

Arguments in the Book of Job

Synopsis of arguments in Job

Ch 3 – Job:

Makes no mention of any sin, implies God did this without cause.

- 1-9 Job curses his day
- 10-19 wishes were never born
- 20-25 why keep me alive now
- 26 this is not my fault

Ch 4-5 – Eliphaz:

Since no man is perfect, our trouble is obviously deserved, so repent

- 4.1-5 Surprised at Job's omission, and implication against God
- 6-10 assumes **Job must be guilty of something**
- 12-16 Eliphaz referring to God's revelation to him in dreams
- 17-21 affirms that **no man is righteous**
- 5.1-5 claims all agree that fools don't prosper
- 6-7 that **trouble never happens without cause**
- 8-16 counsels to seek God who can lift the humble and cast down the proud
- 17-26 says **just admit God is correcting you** and he will restore you
- 27 I only say this for your own good

Ch 6-7 – Job:

My complaint is justified, you don't point to any error, my affliction is your only case against me

- 1-3 you are overlooking the depth of my grief
- 4-5 the Almighty has turned against me, **my complaint is not without good reason**
- 6-7 Nobody likes poor arguments, but it's all I get from you
- 8-10 I wish God would finish with me, I'm certainly not ignoring his words
- 11-13 I am mortal, but not stupid
- 14-20 I expected pity, you disappoint like a dry brook to a desert traveler
- 21-23 you're afraid it might happen to you, but I didn't ask you for help
- 24-27 You don't point to any error, which I'm open to, but you criticize me for complaining only
- 28-30 You can tell I'm not lying, start over, be fair, it is about my reputation
- 7.1-11** man has one life, and mine is almost over, so all I can do is complain
- 12-19** so why focus on me? **Let me alone**, I'm just a man, why put men through trials?
- 20-21 So I'm a sinner, why not just pardon me? I'm almost gone anyway

Ch 8 – Bildad:

Your children must have sinned, he prospers the pure, and opposes the evil

- 1-3 you are way too bold, accusing God of being unfair
- 4-5 if God cast away your children for sin, just pray to him
- 6-7 if you are pure, he'll prosper you
- 8-10 this is not new doctrine
- 11-15 like the rush out of water, all that forget God don't last
- 16-19 and like the garden doesn't remember plants that die, others take their place
- 20-22 God will not fail a perfect man, nor help the evil

Ch 9-10 – Job:

I'm not worthy to argue my case, but if he'd help me, I'd try, and it seems a reasonable request

- 1-12 Of course, but how can a man ever defend himself? God is too wise and mighty to even approach.
- 13-15 If he's angry how can we dispute with him? I could only beg.
- 16-18 No opportunity to speak would matter anyway, for He already broke me without a cause,
- 19-21 not about my strength or judgment, but a time to plead, even though I don't even know myself
- 22-24 He treats good and bad alike, and the wicked run the world, if he didn't do that, who did?
- 25-28 I'm failing fast, and there is no bright side here, and I can't pretend I'm innocent
- 29-31 If I'm wicked, why waste time going through the motions? I'll still die wretched
- 32-33 I can't argue with him, and nobody else can either
- 34-10.1 but if he would just give me a break, I would try, but he doesn't
- 10.1-3 I'm weary, God, show me why you're against me. You made me, yet you treat the wicked better

4-7 are you judging me like men do? You know I'm not wicked, and that I'm helpless
8-13 you formed me, and gave me life, surely you had a reason
14-15 whether I sin or not, you see, you remember, I can't resist you
16-17 I'm confused, you see my affliction, but then it gets worse
18-22 I might as well have gone from the womb to the grave, just give me a little rest before it's over

Ch 11 – Zophar:

We might not know your sin, but God does, and he knows more than you, just repent

1-4 You're in a bad way so we have to be quiet? You say you're pure, so you have to be answered.
5-6 If only God would speak up about your sin, which is worse than you think.
7-10 You just can't understand God, and can't resist him
11-12 But God knows us, and sees our wickedness
13-19 so put away your wickedness, and you will be secure
20 but the wicked will not escape

Ch12-14 – Job:

The wicked do prosper, and if God won't tell me my sin, my vindication will have to come after this life

1-5 I know all that, but it is easy for you to despise me because you're at ease
6-10 but the wicked do prosper, and like everything else, it is God that does it
11-25 Just look around, God does unexpected things, both to wise and foolish, good and evil
13.1-3 I know as much as you know, and I'd be willing to meet with God (like you said)
4-5 but you have lied (about me), and you would have been wise to keep quiet
6-12 God doesn't approve your unfair judgments against me, and you should fear to do it
13-16 leave me alone, let me take my chances with him, even if he kills me, he'll vindicate me
17-19 I must make my case, because if I don't, I'll just die
20-22 I need two things from God, stop the affliction, and don't terrorize me, so we can talk
21-28 tell me my sins, and why you are against me
14.1-4 Man is so feeble and unclean, why focus on us? Why deal with our sin?
5-12 Men have one life, and it's over, so turn from us, let us live it out
13-15 Death is not permanent, my change will come, you will call me someday out of the grave
16-17 You know all about me, even my sin, and it will never go away
18-22 Even mountains disappear, so men pass away too, and only mourn while alive

Ch15 – Eliphaz:

Wicked never prosper, you admit to being a sinner, so why claim innocence?

