

A collage-style illustration of a desert landscape. The scene is composed of layered, torn-paper-like elements. In the foreground, a person in dark, heavy robes sits on the ground, looking down. The ground is a mix of tan and brown tones with some sparse, dry vegetation and dark rocks. In the middle ground, there are rolling hills and mountains in shades of brown, tan, and dark blue. The background features a large, bright yellow sun in the upper center, with dark, stormy clouds and a lightning bolt on the right side. Several birds are flying in the sky. The overall style is textured and layered, with a mix of colors including tan, brown, dark blue, and yellow.

# THE BOOK OF JOB

SUFFERING & THE CHARACTER OF GOD

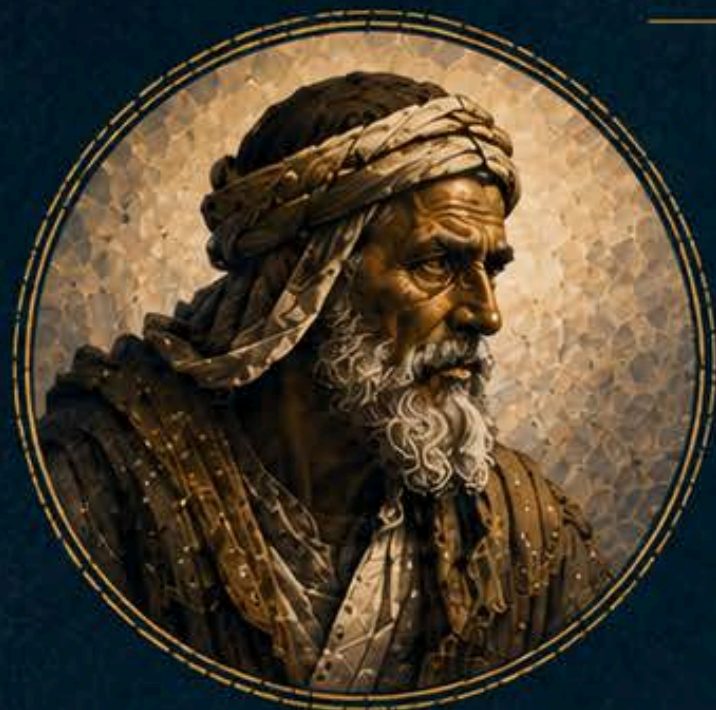
# JOB 3:3-6

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- 3 Let the day perish on which I was born,  
and the night that said,  
'A man is conceived.'
- 4 Let that day be darkness!  
May God above not seek it,  
nor light shine upon it.
- 5 Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.  
Let clouds dwell upon it;  
let the blackness of the day terrify it.
- 6 That night—let thick darkness seize it!  
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;  
let it not come into the number of the months.

