

# Job's Initial Response to Zophar

## Job Chapter 12

*Job 12:1–2 And Job answered and said, <sup>2</sup>No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.*

**J**OB said in sarcasm what his three friends believed to be true—that their wisdom was rare and that wisdom would die with them. Job thus rebukes his friends, who had far higher opinions of themselves than was merited by the superficial wisdom they brought forth. They all spoke at length, but they did not help Job at all. It is also common with both the heathen and the hypocrite, that they foolishly think that the more they speak the greater chance they will have of being heard. *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking* (Matt. 6:7). An abundance of words, though, does not cause God to answer prayers, nor does it help to convince the guilty of sin.

*(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Matt. 6:7) Their much speaking.*—This thought was the root-evil of the worship of the heathen or the Pharisee. It gave to prayer a quantitative mechanical force, increased in proportion to the number of prayers offered. If fifty failed, a hundred might succeed.

If the Holy Spirit does not prompt reproof, then the emptiness of human correction will prohibit any true change in the sinner's heart. The Lord has also declared that the wisdom of this world, characterized by human thought, reason, and conjecture, will be brought to nothing. *Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the*

*wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid* (Isa. 29:14).

*Job 12:3 But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?*

Job's friends thought themselves superior in knowledge because their own lives had not been touched by adversity. Many a man may live his life unafflicted by Satan, unaware that the primary reason he has not been singled out for devilish attack is simply because he poses no real threat to the devil's kingdom. It was Job's fear and faith in God that prompted Satan's jealousy, and for this he sought Job's demise. Because Job sought genuine and sincere fellowship with the Lord and revered His holy name, Satan sought his destruction. Ultimately Job's righteous desire to stand uprightly before the Lord is what contributed to the devil's hate for him. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution* (II Tim. 3:12). Consider as well that when a man truly joins himself to God, he is no longer an innocent bystander in the war between God and Satan.

*Job 12:4 I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn.*

Just as Job was mocked by those around him, God's Word reveals that there will be an increase of mockers in the last days. *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts* (II Pet. 3:3). Sanballat, Tobiah,

and Geshem mocked Nehemiah and his construction and building of the walls in Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah was mocked when he preached for the Lord.<sup>2</sup> The apostles were mocked for supposedly drinking new wine when they were supernaturally filled with God's Holy Spirit<sup>3</sup> and spake in diverse tongues. Jesus' journey to the cross also began with mockery before His crucifixion.<sup>4</sup> Often the response of unbelievers is to mock those who do believe, even as they make mock of their own sins against God. *Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour* (Prov. 14:9).

(Benson Commentary, Prov. 14:9) . . . Sin deludes, or makes a mock of, fools, or sinners; that is, exposes them to shame and contempt . . .

**Job 12:5** *He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.*

This verse on the surface can be viewed as difficult to understand. The *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary* aids in its interpretation.

As the torch is to the wanderer, so Job to his friends. Once they gladly used his aid in their need; now they in prosperity mock him in his need.

Because Job's friends were safe and at ease, they could mock his words. Again, He who is not afflicted by adversity can easily think himself superior to those who are.

**Job 12:6–8** *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.*

<sup>7</sup>*But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:*

<sup>8</sup>*Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.*

Job speaks of robbers prospering and strong beasts prevailing on earth. He uses realities visible in nature to defend the fact that just because men are afflicted does not mean they are always sinners. Undergoing persecution is not sufficient evidence to prove the presence of sin.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Neh. 2:19 *But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?*

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 20:7 *O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.*

<sup>3</sup> Acts 2:13 *Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.*

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 27:29–31 *And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!<sup>30</sup> And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.<sup>31</sup> And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.*

<sup>5</sup> Mark 15:19–20 *And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.<sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.*

<sup>6</sup> Luke 22:63–64 *And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?*

<sup>7</sup> Luke 23:11–12 *And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.<sup>12</sup> And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.*

<sup>8</sup> Luke 23:36 *And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,*

<sup>9</sup> Ps. 25:16–18 *Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.<sup>17</sup> The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.<sup>18</sup> Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.*

<sup>10</sup> Ps. 34:19–20 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.<sup>20</sup> He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*

***Job 12:9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?***

By referencing creation and the creatures in it, Job rightly declares that all is under God's providence and as such, part of His divine will. Job's views his own life as no different than this.