1-6 your words are empty, and they also condemn you
7-10 we are as wise as you, and the ancients agree with us
11-13 you are underestimating how good God has been to you
14-16 no man is righteous (so claiming innocence here is foolish)
17-35 everyone has always known that the wicked suffer pain all their days, and never prosper

Ch16-17 – Job:

Your only argument against me is my affliction, my justification is in heaven

1-3 None of you are helping me, and you just won't stop talking.
4-5 What if the shoe were on the other foot?
6 Whether I speak or not I'm no better off.
7-8 Now God turns my company into accusers, using my affliction as witness against me
9-10 My enemies are eyeing me, ganging up on me
11-14 God has made me vulnerable to my enemies
15-17 I have humbled myself, but not because of injustice in mine hands
18-19 My only justification is in heaven,
20-21 My friends scorn me, they don't plead for me
22-17.1 I'm obviously going to die
17.2-7 Are you really mocking and provoking me? God must have kept you from understanding.
8-9 Good people are going to be amazed at this, and strengthened by it
10-16 But never mind, you don't have to listen to me, my life is over

Ch18 – Bildad:

Everyone knows the wicked get what they deserve in this life

1-4 Why do you insult us? Can you overturn rock solid logic?
5-21 Every evil thing happens to the wicked, their children die off, people are amazed at their end

Ch19 – Job:

My vindication is in God's eventual judgment, and you should fear that judgment for falsely accusing me

1-3 How long can this go on, reproaching me without shame

4-5 If I have erred, it's only in me, and you use my reproach as your only argument against me.

6-7 It was God that overthrew me, and I cry out, but I'm not heard.

8-12 God destroyed me on every side, and treats me like an enemy

13-18 My relatives, friends and even my wife avoid me, though I prayed for my children

19-22 My best friends hate me, have pity, God has touched me

23-27 My hope is now only in God's eventual judgment, which I know will come

28-29 But you should reconsider, and be afraid of that judgment yourselves.

Ch20 – Zophar:

Ok, sometimes the wicked prosper, but only briefly, and they're miserable the whole time

1-3 I hear your rebuke, but I have to answer

4-9 Triumphant of the wicked is short, they can prosper, but will eventually fade

10-22 Even in health and wealth the wicked cannot enjoy themselves

23-29 And sudden destruction is determined upon them

Ch21 – Job

Not true! The wicked often live long prosperous lives, his true judgment is after the grave.

1-6 Why should I not complain? you should be astonished and quiet

7-15 The wicked do prosper, become old, their children flourish, they don't need God

16-21 Of course I'm not arguing for them, God will eventually judge them, at least after death

22 God knows all, and judges all

23-26 But some die old, at ease and full, others die bitter and hungry, both die alike

27-30 You say, ask anyone, the wicked is reserved for destruction

31-34 So who repays him to his face? He goes to the grave like everyone else. So you're wrong.

Ch22 – Eliphaz:

Don't expect a judgment day to dispute with God, the wicked die before their time, for the righteous to see

1-4 man offers nothing to God

5-11 you are obviously a great sinner, which is why you are troubled by God

12-14 you foolishly think God can't see your hidden sins, but he sees

15-18 So God gave wicked men good things in the past, but then he cut them down before their time

19-20 the righteous see their destruction, and rejoice because they are preserved by God

21-30 so just return to God, you'll be rich and prosperous again

Ch23-24 – Job:

God would help us plead our case in judgment, the world is evil because God allows the wicked to live

1-7 if I could just speak to God, he would help me dispute with him, (there is a judgment day)

8-9 but I can't find him now, he's hiding from me

10-12 but he knows me, I will be vindicated, because I have not turned away from him

13-17 yet he is determined, can't be manipulated, and that makes me afraid of him

24.1-22 So, if God sees everything, why do the wicked persist? the world is given to evil

23-25 God allows the wicked to be in safety for a little while (which is why they continue)

Ch25 – Bildad:

There is no possibility of arguing against God's earthly judgments

1-3 there is no conflict in God's dominion, he controls everything

4-6 not even creation would argue with God, so how can a man pretend to justify himself to him

Ch 26-31 Job's conclusion:

