

Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

2 "Should a multitude of words go unanswered,  
and a man full of talk be judged right?  
3 Should your babble silence men,  
and when you mock, shall no one shame you?  
4 For you say, 'My doctrine is pure,  
and I am clean in God's eyes.'  
5 But oh, that God would speak  
and open his lips to you,  
6 and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom!  
For he is manifold in understanding.  
Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.

7 "Can you find out the deep things of God?  
Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?  
8 It is higher than heaven—what can you do?  
Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?  
9 Its measure is longer than the earth  
and broader than the sea.  
10 If he passes through and imprisons  
and summons the court, who can turn him back?  
11 For he knows worthless men;  
when he sees iniquity, will he not consider it?  
12 But a stupid man will get understanding  
when a wild donkey's colt is born a man!  
13 "If you prepare your heart,  
you will stretch out your hands toward him.  
14 If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away,  
and let not injustice dwell in your tents.  
15 Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish;  
you will be secure and will not fear.  
16 You will forget your misery;  
you will remember it as waters that have passed away.  
17 And your life will be brighter than the noonday;  
its darkness will be like the morning.  
18 And you will feel secure, because there is hope;  
you will look around and take your rest in security.  
19 You will lie down, and none will make you afraid;  
many will court your favor.  
20 But the eyes of the wicked will fail;  
all way of escape will be lost to them,  
and their hope is to breathe their last."

## Ch11- Zophar 1<sup>st</sup> Speech

He is the least engaging and compassionate. All we see is cold disapproval.

### **You are self-righteous; you ought to get more than you deserve v2-6.**

In v2,3 Zophar essentially says in four ways, 'you ought to shut up and listen to me'.<sup>1</sup> You have a '*multitude of words*' v2 Job, meaning, you are saying much without saying anything at all. You speak '*babble*' v3. The word (in Isa16v6, Jer48v30) refers to the boasting of Moab, which is false. Zophar is saying that Job is boasting in his falseness of being innocent. He is '*full of talk*' v2, implying that even if Job was innocent before, his talk has now let him down. He has *mocked* v3 them, derided, and put them down.

Zophar is to the point, not quoting any exact words of Jobs, but carrying what he thinks is the sentiment of what he has said. He accuses Job of firstly, claiming to have 'pure doctrine' v4a, that is he is speaking the truth that he knows is true. That nothing is tainted in it, nothing is confused in it. And secondly, that he is 'clean in Gods eyes' v4b, that is, morally pure before even Gods searching eyes.

Part of the difficulty for Zophar and the friends, is making a difference between 'sin' and 'innocence', between 'blameless' and 'sinless'. Job maintains he has not done anything major to warrant this suffering. Zophar wants God to really speak to job.

He gives four words from God (as different to Jobs words) 'speak, his lips, tell, manifold' vv5-6. He wants God to give him the 'what for' v5-6 and correct Jobs supposed self-righteousness because he thinks Job is getting off lightly v6b. How someone can say this to Job who has lost everything is mind boggling but tells us something about Zophar himself and who he really thinks God is.

### **You are arrogant; you know nothing v7-12.**

See the extent of the double question v7, he asks if lowly Job can find out the deep things of God, the limits of what God is and can do? Going from the innermost heart of God (deep things), his mind, will and being, to the outer limits of his ability v7.

To understand the deep things, you would have to go higher than 'the heavens', deeper 'than Sheol', longer than 'the earth' and broader than 'the sea' v8-10. He is the 'Almighty, He is God' v7. Rightly said. But it doesn't mean Job is wrong in what he does understand. So, if God passes through town, imprisons someone and makes his judgement, who can deny that v10? He knows 'worthless men, in their 'iniquity' v11 and he can punish. Who are you to question God Job? Only when a donkey can be born as a man will you really understand Job, i.e. you are as stupid as a donkey Job v12! Harsh! The obvious implication is that, why are you complaining against God, he knows, he can judge, he sees your iniquity and that you are a worthless man, and you are getting better than you deserve.

### **You have sinned; you need to repent v13-20.**

This is the third such attempt by his friends (5v8; 8v5; 11v13-14) to tell Job to get right with God. And if he does, blessing will follow (5v17-26; 8v6-7; 11v15-19). You have sown destruction by sin Job, now sow repentance to bring life. If you direct, devote, prepare your heart; if you put your iniquity away, take it out of your heart and out of your home and lift your hands to God, really pray v13-14, 'surely then', you will be secure, without fear, have no darkness and know hope v15-19. Your misery will flow away like water under a bridge<sup>2</sup> v16. If not, you will not escape, and your only hope will be death v20. If Jobs problems have come by his great sin; this is true and right. But he is innocent is he not?

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<sup>1</sup> Ash p154

<sup>2</sup> Ash p156