

Introduction to Job

In several senses the book of Job is one of the most difficult in the Bible. First because it contains some great enigmas that only Deuteronomy 29:29 (*secret things belong to God*) can answer. Second, because God made it clear at the end of the book that Job said some things in his speeches that were incorrect. Like Pharaoh's words to Moses were just his own words, so also all the words of the three friends were their own words. Not even all Job's words were right. Job is an inspired book of uninspired words, or an inspired book of wrong answers:

*the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: "Who is this who **darkens counsel by words without knowledge?**" 38:1-2*

*Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said: "Shall the **one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God,** let him answer it." Then Job answered the LORD and said: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yes, twice, but I will proceed no further." Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: "Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me: "**Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?**" Job 40:1-8*

*Then Job answered the LORD and said: "I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore **I have uttered what I did not understand,** things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak; you said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.' "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore **I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.**" Job 42:1-6*

God accused and Job had admitted that he had uttered things that were wrong. Some of the things Job said "darken counsel by words without knowledge," "contend" and "rebuke" God, "annul God's judgment" and "condemn" God that "he might be justified." At the end, Job "abhors" himself and feels the need to "repent in dust and ashes." From this we are forced to conclude that there are some things in Job's words that are not to be taken as inspired Scripture. But Job's words for the most part are right compared to the words of the three friends

*Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because **you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.**" Job 42:8*

God strongly condemned the words of the three friends. They "have not spoken of Me what is right." This leaves the student in a difficult position. While the rest of the Bible is revealed to be inspired Scripture, the book of Job records exactly what they said (inspiration) but is clear that the inaccuracies were left in their words.

This requires us to be very careful. Things in the book of Job are much like the words of the Pharisees to Jesus. The Spirit accurately records what they said but makes it clear that they were false words. This is not the only book in the Bible where these things occur. We have the uninspired words of Cain in Genesis, of Pharaoh in Exodus, of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel and of Pilate and Herod in the gospels and Festus in the book of Acts. We also have many instances of the sins of the patriarchs and others recorded without comment. The only difference in Job is the length of the speeches, and that righteous Job makes some of these statements.

Job contains a narrative in the first two chapters. Then records the "speeches" or "debates" between Job and each of the three friends. The speeches are in Hebrew poetry which is why Job is one of the books of Poetry. At the end, Elihu spoke and then Jehovah addressed Job's words and Job "repents."

When Job Lived and who wrote the Book

We can only use deduction to answer the question who wrote the book or when Job lived and it doesn't take us very far toward the answers. Job had 10 adult children. This would put him at least in his fifties. Yet after his affliction he lived another one hundred and forty years. This means he lived at least to be 190 years old. This would place us somewhere around the time of Abraham. For by the time of Moses, man's life span had dropped to about 120. He functioned as a priest for his children and his three friends so it would be unlikely that the Law had been given on Sinai. We are fairly safe concluding Job lived in the Patriarchal age.

When and by whom the book was written is pure guesswork. Job himself, Elihu, Moses, Solomon, or a Jewish scribe have all been put forth. The truth is that there is no internal or external evidence of a compelling nature to rely upon. The arguments for each are interesting, but anyone put forth as the

author is only a guess. God didn't tell us so it is not important for us to know.

The book had an important place in the hearts of Israel. James described Job as a real person and cited the book concerning his perseverance.

Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord-- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. James 5:11

God also speaks of Job as a real person and as someone Jeremiah knew about.

"Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out My fury on it in blood, and cut off from it man and beast, 20 even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live," says the Lord God, "they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness." Ezek 14:19-20

In spite of the difficulties that must be overcome to gain a mastery of this book it is worth the effort! It is a book rich with truths about some very vital issues God's people must face.

Job's Lamentation	3:1-26		
Eliphaz' Words	4:1-21; 5:1-27;	15:1-35	22:1-30
Job Responds to Eliphaz	6:1-30; 7:1-21	16:1-22; 17:1-21	23:1-17; 24:1-24
Bildad's Words:	8:1-22;	18:1-21	25:1-6
Job Responds to Bildad	9:1-35; 10:1-22	19:1-29	26:1-14;
Zophar's Words:	11:1-20	20:1-29	
Job Responds to Zophar:	12:1-25; 13:1-28	21:1-34	
Job's Final Words	27-31		
Elihu Speaks	32:1-37:24		
Jehovah Speaks	38:1-40:2	40:6-41:34	42:7-8
Job Responds to Jehovah	40:3-5	42:1-6	

Job's Righteous Character:

God Himself revealed Job was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil Job 1:1; 1:8; 2:3;

These terms are important to understand by those who want to be viewed by God in this light.

blameless: perfect, complete, a) complete, perfect; one who lacks nothing in physical strength, beauty, etc. b) sound, wholesome; ... c) morally innocent, having integrity; one who is morally and ethically pure

upright: straight, upright, correct, right, a) straight, level, b) right, pleasing, correct, c) straightforward, just, upright, fitting, proper, d) uprightness, righteous, upright, e) what is upright (substantive)

fearing God: fearing, reverent, afraid, fearing; morally, reverent:

turning away from evil: to turn aside, to depart 1) to turn in unto, 2) to depart from way, to 1) bad, evil, a) disagreeable, malignant... unpleasant..(giving pain, unhappiness, misery)... displeasing... (hurtful)... unkind (vicious in disposition), j)bad, evil, wicked(ethically) 1)in general, of persons, of thoughts 2) deeds, actions...

Job 23:11-12

*My foot has held fast to His path
Not departed from the commands of His lips*

*Kept His way and not turned aside
Treasured His words more than necessary food.*

Job 29:12-17

*I delivered the poor who cried for help
I made the widows heart sing for joy.
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
I was a father to the poor,
I broke the fangs of the wicked,*

*and the orphan who had no helper
I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame.
searched out the case that I did not know.
and plucked the victim from his teeth.*

Job 31:1-40

1 *made a covenant with my eyes; not to look on a young woman?*
5 *If I have walked with falsehood, or if my foot has hastened to deceit,*
7 *If my step has turned from the way, or my heart walked after my eyes, or if any spot adheres to my hands,*

9 If my heart has been enticed by a woman, or if I have lurked at my neighbor's door,
 13 If I have despised the cause of my male or female servant when they complained against me,
 16 If I have kept the poor from their desire, or caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
 17 Or eaten my morsel by myself, so that the fatherless may not eat of it
 18 (But from my youth I reared him as a father, and from my mother's womb I guided the widow)
 19 If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, or any poor man without covering;
 24 If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, "You are my confidence";
 25 If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gained much;
 26 If I have observed the sun when it shines, or the moon moving in brightness,
 27 So that my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand;
 28 This also would be an iniquity worthy of judgment, for I would have denied God who is above.
 29 If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me, or lifted myself up when evil found him
 30 (Indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin by asking for a curse on his soul);
 32 (But no sojourner had to lodge in the street, for I have opened my doors to the traveler);
 33 If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom,
 34 Because I feared the great multitude, and dreaded the contempt of families, so that I kept silence
 and did not go out of the door--
 39 If I have eaten its fruit without money, or caused its owners to lose their lives;

What is seen above is what God saw in Job that made him blameless and righteous. He loved God and man.

Job's suffering and grief.

Satan's first slander of Job's character centered on his possessions and family. When God gave him the right to take these things from Job, he also gave him full control over how he took them.

So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. Job 1:12

There was no mercy, not only did he lose everything, but he lost them rapidly and with different methods to make it more difficult to comprehend and deal with:

7000 sheep	<i>The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I alone have escaped to tell you! <u>1:16</u></i>
3000 camels	<i>The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them and killed the servants with the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you! <u>1:17</u></i>
500 yoke(1000) oxen	<i>the Sabeans raided and took them, have killed the servants <u>1:14-15</u></i>
500 female donkeys	<i>with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you! <u>1:14-15</u></i>
very many servants	<i>(all died either in the fire of God, Chaldean or Sabean raid) <u>1:14-18</u></i>
7 sons and 3 daughters	<i>Your sons and daughters were in their oldest brother's house," suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead. <u>1:18</u></i>

Job's reaction to his first losses is honorable and justified God's confidence.

Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord." 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong. Job 1:20-22

After his first loss, Satan is ready to try again. He reasons with God that the stakes were not high enough. He does not admit that he was wrong in his first statement, but seeks another chance:

So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. 5 "But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" 6 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life." Job 2:4-6

Again, God gives the devil the power to do what he wants, and allows Satan the right to choose the means of touching his bone and flesh. Again he chooses a horrible method.

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes. Job 2:7-8

Job then lost his wife's support and confidence.

Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips. Job 2:9-10

There must have been deep agony in Job's heart to be so alone in this illness and loss. But it did not

stop there. The devil then began a slow and agonizing torture of Job's mind. First by showing the false friendship of his "three" friends. Though they come to "comfort him" they soon change.

*Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place-- Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him. 12 And when they raised their eyes from afar, and **did not recognize him**, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven. 13 So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, **for they saw that his grief was very great.** Job 2:11-13*

Job's describes his first feelings after being struck down immediately after the three friends arrived:

*Why is light given to **him who is in misery**, and life to the **bitter of soul**, 21 Who **long for death**, but it does not come, and search for it more than hidden treasures; 22 Who rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave? 23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in? 24 **For my sighing comes before I eat, and my groanings pour out like water.** 25 **For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me**, and what I dreaded has happened to me. 26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; **I have no rest, for trouble comes.** Job 3:20-26*

It is very difficult to understand why Job's three friends took his speech so negatively. But they immediately begin to attack him. They are fully convinced that he is a wicked sinner and a hypocrite. They do not understand why he does not admit his sins and ask God to forgive him. Eliphaz is actually very rude and insulting(not to mention totally in the wrong).

*Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: 2 "If one attempts a word with you, will you become weary? But who can withhold himself from speaking? 3 Surely you have instructed many, and you have strengthened weak hands. 4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, and you have strengthened the feeble knees; 5 But now it comes upon you, and you are weary; it touches you, and you are troubled. 6 Is not your reverence your confidence? And the integrity of your ways your hope? 7 "Remember now, **who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright ever cut off?** 8 Even as I have seen, **those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same.** 9 By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of His anger they are consumed. Job 4:1-9*

"But as for me, I would seek God, and to God I would commit my cause-- Job 5:8

"Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. Job 5:17

You shall know that your tent is in peace; you shall visit your habitation and find nothing amiss. 25 You shall also know that your descendants shall be many, and your offspring like the grass of the earth. 26 You shall come to the grave at a full age, as a sheaf of grain ripens in its season. 27 Behold, this we have searched out; it is true. Hear it, and know for yourself." 5:24-27

He was speaking to Job as though Job is an unconverted sinner. As though Job does not know these things, as though Job has not already considered them. God had already informed us that Job was morally superior to all of them, yet they speak to him as though all he needs to do to fix this situation is repent of things he was already repenting of before any of this happened.

Then Job answered and said: 2 "Oh, that my grief were fully weighed, and my calamity laid with it on the scales! 3 For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea-- therefore my words have been rash. 4 For the arrows of the Almighty are within me; my spirit drinks in their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me. Job 6:1-4

To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. 15 My brothers have dealt deceitfully like a brook, like the streams of the brooks that pass away... 21 For now you are nothing, you see terror and are afraid. 22 Did I ever say, 'Bring something to me'? Or, 'Offer a bribe for me from your wealth'? 23 Or, 'Deliver me from the enemy's hand'? Or, 'Redeem me from the hand of oppressors'? 24 "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; cause me to understand wherein I have erred. 25 How forceful are right words! But what does your arguing prove? 26 Do you intend to rebuke my words, and the speeches of a desperate one, which are as wind? 27 Yes, you overwhelm the fatherless, and you undermine your friend. 28 Now therefore, be pleased to look at me; for I would never lie to your face. 29 Yield now, let there be no injustice! Yes, concede, my righteousness still stands! Job 6:14-15; 21-29

When I lie down, I say, 'When shall I arise, and the night be ended?' For I have had my fill of tossing till dawn. 5 My flesh is caked with worms and dust, my skin is cracked and breaks out afresh. 6 "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. Job 7:4-6

When I say, 'My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,' 14 Then You scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions, 15 So that my soul chooses strangling and death rather than my body. 16 I loathe my life; I would not live forever. Let me alone, for my days are but a breath. Job 7:13-16

The themes in the book of Job are now beginning to become clear. There is the slow revealing of Job's great suffering, there are the rebukes of his friends for what they are doing to him, and there is a gradual bitterness developing in Job's heart toward God. What Job has said is that He has done nothing to deserve what is happening to him (absolutely true), and he is suffering grievously. He wants to know if they intend to rebuke his words that were uttered under extreme duress. But then, at the end of chapter seven, we see the first crack in the armor.

Then You scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions... 19 How long? Will You not look away from me, and let me alone till I swallow my saliva? 20 Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, so that I am a burden to myself? 21 Why then do You not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust, and You will seek me diligently, but I will no longer be." Job 7:14, 19-21

The words of the Eliphaz about Job's getting the same treatment all the other wicked get have struck a nerve. Job begins to wrestle with this problem. Why is he getting this treatment? He knows it is not for his wicked conduct, but he is unsure of what other reason it could be. But then he begins to think that God is not being fair to him.