*(Benson Commentary, Job 12:9) Who knoweth not in all these—Or, by all these brute creatures; that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this—That God, by his power and wisdom, hath created and ordered all that is in them, or that is done by and among them. Job meant in these verses to express his firm opinion that all animate and inanimate nature clearly bore testimony to the creating power and overruling providence of God: see Nehemiah 9:6.<sup>6</sup> This is the only time that we meet with the name Jehovah in all the discourses between Job and his friends. For God in that age was more known by the name of Shaddai, the Almighty.*

***Job 12:10 In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.***

The soul and breath of every living creature are in God's hands. All the earth is under the Lord's divine sovereignty. Ultimately the Lord can allow life to be taken as easy as it was given. No doubt, Job knew of Jehovah what men are woefully

ignorant of today, that *the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind* are in the hands and will of God, that all life is subject to divine will—reminding us as well that the soul who lives in eternity will do so only because God has willed it. If men were truly aware and actually believed this divine truth, that all life is in God's hands, then they would hold a much greater and reverential fear of Him.

*(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 12:10) In whose hand is the soul of every living thing—Margin, "Life." The margin is the more correct rendering. The idea is, that all are under the control of God. He gives life, and health, and happiness when he pleases, and when he chooses he takes them away. His sovereignty is manifested, says Job, in the inferior creation, or among the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven.*

*And the breath of all mankind—Margin, "Flesh of man." The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew. The meaning is, that man is subjected to the same laws as the rest of the creation. God is a sovereign, and the same great principles of administration may be seen in all his works.*

Few records reveal God's sovereignty over the earth more than the revelation given to Isaiah concerning Cyrus, the Persian king who returned the Babylonian Jews to their homeland. The record reveals that God anointed a non-Jew to carry out His will.<sup>7</sup>

*Matt. 24:9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.*

*II Cor. 4:8–9 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;*

*II Cor. 6:4–6 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, <sup>5</sup>In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;*

*<sup>6</sup>By pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,*

*6 Neh. 9:6 Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*

*7 Ezra 1:1–4 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, <sup>2</sup>Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. <sup>3</sup>Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place*

**Isaiah 45:1** *Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;*

(*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, Isa. 45:1–4) Cyrus is called God's anointed; he was designed and qualified for his great service by the counsel of God. The gates of Babylon which led to the river, were left open the night that Cyrus marched his army into the empty channel. The Lord went before him, giving entrance to the cities he besieged. He gave him also treasures, which had been hidden in secret places. The true God was to Cyrus an unknown God; yet God foreknew him; he called him by his name. The exact fulfilment of this must have shown Cyrus that Jehovah was the only true God, and that it was for the sake of Israel that he was prospered. In all the changes of states and kingdoms, God works out the good of his church.

**Isaiah 45:2** *I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:*

Cyrus was God's anointed, and his task was according to God's will. Therefore, the Lord said He would go before him and level all obstacles that could hinder his success. It was God's power that ensured Cyrus' victory. The Lord is sovereign, and what He has willed shall be done.

**Isaiah 45:3** *And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.*

*help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.*

8 Deut. 11:26–28 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; <sup>27</sup>A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: <sup>28</sup>And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

Deut. 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

By the Lord's blessing his people with hidden treasures, they would be brought to know that He was both with and for them. What a wonderful truth is hidden in this revelation, that by blessings, riches, and spiritual treasures the people of God are brought to know both the reality and generosity of Him, Who has called them! In truth, both blessings or curses are purposed to awaken men to the reality of God and His sovereignty and spiritual presence in the earth.<sup>8</sup>

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Isa. 45:3) *That thou mayest know*—That from these signal successes, and these favors of heaven, you may learn that Yahweh is the true God. This he would learn because he would see that he owed it to heaven (see the note at Isaiah 45:2); and because the prediction which God had made of his success would convince him that he was the true and only God.

**Job 12:11–13** *Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?*

<sup>12</sup> *With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.*

<sup>13</sup> *With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.*

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 12:13) *With him is wisdom*—Margin, correctly, "God." However much wisdom there may seem to be with aged men, yes the true wisdom—that which was supreme and worthy of the name—was to be found in God alone. The object of Job was to lead the thoughts up to God . . . He made all things; he sustains all things; he reverses the condition of people at his pleasure; he sets up whom he pleases, and when he chooses he casts them down. His works are contrary in many respects to what we should anticipate; and the sense of all is, that God was a holy and a righteous

sovereign, and that such were the reverses under his administration that we could not argue that he treated all according to their character on earth.

