

vs. 1-7 – Job is given in to despair and hopelessness. He longs for relief or even the sign of its coming. Even sleeping, which comes with the promise of a new day, does not alleviate his suffering. He esteems himself to not be punished by God but forsaken by him.

vs. 8-21 – Here Job ceases from addressing Eliphaz directly and speaks directly to God. He is complaining about his suffering, accusing God of targeting him. In vs. 14 he confesses that, like Eliphaz, he has had dreams, too. But his dreams are nightmares which fail to offer answers or relief. He had enjoyed the goodness and favor of God, but failed to understand why his suffering, which he too deems to be judgment, has fallen on him. In vs. 20 he makes an empty statement of confession. It is not specific. He is confessing ignorance and assuming he has done something wrong. The problem for him is that in his empty confession has brought no relief. If Job had sinned and it was the cause of his suffering, He could have confessed and repented to bring restoration with God. But how can he repent when he does know what sin to repent of from? It is a futile and empty expression.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 157

It is quite tempting when defending ourselves from attack or accusation. Job falls into that trap. Most times it is far better to allow God to handle the situation. He will reward and reveal the right in His time.

### Hymn for Day 157

Our hymn today appears in a 1761 songbook titled “Urania” that was edited by James Lyon. It is presented under the heading “An Anthem taken from the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Job”. Why did I choose it? I think it is fascinating that someone took the time to write such a text.

*Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth,  
are not his days also as the days of an hireling?  
I'm made to possess months of vanity,  
and worrisome nights are appointed to me,  
And worrisome nights are appointed to me,  
And worrisome nights are appointed to me.*

*When I lie down, when I lie down,  
I say, when shall I arise and the night begone?  
I'm full of tosing to and fro,  
unto the dawning of the day.  
When I lie down, when I lie down,  
I say, when shall I arise and the night begone?  
I'm full of tosing to and fro,  
unto the dawning of the day.*

*My flesh is cloth'd with worms and clods of dust.  
My skin is broken and become loathsome.  
I loathe it. I would not live always,  
I would not live always,  
I would not live always,  
I would not live always.*

*Let me alone for my days are vanity,  
for my days are vanity.  
My days are swifter than a weavers shuttle  
and are spent without hope.*

*O remember that my life, my life is wind,  
mine eyes shall no more see good.  
As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,  
so he that goeth down to the grave  
shall come up no more:  
for now shall I sleep, shall sleep in the dust  
and thou shalt seek me in the morning,  
thou shalt seek me, but I shall not be.*

*O remember that my life, my life is wind,  
mine eyes shall no more see good.  
As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,  
so he that goeth down to the grave  
shall come up no more:  
for now shall I sleep, shall sleep in the dust  
and thou shalt seek me in the morning,  
thou shalt seek me, but I shall not be.*

## Chapter 8 Notes

In this chapter Bildad reasons that Job's suffering is because of his sin.

vs. 1-7 – Bildad makes the same basic accusation that Eliphaz did, that Job must have sinned to have caused his suffering. Bildad is incensed that Job would offer what he determined as empty excuses. Job's words were as empty as the wind that blows. That also went for his prayers, because it is reasoned that God would hear the prayer of the righteous and, obviously, he had not heard his prayers. It is a cruel accusation in vs. 4 that blames the deaths of Job's children on their sins, that they must have gotten what they deserved. Bildad's reasoning is that IF (used to begin vs. 4-6) Job had only done well then none of this would have befallen him.

vs. 8-10 – Next Bildad appeals to history and tradition. Did not their forefathers believe that suffering was caused by sin? How could Job go against the established wisdom that had been passed down to them?

vs. 11-22 – Bildad now appeals to past observation. He argues using cause and effect. God, they all knew, would punish the wicked in the end and reward the righteous. So, if suffering was the fate awaiting the wicked and Job was now suffering, the effect of his suffering must have been caused by his sin.

## Chapter 9 Notes

In this chapter Job begins his defense against Bildad.

vs. 1-10 – Job begins his defense against Bildad by exalting the greatness of God. No man can stand against God. He is ceding the argument made at the close of the previous chapter that God will ultimately punish the wicked and reward the righteous. Who could stop God from doing so? In vs. 9 there is a list of constellations of stars that Job says are proof of the power of God.

vs. 11-21 – After establishing the greatness of God, Job now appeals to His sovereignty. Man is nothing before the almighty God. We cannot stop Him or hinder Him in His works. He knows what is best and does it. Note in vs. 20 that Job says he cannot defend himself against God's will. Who is man to question God? To what higher authority could our case be appealed? Job proposes that it is sinful to even argue against the plans made by the Lord. God is incapable of wrongdoing or mistakes. If we argue we do not deserve what befalls us, we are guilty of self-righteousness. See I John 1:8-10.

vs. 22-24 – Job counters the argument that all suffering must be caused by sin. He does so by appealing to God's use of judgment against nations. The word "scourge" is used, likening the action to a lashing. The idea is that some disaster or calamity is sent against a nation and all, both righteous and unrighteous, suffer in it. If famine came, it was not as if the fields of the righteous were bountiful while those of the wicked were dry and bare. If God did not cause or allow such, then who did? Because of God's sovereignty it must be by Him.

vs. 25-35 – Job senses his own mortality, especially when compared to the vastness of God. Who was he to present a defense against God? How could he even do so? No amount of self-improvement would change the facts of his case. In vs. 33, he longs for a mediator to stand between him and God and argue on his behalf. In the Old Testament economy this was not fully revealed, but we know that Jesus Christ fulfills that very function for believers (I Timothy 2:15, I John 2:1-2).

## Chapter 10 Notes

In this chapter continues his defense against Bildad.

vs. 1-17 – Job presents an example of the defense he might offer God, though he has already admitted in the previous chapter such an endeavor is futile. He is speaking his frustration out loud. God knows that he is not wicked and yet he is suffering. He cannot understand it. Why would God attack one of His children? He was suffering, and all the evidence in his mind showed it was not linked to his righteousness or lack of it. God was doing it and it did not make sense to Job.

vs. 18-22 – Job again despairs that he had ever drawn the breath of life. Why should he suffer when he would go the way of mortal man into death? It would have been better to die in infancy than to live through this experience and face the same fate. Note his description of death. He does not anticipate torment or judgment. He knows that by his faith he would not see that end. But he does not see the joys of Heaven either. He is speaking her out of grief, refusing to acknowledge the blessed hope that awaits for the saints of God beyond death's door.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 158

It is the height of absurdity to think that we know more than God and that we can somehow convince Him of an error in His will. We here this often among the unchurched, but it creeps into our thinking sometimes. We could never win in an argument against God. Now, we may pray and present our pleas, but God still does exactly what He wills to do. We do not control God. He controls all things. We find peace when we surrender to His will and rest in His care.