Bildad's treatment is no better:

*How long will you speak these things, and the words of your mouth be like a strong wind? 3 Does God subvert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice? 4 **If your sons have sinned against Him, he has cast them away for their transgression.** 5 **If you would earnestly seek God** and make your supplication to the Almighty, 6 **If you were pure and upright,** surely now **He would awake for you,** and prosper your rightful dwelling place. 7 Though your beginning was small, yet your latter end would increase abundantly. Job 8:2-7*

What is the implication of Bildad's speech? Job is getting exactly what he deserved because he is a sinner. He must still be in sin and refusing to repent or God would resolve this for him. The problem with this reasoning is that it is false to the core. Job was not guilty and did not deserve what he was receiving. **Satan is using the false teaching and the jealousy? envy? Or ...? of the three friends** at a time of severe emotional weakness on Job's part. Note how this increased his suffering:

For He crushes me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause. 18 He will not allow me to catch my breath, but fills me with bitterness. 19 If it is a matter of strength, indeed He is strong; and if of justice, who will appoint my day in court? Job 9:17-19

It is all one thing; therefore I say, 'He destroys the blameless and the wicked.' 23 If the scourge slays suddenly, he laughs at the plight of the innocent. 24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked. He covers the faces of its judges. If it is not He, who else could it be? Job 9:22-24

My soul loathes my life; I will give free course to my complaint, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. Job 10:1

Job has been undone by the false reasoning and attacks of his friends. He withstood Eliphaz speech, but began to slip, now his suffering has increased greatly with Bildad's affirmation that he has brought this on himself. He begins to question God's rule. Job should have thought longer about his question in 9:24.

Zophar's speech seems to imply that Job's answers so far ;have provoked him to anger or frustration. He is much harsher than the first two, and speaks for God about things he has no knowledge of. With friends like this, no one needs any enemies. One has to wonder what Job could have done to deserve this type of judgement and censure:

Should not the multitude of words be answered? And should a man full of talk be vindicated? 3 Should your empty talk make men hold their peace? And when you mock, should no one rebuke you? 4 For you have said, 'My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in your eyes.' 5 But oh, that God would speak, and open His lips against you, 6 That He would show you the secrets of wisdom! For they would double your prudence. Know therefore that God exacts from you less than your iniquity deserves. Job 11:2-6

After this speech, Job begins to regain his composure. After his initial rebuke at the folly of the first speech of each of his three friends, he warns them that they are forging lies, and are speaking wickedly and deceitfully for God. They are showing partiality and he fears for them if they continue on in this error. He begins to reign in his own feelings, toward the matter, regaining control once again:

"No doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you! 3 But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Indeed, who does not know such things as these? 4 "I am one mocked by his friends, who called on God, and He answered him, the just and blameless who is ridiculed. Job 12:2-4

"Behold, my eye has seen all this, my ear has heard and understood it. 2 What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you. 3 But I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. 4 But you forgers of lies, you are all worthless physicians. 5 Oh, that you would be silent, and it would be your

wisdom! 6 Now hear my reasoning, and heed the pleadings of my lips. 7 **Will you speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for Him?** 8 Will you **show partiality for Him? Will you contend for God? Will it be well when He searches you out? Or can you mock Him as one mocks a man?** 10 He will surely reprove you if you secretly show partiality... 12 Your platitudes are proverbs of ashes, your defenses are defenses of clay. Job 13:8-10, 12

Eliphaz does not heed Job's warning, but continues to rebuke and charge him falsely:

*"Should a wise man answer with empty knowledge, and fill himself with the east wind? 3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk, or by speeches with which he can do no good? 4 Yes, **you cast off fear**, and restrain prayer before God. 5 **For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty.** 6 **Your own mouth condemns you, and not I; yes, your own lips testify against you.*** Job 15:2-6

Why does your heart carry you away, and what do your eyes wink at, 13 That you turn your spirit against God, and let such words go out of your mouth? 14 "What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous?" Job 15:12-14

After Eliphaz speech, we see Job beginning to calm down and settle in. He realizes these men have nothing to offer him. Their fangs have now been removed and he simply speaks with them. He still makes some statements concerning God that were words without knowledge, but gone are the strong accusations.