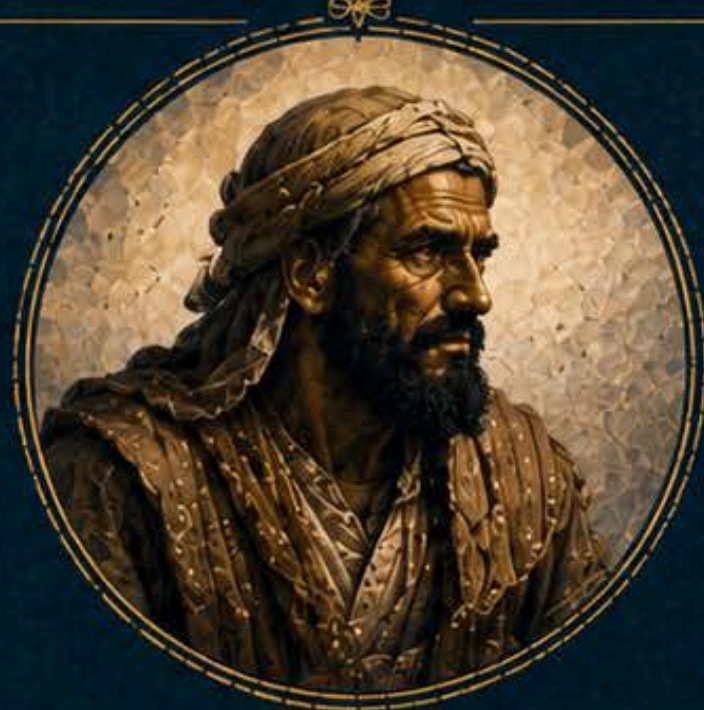
THE THREE FRIENDS OF

# JOB



ELIPHAZ

— THE TEMANITE —



BILDAD

— THE SHUHITE —



ZOPHAR

— THE NAAMATHITE —

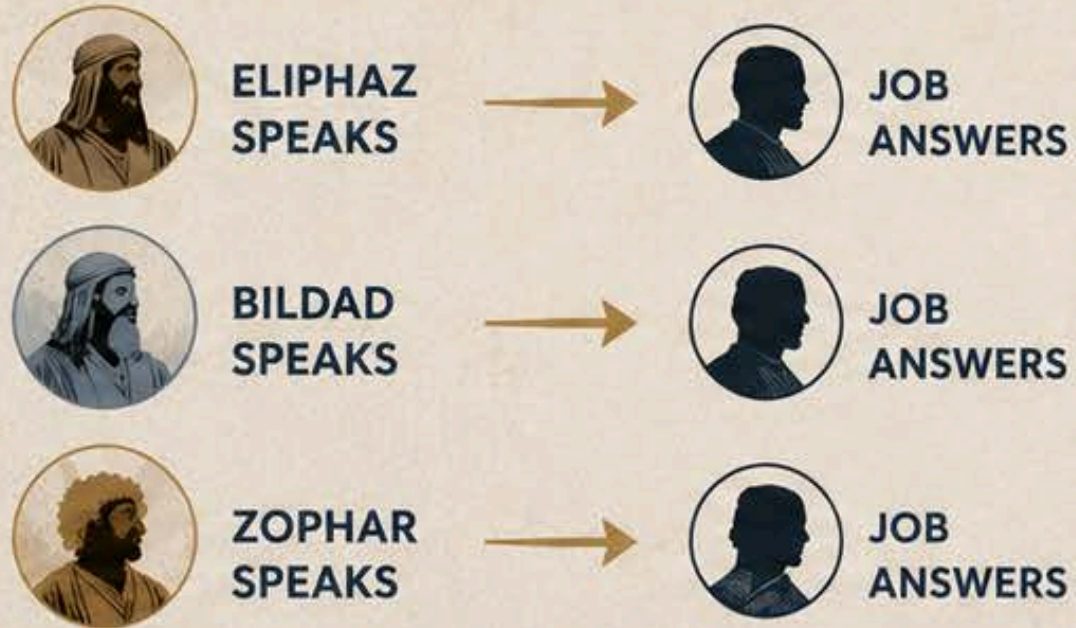


# THE DIALOGUES

## THE THREE CYCLES OF SPEECHES

### CYCLE ONE

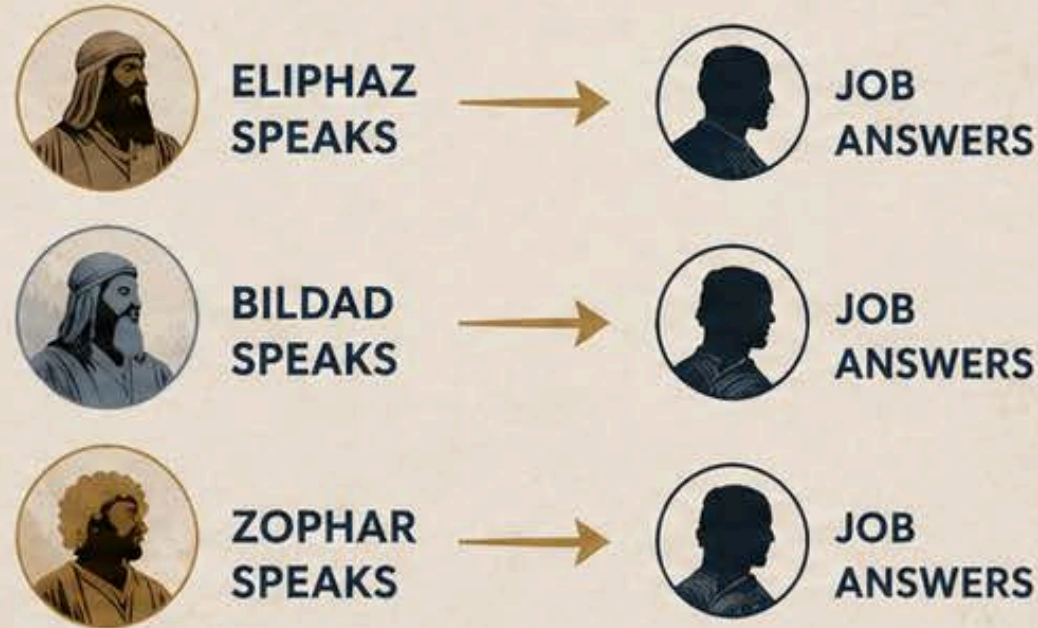
JOB 4-14



*A full round of exchanges.*

### CYCLE TWO

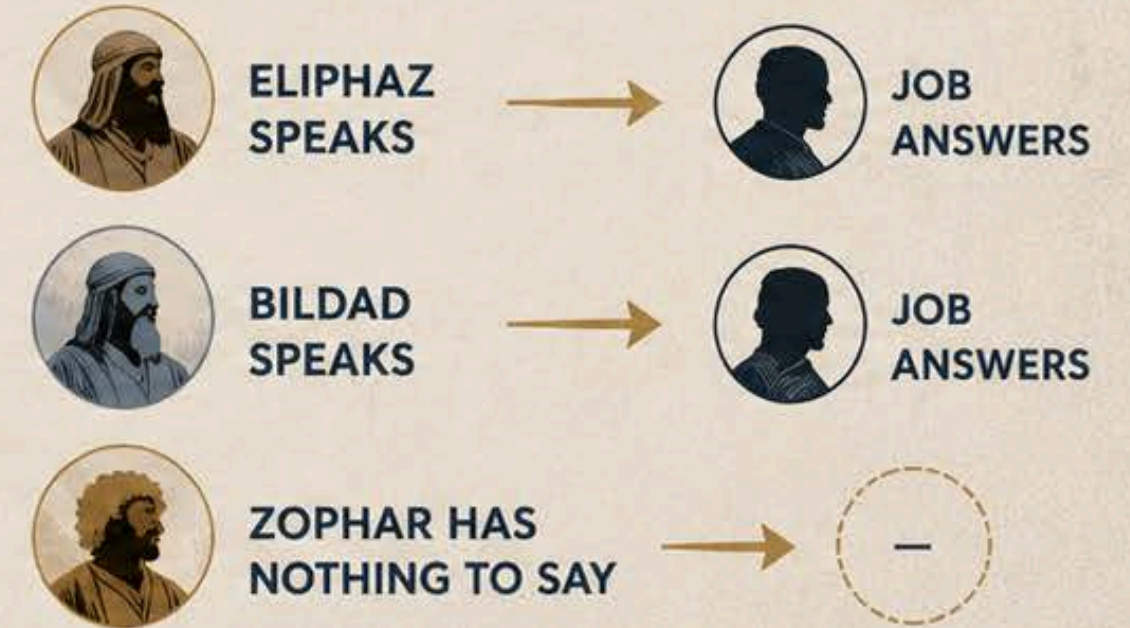
JOB 15-21



*Again, the arguments continue.*

### CYCLE THREE

JOB 22-27



*The speeches grow shorter—  
the friends run out of words.*

## JOB 4:3-6



**ELIPHAZ**

— THE TEMANITE —



- 3** You have instructed many,  
and you have strengthened the weak hands.
- 4** Your words have upheld him  
who was stumbling,  
and you have made firm the feeble knees.
- 5** But now it comes to you, and you faint;  
it touches you, and you are dismayed.
- 6** Is not your fear of God your confidence  
and the integrity of your ways your hope?”



Eliphaz believes that Job's suffering is due to some sin he has committed against God.



Eliphaz regards Job as a righteous man undergoing discipline by God.



Eliphaz tells Job to find hope in the godly life he has lived.



Eliphaz intends to encourage Job toward hope and patience.

This would be my comfort;

I would even exult in pain unsparing,

**for I have not denied the words of the Holy One.**

<sup>11</sup> What is my strength, that I should wait?

And what is my end, that I should be patient?

<sup>12</sup> Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh bronze?

**JOB 6:10-12**

## JOB 8:1-7



# BILDAD

— THE SHUHITE —



- 1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
- 2 “How long will you say such things,  
that the words of your mouth are a great wind?
- 3 Does God pervert justice?  
Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?
- 4 If your children sinned against him,  
he delivered them into the hand of their transgression.
- 5 But if you earnestly seek God  
and plead with the Almighty for mercy,
- 6 if you are pure and upright,  
surely now he will rouse himself for you  
and restore to you your rightful place.
- 7 Though your beginning was small,  
your latter days will be very great.”



Bildad believes that Job’s suffering is due to some sin he has committed against God.