## Hymn for Day 158

Our hymn today is a reworking of Job 9:2-10 by Isaac Watts. When it first appeared in 1709 it was entitled "God, Holy, Just, and Sovereign".

*How should the Sons of Adam's Race  
Be pure before their God?  
If he contend in Righteousness,  
We fall beneath his Rod.*

*To vindicate my Words and Thoughts,  
I'll make no more Pretence;  
Not one of all my thousand Faults  
Can bear a just Defence.*

*Strong in his Arm, his Heart is wise;  
What vain Presumers dare  
Against their Maker's Hand to rise,  
Or tempt th' unequal War?*

*Mountains, by his Almighty Wrath,  
From their old Seats are torn;  
He shakes the Earth from South to North,  
And all her Pillars mourn.*

*He bids the Sun forbear to rise;  
Th' obedient Sun forbears;  
His Hand with Sackcloth spreads the Skies,  
And seals up all the Stars.*

*He walks upon the stormy Sea;  
Flies on the stormy Wind;  
There's none can trace his wond'rous Way,  
Or his dark footsteps find.*

## Chapter 11 Notes

In this chapter Zophar makes his accusation against God.

vs. 1-6 – Zophar is irritated at Job's responses so far. He believes Job is self-righteous and that he deserves more suffering if he will not repent of his sins that caused his condition.

vs. 7-12 – Zophar next appeals to the greatness of God. This is a common theme in Job if you have not noticed. Job's friends like to talk about this, but then they turn around and limit God to a simple formula; to wit, that God sends suffering upon man because of his sin.

vs. 13-20 – Zophar exhorts Job to repent of his sin that must have caused his suffering. None of Job's friends can get past this. Zophar, though, gives it a positive for a change. If Job would only repent, then God would bless him again. God does truly bless Job again in the end of the book, but it is not like Zophar is presenting. The final words are once again a warning that God punishes the wicked, so Job must repent or give up all hope.

## Chapter 12 Notes

In this chapter Job responds to Zophar's accusations.

vs. 1-6 – Job responds with sarcasm. Were there ever such wise men as these friends of his? Who were they to treat him in such a condemning manner? Note in vs. 6 that he counters the claim Zophar made multiple times that the wicked simply do not prosper on this earth. Clearly, they do. It is easily proven.

vs. 7-25 – Job counters Zophar's claims about the greatness and sovereignty of God. Even the animals understand this. It is nothing to brag about having to learn on your own and claim to have discovered some great truth. God is so great, in Job's estimation, that He can and does subvert the expectations of human wisdom. Job's description of God's sovereignty is superior to that of Zophar.

## Chapter 13 Notes

In this chapter Job addresses the arguments made so far by his three friends.

vs. 1-5 – Job’s summary of the arguments made by his friends to this point is that it was all worthless and of no help to his situation. It would be better if they had not said anything at all.

vs. 6-13 – Job accuses his friends of speaking lies in the name of God. Job turns the tables on them and says that they would be the ones that God would judge for misrepresenting his truth. Their so-called wisdom was worthless.

vs. 14-21 – Job now pleads his case directly to God. He has the utmost faith in God and that his innocence will be proven, even if it is in eternity and not on this earth. Even if God took his life, still Job would trust Him. He makes two requests of God, that his suffering end and that he be no longer frightened of God.

vs. 22-28 – Job’s self-righteousness appears again as he continues to address God. He challenges God to answer him and to reveal his sin. This is far from the attitude of faithful submission to God’s sovereignty that Job has claimed. He claims he has been treated unfairly and suffered without need or cause.

## Chapter 14 Notes

In this chapter Job opines the frailty of human existence.

vs. 1-6 – Job describes the frailty of humanity correctly. Our lives are short and inconsequential, especially compared to the eternal God. Because of the infinite disparity between human and Deity, he states that man deserves God's mercy and pity.

vs. 7-12 – Building on the theme of human frailty deserving God's pity, Job points to the tree. The tree will be cut down yet sprout limbs and buds anew. Man has no such advantage. There is no return from death.

vs. 13-17 – Job again despairs for death. If only he would die to end this suffering, because he had faith that on the other side of death was eternal life. We see in vs. 14-15 one of the clearest declarations of life beyond the grave and of the resurrection.

vs. 18-22 – Job observes that all things in nature decay and die. Mountains crumble and stones erode. What hope did man have? His frailty would bring an end to his earthly existence, and before that he must suffer. What is man before the almighty God? What can man do if God turns against him? Those are the accusations Job is making against God to claim he was unjustly subjected to suffering.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 159

Job was a man just like us. He was not perfect, and neither were his friends. As they argue the causes of his suffering, there are mixtures of truth and error in their words. But every now and then some of the most sublime statements sparkle in the darkness. That is very true concerning 13:15 and 14:14-15. Job's imperfect faith was being put to the test. We have these reminders that it was a very strong faith, even if he was struggling with it in his present state. I point this out because we do the same. We all have that strange mixture of strength and weakness within us. Perfection is not for this world but the next. May our prayer be like that of the father seeking for Christ to heal his son in Mark 9:24, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

## Hymn for Day 159

Today's hymn, written by George P. Morris, often appears under the heading "The Grace Disarmed of Its Terrors". It weaves some of Job's words of despair about the frailty of human life with the blessed hope of the believer.