*Then Job answered and said: 2 "I have heard many such things; **miserable comforters are you all!** 3 Shall words of wind have an end? Or what provokes you that you answer? 4 **I also could speak as you do**, if your soul were in my soul's place. I could **heap up words against you, and shake my head at you;** 5 **But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the comfort of my lips would relieve your grief.** 6 "Though I speak, my grief is not relieved; and if I remain silent, how am I eased? 12 I was at ease, but **He has shattered me;** he also **has taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces;** he has **set me up for His target,** 13 His archers surround me. **He pierces my heart and does not pity;** he pours out my gall on the ground. 14 **He breaks me with wound upon wound; he runs at me like a warrior.** 15 "I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, and laid my head in the dust. 16 **My face is flushed from weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death;** 17 Although no violence is in my hands, and my prayer is pure. 18 "O earth, do not cover my blood, and let my cry have no resting place! 19 Surely even now my witness is in heaven, and my evidence is on high. 20 **My friends scorn me;** my eyes pour out tears to God. 21 Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor! 22 For when a few years are finished, I shall go the way of no return." Job 16:1-6; 12-22*

*"But **He has made me a byword of the people, and I have become one in whose face men spit.** 7 **My eye has also grown dim because of sorrow, and all my members are like shadows.** 11 **My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.**" Job 17:6-7; 11*

Job now begins to speak of the emotional damage. The changed attitudes of the people. Suffering we do not often associate with his physical anguish. Bildad's speech continues on the same theme, first he insults Job's intelligence and spirituality, then goes on to once again affirm that only the wicked suffer. Job's answer continues to rebuke them for cruelty, but once again he speaks against God.

***How long will you torment my soul, and break me in pieces with words?** 3 **These ten times you have reproached me; you are not ashamed that you have wronged me.** 4 And if indeed I have erred, my error remains with me. 5 **If indeed you magnify yourselves against me, and plead my disgrace against me,** 6 **Know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net.** ... 13 "He has **removed my brothers far from me, and my acquaintances are completely estranged from me.** 14 **My relatives have failed, and my close friends have forgotten me.** 15 Those who dwell in my house, and **my maidservants, count me as a stranger;** I am an alien in their sight. 16 I call my servant, but he gives no answer; I beg him with my mouth. 17 **My breath is offensive to my wife, and I am loathsome to my own brothers.** 18 **Even young children despise me; I arise, and they speak against me.** 19 **All my close friends abhor me, and those whom I love have turned against me.** 20 **My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.** 21 "Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has struck me! 22 **Why do you persecute me as God does, and are not satisfied with my flesh?**" Job 19:2-6, 13-22*

Zophar's speech contains no direct insults of Job, but he continues the theme that he must have done something wrong. Job fights back by showing how completely false their reasoning is. There supposition that Job must have done something wrong is based upon the false premise that God gives good to all who serve Him and evil to those who do not. Job proves conclusively that all their words against him have been evil and wicked since their premise is false. In the midst of his reasoning and proving, he accuses them of preaching and teaching error.

Listen carefully to my speech, and let this be your consolation. 3 Bear with me that I may speak, and after I have spoken, keep mocking. ... "Look, I know your thoughts, and the schemes with which you would

wrong me. ... How then can you comfort me with empty words, since falsehood remains in your answers?"
Job 21:2-3, 27, 34

Eliphaz's final speech is deeply insulting to Job. He accuses him of base and wicked things that no one could even know without reading Job's mind.

Is it because of your fear of Him that He reproves you, and enters into judgment with you? 5 Is not your wickedness great, and your iniquity without end? 6 For you have taken pledges from your brother for no reason, and stripped the naked of their clothing. 7 You have not given the weary water to drink, and you have withheld bread from the hungry. ... 9 You have sent widows away empty, and the strength of the fatherless was crushed. 10 Therefore snares are all around you, and sudden fear troubles you, ... 21 'Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; Thereby good will come to you. 22 Receive, please, instruction from His mouth, and lay up His words in your heart. 23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; you will remove iniquity far from your tents... 27 You will make your prayer to Him, he will hear you, and you will pay your vows. Job 22:4-7; 9-10; 21-23, 27

None of the things Eliphaz states are true. They are wicked imaginations in his own heart. But they hurt Job, reminding him of the prayers he has uttered in vain. He begins his defense with his agonizing attempts to reach God. He also begins to defend his integrity and righteousness.

Even today my complaint is bitter; my hand is listless because of my groaning. 3 Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come to His seat! 4 I would present my case before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. 5 I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say to me. ... 8 "Look, I go forward, but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; Job 23:2-5, 8

Bildad's final speech contains nothing new and little that has anything pertinent. The three friends who came to comfort Job have ended up debating with him and accomplishing nothing. They have neither convinced or convicted him of wrongdoing. His final words describe his righteousness, and a few more of the things he has suffered.