Bildad holds out hope that Job will return to God because he was spared death, unlike his children.



Bildad argues from the contrast between the fates of Job and Job’s children in order to offer a warning.



Bildad’s intention is to urge Job to search his heart before God in order to ensure that he is not guilty of crimes such as those for which his children have died.

Are your days as the days of man,  
or your years as a man's years,  
6 that you seek out my iniquity  
and search for my sin,  
7 **although you know that I am not guilty,**  
and there is none to deliver out of your hand?

**JOB 10:5-7**

## JOB 11:2-6



# ZOPHAR

—THE NAAMATHITE—



- 2** Should not the multitude of words be answered?  
And a man full of talk be declared right?
- 3** Should your empty talk make men be silent?  
And when you mock, shall no one make you ashamed?
- 4** For you have said, “My doctrine is pure,  
and I am clean in your eyes.”
- 5** Oh that God would speak  
and open his lips against you,
- 6** and that he would show you  
the secret things of wisdom!  
For true wisdom is double-faced. Know then  
that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.”



Zophar believes that Job’s suffering is due to some sin he has committed against God.



Zophar judges Job harshly but still holds out hope that Job will repent.



Zophar argues from the suffering of Job in order to denounce Job.



Zophar’s intention is to summon Job to repentance for sins that he clearly has already committed.

“Is not your evil abundant?

There is no end to your iniquities.

For you have exacted pledges of your brothers for nothing  
and stripped the naked of their clothing.

You have given no water to the weary to drink,  
and you have withheld bread from the hungry.

The man with power possessed the land,  
and the favored man lived in it.

You have sent widows away empty,  
and the arms of the fatherless were crushed.” **(This is Eliphaz)**

**JOB 22:5-9**

“I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Who does not know such things as these?”

**// Job 12:3**

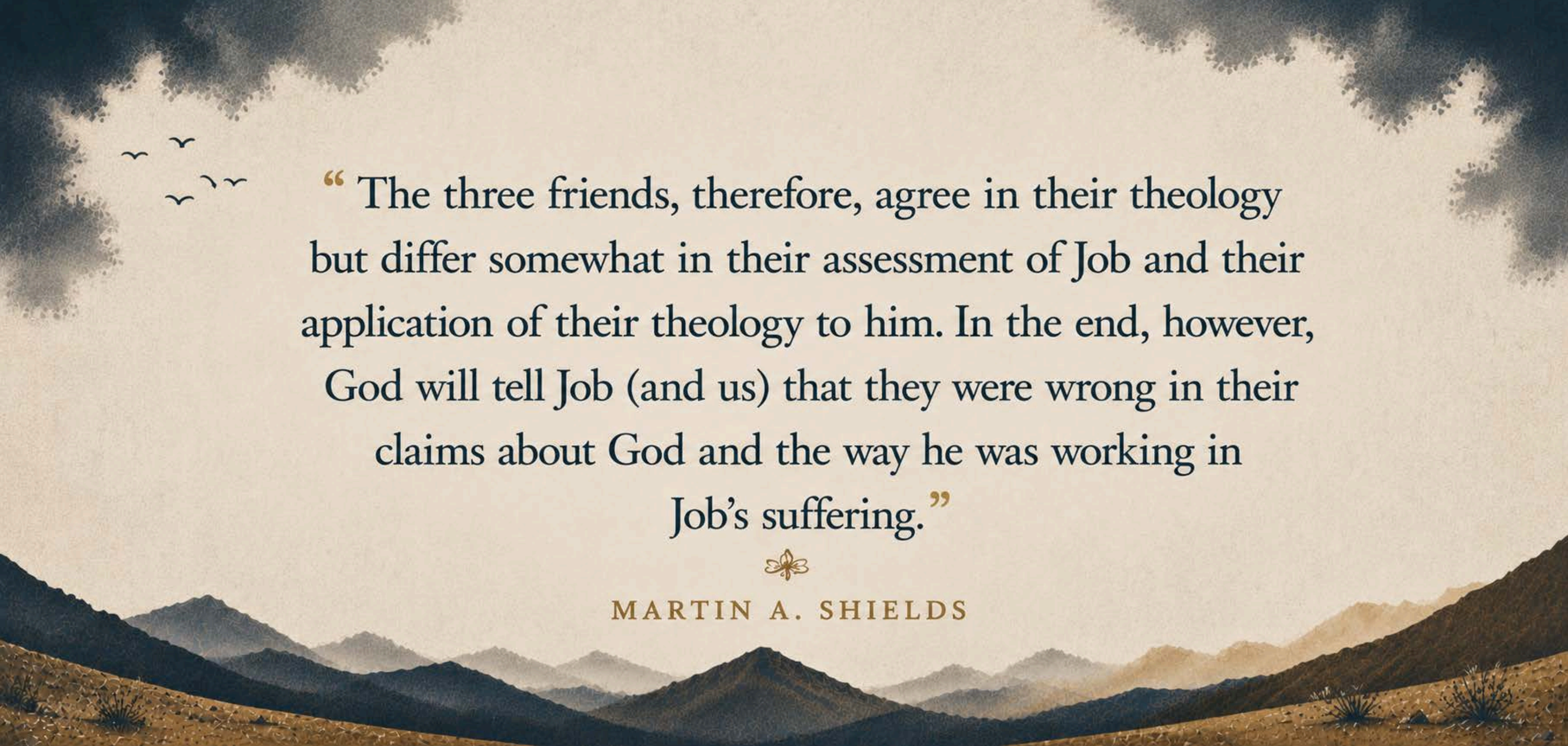
“Your maxims are proverbs of ashes; your defenses are defenses of clay.”