*Man dieth and wasteth away,  
And where is he?--hark! from the skies  
I hear a voice answer and say,  
The spirit of man never dies!  
His body, which came from the earth,  
Must mingle again with the sod;  
His soul, which in heaven had birth,  
Returns to the bosom of God.*

*No terror has death, or the grave,  
To those who believe in the Lord--  
Who know the Redeemer can save,  
And lean on the faith of his word:  
While ashes to ashes, and dust  
We give unto dust, in our gloom  
The light of salvation we trust,  
Which hangs like a lamp in the tomb.*

*O Lord God Almighty, to thee  
We turn as our solace above;  
The waters may fail from the sea,  
But never thy fountains of love:  
Oh, teach us thy will to obey,  
And sing with one heart and accord,--  
He gave, and he taketh away,  
And praised be the name of the Lord.*

## Chapter 15 Notes

In this chapter Eliphaz continues the arguments he made previously against Job.

vs. 1-6 – Eliphaz begins his next discourse by attacking Job’s responses. In his view Job condemned himself with his defensive statements. His words are as empty as the wind, and he failed to respect God.

vs. 7-16 – Eliphaz accuses Job of pride as he sarcastically asks if Job was older than the hills and had secret knowledge that no other human had. Note the great respect he pays to the aged in their culture. This is quite common in that region and at that time. The elderly were honored and the wisdom they had accumulated in their long years was unquestioned. That pride he sees in Job is also displayed against God. He sees Job as failing to honor God or being thankful for the help He had provided. What aid he thinks has been rendered I do not know, unless he thinks it is the attacks they had delivered against Job.

vs. 17-35 – Eliphaz’s next argument revolves around his estimation of the life and fate of the wicked. The picture he paints is not wholly correct but likely exaggerated for effect. He is insinuating that this is what Job is experiencing. He accuses Job of deceiving himself into believing he was not experiencing what he described.

## Chapter 16 Notes

In this chapter Job begins his response to Eliphaz.

vs. 1-5 – Job begins his response by noting how fruitless the words of his friends have been. Nothing they had said had caused any relief to Job.

vs. 6-14 – In vs. 6 he confesses that his own words have brought him no relief. After fourteen chapters of debate nothing has been accomplished other than identifying numerous things that are not the cause of Job's suffering. He then continues to describe how God was treating him, or in his estimation, mistreating him. He says that he is being hounded, hunted, forsaken, and doomed.

vs. 15-22 – Job describes his state in vivid terms. He cries out for justice and relief but finds none. His friends do not help him and even God seems deaf to his pleas for relief. We note yet another cry for mediator in vs. 21, foreshadowing the role of Christ.

## Chapter 17 Notes

In this chapter Job continues his response to Eliphaz.

vs. 1-12 – Job continues his description of his present state. Why God had treated him so he cannot understand, and his friends are definitely not helping the matter!

vs. 13-16 – What hope did Job have? The only relief he could look forward to was death, which he was more than willing to embrace. What good was hope if it were not realized and it was buried with him?

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 160

Just because a person has faith does not mean they are immune to the depths of despair. In the course of his arguments Job displays both. He has sublime trust in God one minute, then the next accuses God of abandoning him. The Bible displays a very real and honest view of humanity. The giants of the faith in its pages stumble and fall as often as they see great victories. It is comforting to see this because too often we allow ourselves to become overconfident in who we are. We think that because we are Christians we should not struggle with our confidence in God. When we do, we give into guilt. Now, I am not saying that doubts are good, but they are part of the human experience. We should give ourselves grace just as God does.

## Hymn for Day 160

Our hymn today is yet another by Charles Wesley. This one is based on Job 17:13 and is titled "Ready For My Earthen Bed".

*Ready for my earthen bed,  
Let me rest my fainting head,  
Welcome life's expected close,  
Sink in permanent repose.*

*Jesus' blood, to which I fly,  
Doth my conscience purify,  
Signs my weary soul's release,  
Bids me now depart in peace.*

*Thus do I my bed prepare;  
O how soft when Christ is there!  
Calm I lay my body down,  
Rise to an immortal crown.*

## Chapter 18 Notes

In this chapter Bildad accuses Job for the second time.

vs. 1-4 – Bildad rebukes Job for refusing to hear their words and fighting against what they saw as the truth.

vs. 5-21 – Bildad continues that common theme of the fate of the wicked. The wicked must necessarily fall in this life. It is pointed out that much of what he says is true, but his application of it to Job's case is where he is wrong. Job was righteous, though they could not reconcile this with his present suffering.

## Chapter 19 Notes

In this chapter Job responds to Bildad.

vs. 1-6 – Job counters Bildad’s attack by showing its futility. Job had not caused his own suffering because of wickedness. His present state was caused by God, which he could not understand why.

vs. 7-12 – Job again accuses God as the source of his troubles. God did not answer his prayers and was treating him like an enemy.

vs. 13-24 – Job describes his miserable state. He is friendless and alienated from all allies. He is a pariah to the world. His health is wrecked. Why were his friends joining God in attacking him?

vs. 25-27 – Here is a marvelous outburst of hope in the midst of Job’s despair. All may go against him on this earth, but one day he would stand justified before God. It is a great prophecy of the work of Christ, who would defeat death and become the redeemer Job longed for.

vs. 28-29 – Job concludes with a warning based on his sudden display of positivity in the previous verses. His friends should beware their persecution of an innocent lest God avenge him against them. It is difficult to determine how much of this newfound confidence is a product of his faith or his tendency toward self-righteousness.

## Chapter 20 Notes

In this chapter Zophar accuses Job for the second time.

vs. 1-3 – Zophar is moved to swift reply because of Job’s counterattack. He believes it is ludicrous that Job would claim the moral high ground in these conversations. Had they not tried to make Job see the error of his ways? Why should they then beware divine retribution when God was clearly punishing Job?

vs. 4-29 – Zophar begins yet another discussion of the history and fate of the wicked. No ounce of pity, for which Job had requested in 19:21, is to be found in his attempt to make Job fit into the mold of the wicked and their punishment. He and his friends are so sure in their pronouncements that they never consider the possibility that Job could have been right.

## Chapter 21 Notes

In this chapter Job responds to Zophar.

vs. 1-6 – Job requests that his friends actually listen to his defense before coming to their conclusions. He had not sought their advice or aid, nor that of any man. His complaint was against God. He is confident that he will be proven right in time.

vs. 7-26 – Job counters the argument that has continually been made about the wicked suffering. He could point to many examples of wicked that prospered and seemed to have avoided God's wrath. Did that mean God was powerless against them? Absolutely not, as they were nothing before Him. Whether they prospered on earth or not, the grave and what lay beyond awaited them all. The wicked would face their reward, just not on this earth. Psalm 73 deals with this topic.

vs. 27-34 – Job concludes with the observation that all the wicked end the same in death. It does not matter if they prospered or if they suffered in this life. Ultimately, the grave took them all. God did punish the wicked because, as Paul writes in Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death." Therefore, Job surmises, it is illogical and unhelpful for his friends to base their arguments on case of the wicked in this life. So much of what they had said was untrue, unsound, and unfounded. Most of all, it was all unhelpful.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 161

One that is starkly missing thus far in Job is revelation. So far, almost every argument has been based on personal experience or observation. These are faulty at best, especially when dealing with the God Who transcends all understanding. This illustrates the importance of divine revelation, when God declares the absolute truth. This is why the Bible is so important. It is the sum of the knowledge God has revealed to us. It is the whole truth He knows we need, and much of it could not be known unless He revealed it. Trust in God's truth and not your own opinion whenever possible.