***Job 12:14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.***

What God tears down, man cannot through mere human strength build up again. What is true in life is equally true in death.

***Job 12:15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.***

God's power over the earth is vividly demonstrated by His power over the water above it, which can either make a land prosper or, if withheld, ruin it.

*(Pulpit Commentary, Job 12:15) Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up.* God, at his pleasure, causes great droughts, which are among the worst calamities that can happen. He withholdeth the blessed rain from heaven (Deuteronomy 11:17; 1 Kings 8:35; 1 Kings 17:1),<sup>9</sup> and the springs shrink, and the rivers dry up, and a fruitful land is turned into a desert, and famine stalks through the land, and men perish by thousands. Also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth; i.e. he causes floods and inundations. Once upon a time he overwhelmed the whole earth, and destroyed almost the entire race of mankind, by a deluge of an extraordinary character, which so fixed itself in the human consciousness, that traces of it are to be found in the traditions of almost all the various races of men. But, beside this great occasion, he also in ten

thousand other cases, causes, by means of floods, tremendous ruin and devastation, sweeping away crops and cattle, and even villages and cities, sometimes even "overturning the earth," causing lakes to burst, rivers to change their course, vast tracts of land to be permanently submerged, and the contour of coasts to be altered.

***Job 12:16 With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his.***

Though God did not create sin, He does maintain control over the extent that it can influence the earth. Thus, though the Lord did not make the deceiver, still there are bounds to which He will allow people to be deceived. In a similar manner, the Lord had set boundaries on the degree that Satan could through affliction harm and bring pain to Job.<sup>10</sup>

*(Benson Commentary, Job 12:16) The deceived and the deceiver are his—*Wholly subject to his disposal. He governs the deceiver, and sets bounds to his deceits, how far they shall extend: he also overrules all this to his own glory, and the accomplishment of his righteous designs of trying the good and punishing wicked men, by giving them up to believe lies. Yet God is not the author of any error or sin, but only the wise and holy governor of it.

***Job 12:17 He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.***

Human wisdom is no match for divine providence. The counselors and supposed wise men in the earth can be led to their own destruction as easily as can those who sit in judgement of others be revealed

<sup>9</sup> Deut. 11:17 *And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.*

<sup>1</sup> Kgs. 8:35 *When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:*

<sup>1</sup> Kgs. 17:1 *And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*  
<sup>10</sup> Job 1:12 *And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.*

Job 2:6 *And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.*

## *I Repent in Dust and Ashes*

as fools, the lesson being that neither the wisdom, position, or authority of man can prevent God's will from being accomplished on the earth.

***Job 12:18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.***

Though kings may bind themselves together to form confederacies and seek to increase their own power in the earth through unity, God can bind them and put them in bonds, just as they have others. This teaches us that the Lord rules all the earth, even those who think themselves its rulers.

***Job 12:19 He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.***

*(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 12:19) princes—rather, “priests,” as the Hebrew is rendered (Ps 99:6).<sup>11</sup> Even the sacred ministers of religion are not exempt from reverses and captivity.*

Just as God has power over nations and its political leaders, so does He hold the same power over those in religion. Hence, religion is not any more a safe haven from God's will being done than how divine will maintains sovereignty over governments and their leaders. The priest can be as easily led away, if it is God's will, as the ruler.

***Job 12:20 He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.***

*(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 12:20) He removeth away the speech of the trusty—Margin, “lip of the faithful.” “He takes away the lip,” that is, he takes away the power of giving safe counsel or good advice. The “trusty” or “faithful” here refer to those of age and experience, and on whose counsel men are*

accustomed to rely. The meaning here is, that their most sagacious anticipations are disappointed, their wisest schemes are foiled. They fail—in their calculations of the [course] of events, and the arrangements of Providence are such that they could not anticipate what was to occur.

*The understanding of the aged—To whom the young were accustomed to look up with deference and respect. The meaning here is, that they who were accustomed to give wise and sound advice, if left by God, give vain and foolish counsels.*

***Job 12:21 He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.***

No worldly prince or ruler can prevent the Lord from taking away his strength and ultimately making him completely powerless. If the Lord desires to bring shame to a man's life by removing him from all his previously held power, then nothing can prevent his fall from grace. Ultimately, every man is entirely vulnerable to having God's will carried out in his life. If God desires to lift a man up, He will. Or if God wishes to bring shame upon a man's plans, He will do this as well. The point of all these examples is to show that it is not men who rule the world, and the events that transpire in it, but God.