How have you helped him who is without power? How have you saved the arm that has no strength? 3 How have you counseled one who has no wisdom? And how have you declared sound advice to many? Job 26:2-3

Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God watched over me; 3 When His lamp shone upon my head, and when by His light I walked through darkness; 4 Just as I was in the days of my prime, when the friendly counsel of God was over my tent; 5 When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were around me; 6 When my steps were bathed with cream, and the rock poured out rivers of oil for me! 7 "When I went out to the gate by the city, when I took my seat in the open square, 8 The young men saw me and hid, and the aged arose and stood; 9 The princes refrained from talking, and put their hand on their mouth; 10 The voice of nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth. 11 When the ear heard, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw, then it approved me; Job 29:2-11

But now they mock at me, men younger than I, whose fathers I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock.... 9 "And now I am their taunting song; yes, I am their byword. 10 They abhor me, they keep far from me; they do not hesitate to spit in my face. ... 16 "And now my soul is poured out because of my plight; the days of affliction take hold of me. 17 My bones are pierced in me at night, and my gnawing pains take no rest. 18 By great force my garment is disfigured; it binds me about as the collar of my coat. 19 He has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes. 20 "I cry out to You, but You do not answer me; I stand up, and You regard me. 21 But You have become cruel to me; with the strength of Your hand You oppose me. 22 26 But when I looked for good, evil came to me; and when I waited for light, then came darkness. 27 My heart is in turmoil and cannot rest; days of affliction confront me. 28 I go about mourning, but not in the sun; I stand up in the assembly and cry out for help. 29 I am a brother of jackals, and a companion of ostriches. 30 My skin grows black and falls from me; my bones burn with fever. Job 30:1, 9-10; 16-22; 26-30

Elihu's speech seems to be filled with both wisdom and caution, yet it appears at several points that he too falsely accuses Job of sinning to bring on his present circumstances, yet over all, if he had spoken first, Job may have been spared the terrible things he had spoken because of the resentment stirred by the three friends.

God speaks to Job:

1. God's initial opinion of Job at the beginning of the book:

that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? 1:8

there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him

without cause. Job 2:3-6

In all this Job did not sin with his lips. Job 2:10

Yet God's first statement to Job after speaking to his friends condemns his words:

Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. Job 38:2-3

What God was responding to:

May the day perish on which I was born, "Why did I not die at birth?" Why did I not perish when I came from the womb? Job 3:3-4, 11-12

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me; my spirit drinks in their poison; **the terrors of God are arrayed against me.** Job 6:4

When I say, 'My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,' 14 Then You scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions, ... 20 Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, so that I am a burden to myself? 21 Why then do You not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity? Job 7:13-14, 20

For He crushes me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause. Job 9:17

It is all one thing; therefore I say, 'He destroys the blameless and the wicked.' 23 If the scourge slays suddenly, he laughs at the plight of the innocent. 24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked. He covers the faces of its judges. If it is not He, who else could it be? Job 9:22-24

Know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net. 7 "If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard. If I cry aloud, there is no justice. 8 He has fenced up my way, so that I cannot pass; and He has set darkness in my paths. 9 He has stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. 10 He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; my hope He has uprooted like a tree. 11 He has also kindled His wrath against me, and He counts me as one of His enemies. 12 His troops come together and build up their road against me; they encamp all around my tent. Job 19:6-12

Why do you persecute me as God does, and are not satisfied with my flesh? Job 19:22

Even today my complaint is bitter; my hand is listless because of my groaning. 3 Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come to His seat! 4 I would present my case before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. 5 I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say to me. 6 Would He contend with me in His great power? No! But He would take note of me. 7 There the upright could reason with Him, and I would be delivered forever from my Judge. Job 23:2-7

Though this is not an exclusive list, the highlighted points are the type of things God is responding to. It is these words that God condemns with the statements:

Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. Job 38:2-3

Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said: 2 "Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it." Job 40:1-2

Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me: 8 "Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?" Job 40:7-8

Everything God poses to Job is calculated to manifest the following:

1. I will question you, and you shall answer Me.
2. Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him?
3. He who rebukes God, let him answer
4. Would you indeed annul My judgment?
5. Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?

The book ends when God condemns the three friends for their folly, and asks Job to mediate for them. He then blessed Job abundantly.

And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. "Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD commanded them; for the LORD had accepted Job. Job 42:7-9