## Hymn for Day 161

Our hymn today is by Charles Wesley and first appeared in 1742. "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" shows the fulfilment of Job's hope in the coming Christ.

*I know that my Redeemer lives,  
And ever prays for me;  
A token of His love He gives,  
A pledge of liberty.*

*I find him lifting up my head,  
He brings salvation near,  
His presence makes me free indeed,  
And He will soon appear.*

*He wills that I should holy be,  
What can withstand His will?  
The counsel of His grace in me  
He surely shall fulfill.*

*Jesus, I hang upon Thy Word;  
I steadfastly believe  
Thou wilt return and claim me, Lord  
And to Thyself receive,*

*Joyful in hope, my spirit soars  
To meet Thee from above,  
Thy goodness thankfully adores;  
And sure I taste Thy love.*

*Thy love I soon expect to find,  
In all its depth and height;  
To comprehend the eternal mind,  
And grasp the Infinite.*

*When God is Mine and I am His,  
Of paradise possessed,  
I taste unutterable bliss,  
And everlasting rest.*

*The bliss of those that fully dwell,  
Fully in Thee believe,  
'Tis more than angel tongues can tell,  
Or angel minds conceive.*

*Thou only knowst, who didst obtain,  
And die to make it known;  
The great salvation now explain,  
And perfect us in one!*

## Chapter 22 Notes

In this chapter Eliphaz brings his third attempt to accuse Job.

vs. 1-5 – Eliphaz again concludes that Job is a sinner before God. Would it not please God if Job were innocent? Would God be judging him for his faith?

vs. 6-11 – Eliphaz now accuses Job of specific wickedness. He had defrauded people in business, failed to show compassion to the needy, and abused the widows and orphans among them. There are many references to these crimes in Scripture illustrating how deplorable a man had to be to engage in them.

vs. 12-20 – Eliphaz appeals to God's omniscience and shifts a discussion once again of the wicked and their fate. He is implying of course that God knew Job was a sinner and that is why he was being made to suffer. Note in vs. 18 that he turns Job's phrase in 21:16 against him.

vs. 21-30 – Eliphaz concludes his discourse with an appeal to Job that he would come to his senses and repent to stop his suffering. Part of this is honestly a beautiful section describing the blessings of God upon those that repent from sin. It seems strange to find it among so many condemning words.

## Chapter 23 Notes

In this chapter Job begins his response to Eliphaz.

vs. 1-9 – Job opens his defense by building off Eliphaz’s closing description of God’s blessing on those that repent. Job wishes he could do that! If he only could find God to argue his case before Him, then he believes the matter could be set straight.

vs. 10-17 – This section begins with one of my favorite phrases in the book: “when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold”. Job displays in these verses a mixture of hope and doubt. He believes himself innocent, but he cannot understand why God has treated him so. Note also in vs. 11-12 that Job’s defense he makes to his friends is somewhat self-righteous. He had never sinned? It is over the top. Most reactions become overreactions. That is what Job is doing. He is partly right, but he goes too far and the statement becomes false.

## Chapter 24 Notes

In this chapter continues his defense against Eliphaz.

vs. 1-12 – Job leaves his personal case and again debates God’s overall dealings with mankind. He notes the wickedness that exists, and it appears that God does nothing to prevent or stop it. He is questioning why his case was is so special that God could not ignore it and had to inflict pain upon him. If he truly was suffering for his sin, why weren’t the other sinners?

vs. 13-25 – Job appeals again to the state of the wicked. Not all of them suffer in this life, and regardless death claims them all in the end. He does not speak of punishment beyond the grave, only that they do not escape the grave. Job is so confident in his estimation of the true course of God’s dealing with the wicked that he challenges them to prove him wrong. It is a very bold statement that their continued arguments have forced him to take.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 162

One of my favorite songs is Ron Hamilton's "Rejoice in the Lord". I would include the lyrics but I am being careful with my song choices to respect copyrights. The chorus of that song is mostly a rewording of 23:10. He wrote that as he was fighting cancer which caused him to lose his eye. That verse and song are reminders that though all may not be pleasant, God is still working for our good. Remind anyone of Romans 8:28?

## Hymn for Day 162

Our hymn today is yet another by Isaac Watts. It appears in one of his early hymnals under the heading "God Incomprehensible and Sovereign". I think you will recognize the many allusions to our reading today.

*Can Creatures to Perfection find  
Th' eternal, uncreated Mind;  
Or can the largest Stretch of Thought  
Measure and search his Nature out!  
'Tis high as Heav'n, 'tis deep as Hell  
And what can mortals know or tell?  
His Glory spreads beyond the Sky,  
And all the shining Worlds on high.*

*But Man, vain Man, would fain be wise;  
Born like a wild young Colt, he flies  
Thro' all the Follies of his Mind,  
And smells, and snuffs the empty Wind.  
God is a King of Power unknown,  
Firm are the Orders of his Throne;  
If He resolve, who dares oppose,  
Or ask Him why or what He does!*

*He wounds the Heart, and He makes whole;  
He calms the Tempest of the Soul  
When He shuts up in long Despair,  
Who can remove the heavy Bar?  
He frowns, and Darkness veils the Moon,  
The fainting Sun grows dim at Noon;  
The Pillars of Heav'n's starry Roof  
Tremble and start at his Reproof.*

*He gave the vaulted Heav'n its Form,  
The crooked serpent, and the Worm;  
He breaks the Billows with his Breath,  
And smites the Sons of Pride to Death.  
These are a Portion of his Ways;  
But who shall dare describe his Face?  
Who can endure his Light? or stand  
To hear the Thunders of his Hand?*

## Chapter 25 Notes

In this chapter Bildad gives his third and final accusation against Job.

vs. 1-3 – Bildad ignores Job’s arguments and begins his final oration with a description of the might of God. God is being placed about as high as rhetorically possible.

vs. 4-6 – Bildad contrasts the might of God with the weakness of man. As high as he placed God in the opening verses, he places man that low on the other end of the scale. His purpose is to humble Job.