**// Job 13:12**

“As for you, you whitewash with lies; worthless physicians are you all.”

**// Job 13:4**

## **JOB’S RESPONSE TO FRIENDS**

A desert landscape with mountains and birds in the sky. The sky is a mix of light and dark tones, with several birds flying. The mountains are layered, with the foreground being a golden-brown desert floor and the background being dark, hazy mountains.

“ The three friends, therefore, agree in their theology but differ somewhat in their assessment of Job and their application of their theology to him. In the end, however, God will tell Job (and us) that they were wrong in their claims about God and the way he was working in Job’s suffering.”



MARTIN A. SHIELDS

<sup>7</sup>After the Lord had spoken these words to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite: **“My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”** <sup>8</sup>Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.” <sup>9</sup>So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the Lord had told them, and the Lord accepted Job's prayer.

## JOB 42:7-9

The background of the image is a landscape featuring a range of mountains. The mountains in the foreground are dark and rugged, with patches of snow or light-colored rock. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds. The overall color palette is muted, with earthy tones and greys.

**LIVE**

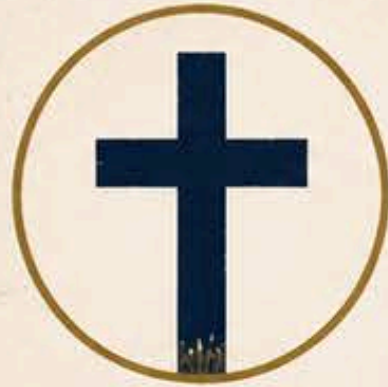
— ✨ — **THE** — ✨ —

**TEXT**

— ✨ —

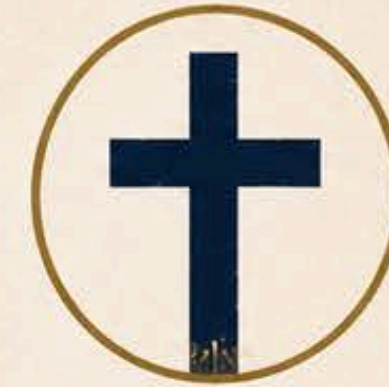
# TWO PATHS

When it comes to understanding our suffering, there are two general paths.



## PATH 1

SUFFERING AS A DIRECT RESULT OF OUR OWN SIN OR THE EVIDENT SIN OF OTHERS.



## PATH 2

SUFFERING FOR REASONS BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING.

### EXAMPLES INCLUDE:



NATURAL DISASTERS



A CHILD BORN WITH A DISABILITY



A SUDDEN UNEXPLAINED DEATH



AND OTHER MYSTERIES OF LIFE

# LIVE THE TEXT

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## 1. COMFORT BEFORE YOU COUNSEL.

- “Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day.” // **PROVERBS 25:20**
- “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” // **GALATIANS 6:2**

## 2. BE SLOW TO EXPLAIN SUFFERING.

- “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever.” // **DEUTERONOMY 29:29**
- “then I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.” // **ECCLESIASTES 8:17**

## 3. POINT THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING TO CHRIST.

- “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.” // **JOB 19:25**
- “Cast all your anxieties on him (Christ), because he cares for you.” // **1 PETER 5:7**