God won't keep any of us from death, but if God will hear me, this is how I've lived, and if not, I deserve it

1-4 your claim (that there is no reasoning with God) is no help to the distressed

5-14 God is obviously amazing, but there is so much we still don't know about him

27.1-7 God vexed me unfairly, and you accuse me falsely, as the wicked might

8-10 though a hypocrite prosper, God will eventually take his soul, and then it is too late

11-23 of course, we all have seen that God opposes the wicked, they must get what they deserve

28.1-11 Notice God creates treasure in the earth, and then uncovers it so it will be found

12-14 But wisdom and understanding is deeply hidden

15-19 and yet is more valuable than all earth's treasures

20-28 only God can reveal it to us, and only the righteous can understand it
 29.1-25 God's secret was with me before, I lived according to it, and people could tell
 30.1-11 but now foolish people deride me, and now that God afflicted me, they let loose on me
 12-15 and even the youth use my calamity to defend their ways of self-destruction
 16-22 now the days of affliction are upon me, God opposes me, and doesn't hear me
 23-24 God appointed death, and will not save us from it though we cry out
 25-31 I was grieved for others who were troubled, then it came to me
 31.1-4 I was conscientious, knowing God punishes the wicked
 5-12 If I had not avoided adultery, then sure, let me be punished
 13-15 or if I had treated servants poorly,
 16-22 or if I had ignored the poor and orphan, let me be punished,
 23 (but I always feared God's punishment)
 24-25 If I had trusted in wealth, or thought my riches were my own doing
 26-28 or if I had denied God by worshiping the sun or moon, of course I should be punished,
 29-30 or if I had hated or cursed my enemies
 31-32 or if I had allowed others to envy me, without sharing with them
 33-34 or if I covered up my transgressions, afraid of confessing my errors when accused
 35-37 if only there were a record to prove my integrity)
 38-39 or if I have used others' goods without compensation, or even caused harm by negligence
 40 then let me be punished, that's all

Ch32-37 Elihu:

There is no judgment day to reason with God, who uses all earthly phenomena to deal with men in this life. And God has obviously already judged Job, if he would just have repented he would already be restored.

1-5 angry at Job, he was righteous in his own eyes, and at friends, because they had no answer
 6-22 I'm young, and Job hasn't disputed with me, but you all gave up, so I can't be silent anymore
 33.1- 3 Job, I have a lot to say about this, and it's very clear
 4-7 God made me, so pretend I'm God, and argue with me without fear
 8-11 you say you are innocent, God is just against you without reason
 12-13 but you are wrong, and God gives no account of his matters (there is no reasoning with him)
 14-18 God deals with men subtly, not openly, helping men avoid destruction
 19-22 God sends pain and sickness, even near death
 23-26 and then sends a messenger to correct him, and is gracious, and heals him
 27-30 if any man sin and confess, God delivers him, restores him to health
 31-33 hear me out, I'm trying to justify you
 34.1-6 listen all of you, we can tell Job is wrong by pure reason
 7-9 Job is like the wicked saying it makes no difference if you serve God
 10-15 but God can't do wickedness, he renders to every man what he deserves
 16-20 it isn't right to accuse God, who is most just, and not impressed even with princes
 21-23 God gives no cause for men to reason things out with him
 24-28 he deals with the wicked openly, and defends the poor and afflicted from them
 29-30 God deals with nations and individuals, so that the wicked don't reign
 31-32 the appropriate answer is that God is punishing me, so I'll stop sinning
 33-37 but Job's answers justify wicked men, and he not only sins, but adds rebellion by denying it
 35.1-3 Job thinks he is more righteous than God, and that there's no value in repenting
 4-8 but our sin and righteousness don't affect God, they only affect us
 9-13 sure some people are unjustly afflicted, but they don't seek the true God, so God doesn't listen
 14-16 you claim you can't see him, (but you don't need to) he has visited you in anger, so repent
 36.1-4 I'm speaking on God's behalf, I ascribe righteousness to God, he is obviously here
 5-10 God never fails the righteous, but punishes the wicked, and commands them to repent
 11-12 if they obey they prosper, but if not, they perish
 13-14 hypocrites don't cry out to him when he punishes them, so they die
 15-16 even so God would have delivered you, and you would already be restored
 17-20 and right now it's just wrath, but if he kills you it's over, so don't desire death
 21-25 and don't choose your sin over his punishment, don't accuse him, magnify his work
 26-33 God is great, and we don't know him, but he uses creation to judge people
 37.1-7 it is amazing to think about how God shows every man his work
 8-13 seasons and weather are caused by God for correction and mercy
 14-18 Job, you cannot reason with God who is perfect in knowledge
 19-24 no one can speak logically with God, he cannot be persuaded by even the wisest of us