## Chapter 26 Notes

In this chapter Job offers his defense against Bildad.

vs. 1-4 – The opening words of Job’s response drip with sarcasm. While Bildad tried to humble Job, comparing the weakness of man with the vastness of God, Job asks more practical questions. Who is Bildad to lecture Job? What good has he done? God is just as much greater than Bildad and He is to Job.

vs. 5-14 – Job outdoes Bildad’s description of God’s greatness. He is God over the living and the dead. He created the universe. Nature is at His command. The conclusion in vs. 14 might be paraphrased to say that God’s greatness is beyond our understanding.

## Chapter 27 Notes

In this chapter begins his final defense against his friends' accusations. You will note that Zophar does not speak in the third round of speeches.

vs. 1-6 – Job begins his final words of defense by swearing in an oath before God that he was innocent before God and would maintain his righteousness. This oath

vs. 7-23 – Job describes the fate of the wicked once again. He states that even in their posterity they are being set up for judgment. They will not escape death. God will not have mercy upon them. Job seems to be acknowledging that though he may have suffered like some of the wicked on this earth, their ends are utterly different. His has faith in the blessed hope that awaits the child of God, which none of the unrighteous can taste.

## Chapter 28 Notes

In this chapter Job continues his final defense.

vs. 1-6 – Job gives an amazing description of mining and metallurgy in these verses. It begs for many questions that we do not know the answer to; such as, how he gained such intimate knowledge of these sciences. Why is this included here? It seems out of place from his previous arguments. The reason is to show the ingenuity of man and set a baseline for discussing things of great value.

vs. 7-22 – Job points out that animal life cannot touch the intelligence and ingenuity of man. He continues to describe the feats of mining. All that effort went into finding precious stones and metals, but there are greater treasures that man should seek after. He identifies these treasures as wisdom. Where was it to be found? He answers in the following section.

vs. 23-28 – Job shows that God is the source of all wisdom. Man's ways are vastly greater than those of animals, as he described earlier. God's ways, however, are infinitely greater than those of man. All the marvelous works imagined and accomplished by humans has no comparison with what God does effortlessly. God has the wonders and workings of the entire world in His hands. What did the almighty God reveal to man? It is something that man could not discover on his own. Wisdom is to fear the Lord. Understanding is to depart from evil.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 163

It is difficult to read Chapter 28 without thinking of a later figure who also wrote about wisdom, that of course being King Solomon. There are parallels to 28:28 in multiple verses in Proverbs, such as 1:7, 3:7, 8:4-5, 9:10, 13:14, and 16:17. Solomon comes to the same conclusion as Job in Ecclesiastes 12:13. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." If you need expert testimonials to understand the value and content of true wisdom, I would recommend you begin with these two men.

## Hymn for Day 163

Our hymn today was originally written in German by Johann Wilhelm Hey and translated into English by E.L. Jorgenson in 1921. "Can You Count the Stars?" echoes Job's descriptions of God's greatness, especially 26:7. That such an almighty God could be concerned with mankind is too marvelous to comprehend.

*Can you count the stars of evening  
That are shining in the sky?  
Can you count the clouds that daily  
Over all the world go by?  
God the Lord, who doth not slumber,  
Keepeth all the boundless number:  
But He careth more for thee,  
But He careth more for thee.*

*Can you count the birds that warble  
In the sunshine all the day?  
Can you count the little fishes  
That in sparkling waters play?  
God the Lord their number knoweth,  
For each one His care he showeth:  
Shall He not remember thee?  
Shall He not remember thee?*

*Can you count the many children  
In their little beds at night,  
Who with out a thought of sorrow  
Rise again at morning light?  
God the Lord, who dwells in heaven,  
Loving care to each has given:  
He has not forgotten thee,  
He has not forgotten thee.*

## Chapter 29 Notes

In this chapter Job defends himself by describing his past.

vs. 1-10 – Job opines for the days just recently passed were all seemed well and God’s hand of blessing was on his life. What he is stating is a true observation, but in using it in his defense he is slipping into his self-righteous tendency.

vs. 11-25 – Job describes his good works in his past. He is again defending himself from the accusations of his friends, but at the same time overreacting into a self-righteous portrayal of his life. His testimony here is more hyperbolic than humble. Part of this could be seen as a rhetorical device to set up the next chapter but given inclination toward self-righteousness we cannot rule it out as also a motivation.

## Chapter 30 Notes

In this chapter Job continues his defense by describing his present state.

vs. 1-19 – Job contrasts his state before to his present suffering. Once respected, he is now scorned. Once exalted, now even the lowest of people look down on him in derision. He is now in a hopeless state, humbled as low as any man has been.

vs. 20-31 – Job again accuses God of causing his misfortune. God would not hear his cry nor have mercy on his suffering. His righteousness and good works had been rewarded with loss and humiliation. Quickly I want to address the use of the word “dragon” in the KJV in vs. 29 and other places. First, you need to remember that ancient people did not have the meticulous classification system we have for animals. Their names are often descriptions and difficult for us to identify today as accurately as we like. Second, the Hebrew word *tannin* (Strong’s H8577) is a vague word applied to multiple creatures. Basically, it just means something like a monster, or as I like to describe it, those frightening things that go bump in the night. Many today say this word means jackal in this verse, which could be true but getting too exact robs the word of its power. Why use the word dragon? The etymology of the English word is from Latin *draconem* (huge serpent, dragon) which is from the Greek *drakon* (“serpent, giant seafish”). Some believe its Greek origin may be related to a verb meaning “I see”, referring to a creature’s bright eyes or “deadly glance”. So essentially, the classic etymological understanding of the word supports its use as a synonym for “monster”.