***Job 12:22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.***

*(Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Job 12:22) The meaning of Job 12:22 in this connection can only be, that there is nothing so finely spun out that God cannot make it visible. All secret plans of the wicked, all secret sins, and the deeds of the evil-doer though veiled in deep darkness, He bringeth before the tribunal of the world.*

<sup>11</sup> Ps. 99:6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

In the Book of Esther, Haman is a wonderful example of how God can see what is done in darkness and then bring it into the light. Haman's plot to destroy the Jews,<sup>12</sup> which he had planned in darkness, led to his own public hanging.<sup>13</sup> *For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform* (Ps. 21:11).

***Job 12:23 He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.***

God increases and enlarges nations as equally as He destroys them. He multiplies and spreads their influence in the earth, but if necessary, He will shrink them and take away their strength so that they must return and inhabit only their own lands.

***Job 12:24 He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.***

Just as God can touch the outside of a man, so He can also touch his understanding and reason. Nebuchadnezzar learned this when he was restored to reason after madness caused him to realize through his own personal experience that God reigns over all.<sup>14</sup> *And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me* (Dan. 4:34–36).

12 Esth. 3:6 *And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.*

13 Esth. 7:10 *So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.*

14 Dan. 4:25–35 *That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.*<sup>26</sup> *And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.*<sup>27</sup> *Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.*<sup>28</sup> *All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.*<sup>29</sup> *At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.*<sup>30</sup> *The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?*<sup>31</sup> *While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.*<sup>32</sup> *And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.*<sup>33</sup> *The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.*<sup>34</sup> *And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:*<sup>35</sup> *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*

**Job 12:25** *They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.*

During his conversion the apostle Paul was made blind for a season in order that he might be humbled and come to know the Lord's power over his life.<sup>15</sup> Both blindness and sight are manifestations of the Lord's divine power over men.<sup>16</sup> Thus as easily as the Lord can bring sight to the blind, so can he blind those with sight. The result, then, of removing vision from those who previously thought themselves untouchable is that they will be made to stagger like a drunken man.<sup>17</sup> One of the Lord's judgments for sin is to smite those who commit it with greater blindness and unsoundness of mind. *The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart* (Deut. 28:28).

(*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, Deut. 28:28) Wherever the sinner goes, the curse of God follows; wherever he is, it rests upon him.

**Job 13:1–2** *Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it. <sup>2</sup> What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you.*

Job reminds his friends that whatever they presumed to know of the Lord and His sovereignty in the earth, he knew equally, if not better. His friends had spoken of their understanding of divine providence; to this Job proclaims, *I am not inferior unto you.*

(*Benson Commentary*, Job 12:3) *But I have an understanding ... I am not inferior to you—* In these things; which he speaks, not in a way of boasting, but for the just vindication both of himself and of that cause of God, which, for the substance of it, he maintained rightly, as God himself attests, Job 42:6.<sup>18</sup> *Who knoweth not such things—* The truth is, neither you nor I have any reason to be puffed up with our knowledge of these things; for the most barbarous nations know that God is infinite in wisdom, and power, and justice.

For the second time Job utters these memorable words<sup>19</sup> as his friends had thought that their time and experience in the world had made them superior to him in wisdom. To this Job replies that there was nothing they spoke of God and his sovereignty over creation that he himself also was not acutely and keenly aware of. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar had assumed Job ignorant, when in fact he was even more knowledgeable than they. In reality they had introduced no

<sup>15</sup> Acts 9:8–9 *And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup>And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.*

Acts 22:11 *And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.*

<sup>16</sup> Acts 9:17–18 *And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. <sup>18</sup>And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.*

<sup>17</sup> Rom. 11:8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

II Kgs. 6:18 *And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.*

Ps. 69:23 *Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.*

Zeph. 1:17 *And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.*

Zech. 12:4 *In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.*

<sup>18</sup> Job 42:6 *Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*

<sup>19</sup> Job 12:3 *But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?*



new wisdom of God to Job that was not already commonly known, nor had they convinced Job of sin or revealed the true reason for his bondage. They had spoken much and had assumed themselves wiser than their friend, when in fact they were even more ignorant than him.

Because of time constraints, only Job's initial response is addressed here.