## Chapter 31 Notes

In this chapter Job concludes his defense against his friends.

vs. 1-12 – Job defends his character and record as being upright. He states specific sins such as impure thoughts (vs. 1) and adultery (vs. 9). While he is true in defending himself, there is a taint of self-righteousness to his words.

vs. 13-23 – One of the greatest sins in the ancient world was not to offer proper hospitality to others. Job had treated his servants well and had been generous to the needy.

vs. 24-34 – Job declares that he had not be entranced to wealth or had worshipped the sun and moon like others around him. He was hospitable and kind. He did not do these things to bury his sins under a pile of good works.

vs. 35-40 – Job again appeals for a mediator to hear his case. Let his record be compared with the accusations made against him. He is confident in his case that he was not suffering because of his sins. Of course, we have also noted that he does tend to let the sins of self-righteousness and pride to creep into his defense. These may taint his cause, but the end is still true. Job was a righteous man. God gives us that declaration back in the first book of the chapter. His friends accused him of suffering because of some supposed great sin. We know that is not the case. We have the first two chapters telling us what was happening behind the scenes, all which Job did not know. The earthly wisdom of his friends concluded that sin led to his suffering. He had no divine revelation (yet) to counter their case. He could only defend himself to them. He has done so and ceases speaking to them.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 164

We saw today that Job has a remarkable record of faithfulness to God before his time of suffering. I think he is largely arguing along the same lines as James Chapter 2. Did Job have faith? Yes, he did. How do we know? Because of his good works. Faith always bears fruit in the lives of believers. It is not the reason we have hope with God, but it is the expression of the hope.

## Hymn for Day 164

Our hymn today is yet another by the prolific pen of Charles Wesley. “O That I Were As Heretofore” is heavily based on Job 29 where Job is remembered his happier days before his suffering. Wesley shifts this to remembering the better days before backsliding spiritually.

*O that I were as heretofore,  
When warm in my first love!  
I only liv'd my Lord t' adore,  
And seek the things above.*

*Upon my head his candle shone,  
And lavish of his grace,  
With cords of love he drew me on,  
And half unveil'd his face.*

*Butter and honey did I eat,  
And lifted up on high,  
I saw the clouds beneath my feet,  
And rode upon the sky.*

*Far, far above all earthly things  
Triumphantly I rode;  
I soar'd to heav'n on eagles' wings,  
And found, and talk'd with God.*

*Where am I now, from what a height  
Of happiness cast down!  
The glory swallow'd up in night,  
And faded is the crown.*

*O God, thou art my home, my rest,  
For which I sigh in pain,  
How shall I 'scape into thy breast,  
My Eden how regain?*

## Chapter 32 Notes

In this chapter Elihu appears and begins his speech.

vs. 1-5 – This opening section of prose sets the stage for the final accusation against Job. We note in vs. 1 that the other friends have ceased from speaking because they could not convince Job that he was not righteous. Enter Elihu. He has not been mentioned heretofore, likely because of his youth (vs. 4). In these cultures, there is status that comes with age and the younger would keep silence while their elders spoke. He has observed the accusations and defenses between Job and his friends. He is now moved to speak after Job finished his defense. He believed Job is self-righteous (vs. 2) and that the friends condemned Job without proving his guilt (vs. 3, 5). His speech is often considered the most correct of any of the men in this book.

vs. 6-22 – Elihu begins by explaining his silence as he observed the back and forth between the others. He respected their age and experience, but he failed to see how that had added in their cases. His heart and mind are bursting with responses to his observations. The friends had failed to convince Job of his supposed sinfulness.

## Chapter 33 Notes

In this chapter Elihu begins deconstructing Job's arguments.

vs. 1-7 – Elihu begins to address Job in a kindly manner. He desires to be mediator that Job has looked for. He does so, humbly confessing his own humanity.

vs. 8-13 – Elihu has heard that accusations against Job and his defenses. His friends were convinced that he was guilty of gross sin yet could not prove it. Elihu moves beyond that and addresses the way Job has defended himself. He identifies Job's self-righteousness and calls him out for accusing God of mistreating him.

vs. 14-22 – Job had claimed that God had no purpose in his suffering nor revealed its reason. Elihu counters this by highlighting ways that God deals with man. The first is by special revelation in dreams and visions such as was common in those days. The second, that God used chastening to direct and correct man. This, he observes, is another subtler form of special revelation. It is the hand of God controlling the affairs of this world to guide His children to His will.

vs. 23-28 – Elihu shows yet a third way that God communicates to man, and that is through a third-party mediator. Some see this as an angel, and others as a person so specially used by God. This person appears by divine appointment and guides man to the truth.

vs. 29-33 – Elihu has effectively proven that God works with man in a myriad of ways. Job did not have to hear the voice of God directly. There were other means that God could and would guide him. To say that God was not working would be false. Could Job prove this claim false? No, he must remain silent in agreement with it.

## Chapter 34 Notes

In this chapter Elihu examines how Job defended himself.

vs. 1-4 – Elihu now addresses Job, his friends, on any other onlookers to hear his next words. He wants all to hear and understand his coming words.

vs. 5-30 – Elihu turns his attention to Job's defense and errors that he made. He points out Job's own claims that he was righteous and that he was being treated unfairly. He counters those statements by pointing God's character. God is not evil and is certainly righteous in all His doings. In fact, God's actions prove His righteousness.

vs. 31-37 – Elihu shows that much of Job's arguments have been based on ignorance. Instead of seeking wisdom or answers, Job had argued from silence. Why had God made him suffer? He did not know. Did he seek answers? Sort of. He spent much of the time refuting his friends' accusations of his sinfulness

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 165

Sometimes the people with the worst perspective in a debate are the one engaged in it. They get lost in the intellectual thrusts and parries of debate. Often it is an outside observer that has the best sense of what is actually occurring. Such is the case with Elihu. Having observed the back and forth between Job and his friends he comes in with a entirely different angle. The practical lesson here is one that is seen throughout Scripture: we benefit from seeking the counsel and input of others. That could be as simple as advice sought from wise friends or the exhorting of Christian brethren amongst themselves.

## Hymn for Day 165

Our hymn today is “Upheld My God, by Thine Own Hand”, written by John Needham. It appears in his 1768 Hymns Devotional and Moral under the heading “God, the preserver of men.” I hope that you identify the many references to Job in this work.

*Upheld my God, by thine own hand,  
Of grace the monument I stand:  
To thee unceasing thanks I owe,  
From whom my blessings constant flow.*

*Why did not the uncertain womb  
Which gave me life, provide my tomb?  
With thousands more I might have fled,  
Born in the number of the dead.*

*Why in the frequent dubious strife  
'Twixt threat'ning death and newborn life,  
Did I, weak babe, the shock sustain,  
And stand where millions have been slain.*

*'Tis thou, O Lord, didst keep my breath,  
And make me conq'ror over death:  
To thee the triumph I resign,  
And all the glory, Lord, be thine.*

*Guardian of men! thy gracious name  
My childhood and my youth pro-claim:  
'Midst death's thick flying darts, thy pow'r  
Has brought me safe unto this hour.*

*When sore temptations have beset,  
And hellish foes have spread their net,  
Protected by thy friendly care  
I have escaped the dang'rous snare.*

*O may thy goodness me inspire  
To do whate'er thou shalt require  
Then in new troubles I will flee,  
And find my refuge, Lord, in thee.*

## Chapter 35 Notes

In this chapter Elihu continues to examine Job's defenses.

vs. 1-8 – Elihu takes Job's former claim to its logical conclusion: if Job felt that he was mistreated by God, he was claiming greater righteousness than God. Elihu then proves that whether Job was righteous or not had no bearing on God. God was still God. God was not diminished in any way because of man's actions. Men affect themselves but God is not affected.

vs. 9-16 – Elihu next points to Job's claim that God would not hear him. He uses the illustration of people crying out to God in their oppression. Had these same people cried out to God when they were blessed and not oppressed? No. The complaint then is not that God did not hear, but that He did not do so according to man's expectations. It was in fact pride that caused man to assume that God would answer and move at his every call. God is a Person, not a robot. He does not have to obey our commands, nor should He. Not only is God then not obliged to answer man at his demand, but the sin of proud in which man makes the demand pushes God further away from answering.

## Chapter 36 Notes

In this chapter Elihu continues to examine Job's defenses.

vs. 1-7 - Elihu next defends God against Job's accusations made in his frustration. Surely, Elihu would be able to speak for God as he exalted Him against Job. It was a sin to accuse God of wrongdoing. God did not bless the wicked or curse the righteous. No, God exalted the righteous and established them forever.

vs. 8-18 – Elihu accuses Job of anger against God for his suffering. Did the righteous suffer? Yes, but God worked through it for their good. God guided and taught through chastisement. He accuses Job of not learning the assigned lesson yet, believing that God would restore blessing to him once he did. But as long as he held onto pride and anger that was not going to happen. In this, Elihu is not saying that Job suffered because of sin, but he was sinning for not trusting God and growing through his suffering.

vs. 19-21 – Elihu exhorts Job to repent of his sin and submit to God. He should not simply give up in despair.

vs. 22-33 – Elihu begins to use the object lesson of a storm. The existence and power of a storm proved the greatness of God. God could use the same storm to both bless and to judge; it both gave life and destroyed it. There is a subtle jab in vs. 33, as Elihu points out that even the animals understood the coming storm better than Job understood what was happening to him.

## Chapter 37 Notes

In this chapter Elihu closes his speech by showing the might of God and the feebleness of man.

vs. 1-5 – Elihu uses the illustration of the storm to show God’s power. Man cannot harness or even properly comprehend that power of a storm, and so it is that man cannot begin to grasp the might of God.

vs. 6-16 – Elihu broadens his comparison of God’s greatness to all sorts of weather: snow, frost, rain, whirlwinds, and more. All of this was controlled by God and beyond man’s feeble strength. As we see His greatness in nature and stand in awe of the might of God, so should Job stand before Him in the figurative storm that had engulfed him.

vs. 17-24 – Elihu ends with a flourish. He appeals to the image of the storm and weather he has used to illustrate God’s might. He then makes his striking conclusion in vs. 23: God is infinitely beyond mortal man in every way. In power, in wisdom, in righteousness – in every way! Men are to fear the mighty God who despises the pride of man. Thus concludes Elihu’s speech. He has taken a sledgehammer to the errors that had infiltrated Job’s thinking. He too blames Job’s sin for his state. Not for causing it, but in response to it. His words prepare the way for God to speak in the next chapter.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 166

Elihu is the first in this book to not see suffering only as detrimental. He clearly shows that God can use it for good purposes also. That is how amazing our God is. He can make blessings bloom even in the darkest of valleys. All things bend to His will, a will that is guaranteed to bring Him glory and to see all things work together for our good.

## Hymn for Day 166

Our hymn today has one of the most fascinating histories of any we have thus far highlighted. “Many and Great, O God” was written by Joseph Renville (1779-1846). The son of a French-Canadian father and a Dakota mother, he became an important bridge between the Native American and European worlds. He aided a mission at Lac qui Parle in Minnesota, helped translate the Bible into the Dakota language, and composed a few hymns also. One of those texts was adapted later by Philip Frazer into the form we have here. It echoes the description in our reading today of God’s greatness as revealed through nature.

*Many and great, O God, are Thy things,  
Maker of earth and sky;  
Thy hands have set the heavens with stars;  
Thy fingers spread the mountains and plains.  
Lo, at Thy Word the waters were formed;  
Deep seas obey Thy voice.*

*Grant unto us communion with Thee,  
Thou star abiding One;  
Come unto us and dwell with us;  
With Thee are found the gifts of life,  
Bless us with life that has no end,  
Eternal life with Thee.*

## Chapter 38 Notes

In this chapter God addresses Job and displays His might.

vs. 1-3 – Job had lamented that God had not answered him in 31:35. God has remained silent through the debates between Job and his friends. Now, He answers Job and calls him to account for his words. God speaking out of a cloud or whirlwind is a common theme, see Exodus 19:18, Numbers 9:15-16, I Kings 19:11, and Ezekiel 1:4. That mighty storm that Elihu had described previously is now before them and the thunder of it is the voice of God.

vs. 4-38 – God’s first message to Job is to reinforce His might and to humble Job. Who was a man like Job when compared to the almighty God? Did he create the world? Was he even there to witness it? Does he control the weather and uphold the world? Man is nothing compared to the infinite God. Note in vs. 31-32 that constellations are mentioned.

vs. 39-41 – God continues illustrating His power but shifts to the animal world. Did Job feed the lions and ravens? God did not just maintain the physical world; He personally cared for the life within it.

## Chapter 39 Notes

In this chapter God continues to display His might.

vs. 1-18 – God continues to display His through his care for the animal kingdom. Did Job feed these or cause them to give birth? Wild goats, donkeys, unicorns, and ostriches are used in this passage. Much like with “dragons” in 30:29, there is debate as to the identity of the *unicorn* (literally means “one horn”) in vs. 9. This is, like the dragon we dealt with before, not the mythological creature associated with that name today. In Hebrew it is called a *re'em* (Strong’s H7214), and it was translated in the Greek Septuagint as *monoceres* (literally means “one horn”). The three main theories about its identity are that it is a rhinoceros, a type of antelope, or an extinct cattle called aurochs. Personally, I am fine with either a rhinoceros or an aurochs. I have checked and either is historically plausible.

vs. 19-30 – God continues to display His through his care for the animal kingdom. Now He turns to horses, hawks, and eagles.

## Chapter 40 Notes

In this chapter God continues to display His might and challenges Job to match it.

vs. 1-2 – Now that God has established His infinite superiority over mortal men, He asks Job pointed if he though he could teach God anything.

vs. 3-5 – Job is utterly silenced before God’s majesty. He acknowledges his error and submits to hear God without attempting to make his case against Him.

vs. 6-14 – God has already established His greatness, now He challenges Job to do the same. He calls on Job to be as great as He is and to do the work that only He can do. It is a further humiliation of Job.

vs. 15-24 – God now appeals again to the animal kingdom by pointing to the *behemoth* (a transliteration of the Hebrew H930). Here again we have a creature that is difficult to positively identify. Some believe this to be an elephant or rhinoceros, if we are to be limited to creatures alive today. All the other descriptions made of animals in this book are very accurate with what we know of them. Frankly, this description does not quite fit any living beast today. I think it is very likely a dinosaur, which died out after Noah’s flood because the environment had changed so drastically (Reese’s Chronological Bible places Job about 650 years after the Flood). It is too deep of a conversation to have in this setting.

## Chapter 41 Notes

In this chapter God continues to display His might.

vs. 1-34 – God now points to another creature that is difficult to identify. *Leviathan* (transliteration of Strong's H3882) is used as an example of a beast too great for man to tame, yet God controls it with ease. It is sometimes identified as a crocodile, but once again we have trouble finding a living animal today that matches all of the descriptions. It is said, in part, to be captured by a hook like a fish (vs. 1), has a thick hide of scales (vs. 13-15), has sharp teeth (vs. 14), and lives along rivers (vs. 30). These could be a crocodile, but other details do not, such as: it frightens the mightiest of men (vs. 25), is king over other beasts (vs. 34), and breathes fire (vs. 18-21). I think this is a likely case for another animal that was alive in Job's day but extinct today, possibly another dinosaur.

## Chapter 42 Notes

In this chapter Job repents and God blesses him.

vs. 1-6 – Job’s attitude is changed after his encounter with God. He confesses the greatness of God and humbles himself before Him. He admits he spoke ignorantly out of pride. Now he humbly submits to God. He no longer requires explanation for what has happened. He no longer desires to present his defense before God. He repents of his sins he committed in reacting to the suffering sent by God. He now completely surrenders himself to God and mourns his sin.

vs. 7-9 – God now turns to Job’s three friends and directs them to repent and offer sacrifices to Him. There are two things of note here. First, that God places Job in a mediatorial position with his friends, requiring him to pray on their behalf to find forgiveness. Second, that Elihu is not numbered among them in the rebuke, likely because of all of them he had been the nearest to right and did not falsely accuse Job.

vs. 10-17 – God returns to blessing Job as soon as he prayed for his friends. He is not only restored to his previous state, but also graciously increased. His possessions doubled from the list in Chapter 1. He has another 10 children, the same number as he lost. We note the beautiful names given to the three daughters: Jemima (dove), Kezia (cassia plant), and Kerenhappuch (horn of beauty). Also noted is that in a time when property only passed down in inheritance to male descendants, the three daughters of Job are included in the division. He lives another 140 years, which some interpret to be a doubling of his age when the book began. He lives a blessed and peaceful life for the rest of his days.

## Devotional Thoughts for Day 167

At last we have come to the end of the Book of Job. It is a difficult book to read through and to study. It requires diligent effort and time meditating on its contents. I hope that you see how priceless this record is, even to us today. Life is hard. Bad things happen. Sometimes we act like Job's friends and think we have all the answers. Sometimes we are Job trying to grope our way through the darkest of nights in search of some hope or purpose in our circumstances. The message of the book is the closing chapters when God speaks. He is in control. He works for good, even when horrible things occur. Our best response to the trials of life are to seek refuge in Him and trust in His strengthening hand. We do not have to understand, we just have to have faith in the One who does.

## Hymn for Day 167

Our hymn today is "My God, My God, To Thee I Cry" by Charles Wesley. The final verses are clearly inspired by Job's confession in Chapter 42.

*My God, My God, To Thee I Cry,  
Thee Only Would I Know;  
Thy Purifying Blood Apply,  
And Wash Me White As Snow.*

*Touch Me, And Make The Leper Clean;  
Purge My Iniquity;  
Unless Thou Wash My Soul From Sin,  
I Have No Part In Thee.*

*But Art Thou Not Already Mine?  
Answer, If Mine Thou Art!  
Whisper Within, Thou Love Divine,  
And Cheer My Drooping Heart.*

*Tell Me Again My Peace Is Made,  
And Bid The Sinner Live;  
The Debt's Discharged, The Ransom's Paid,  
My Father Must Forgive.*

*Behold, For Me The Victim Bleeds,  
His Wounds Are Opened Wide;  
For Me The Blood Of Sprinkling Pleads,  
And Speaks Me Justified.*

*O Why Did I My Saviour Leave?  
So Soon Unfaithful Prove!  
How Could I Thy Good Spirit Grieve,  
And Sin Against Thy Love?*

*I Forced Thee First To Disappear,  
I Turned Thy Face Aside;  
Ah, Lord! If Thou Hadst Still Been Here,  
Thy Servant Had Not Died.*

*But O, How Soon Thy Wrath Is O'er,  
And Pardoning Love Takes Place!  
Assist Me, Saviour, To Adore  
The Riches Of Thy Grace.*

*O Could I Lose Myself In Thee,  
Thy Depth Of Mercy Prove,  
Thou Vast, Unfathomable Sea  
Of Unexhausted Love!*

*My Humbled Soul, When Thou Art Near,  
In Dust And Ashes Lies;  
How Shall A Sinful Worm Appear,  
Or Meet Thy Purer Eyes?*

*I Loathe Myself When God I See,  
And Into Nothing Fall;  
Content If Thou Exalted Be,  
And Christ Be In My All.*