OT Survey I

Session Eleven: Wisdom for Suffering (Job)

Ben Adams & Les Sillars, May 19 2019

Dating Job:

- By dispensation
- By omissions
- By lifespan
- By typology
- By neighbors' ancestry

Names:

- Job:
- Eliphaz:
- Bildad:
- Zophar:
- Elihu:

I. Cycle of Dialogues: 3-31

Ch 12, 13-14 27:1-6, 30:20-23, 31:35-40

Epigraphs

Job's friends: creation shows that everything is good and understandable in terms of retributive justice Job: Omnipotent God seems to smile on evil and chaos

- II. ELIHU SPEAKS: 32-37
- III. I AM SPEAKS: 38-42:6

38

39

40

Why does God take so long to answer?

What are the lessons from God's creation?

IV. **PENSÉES**

The knowledge of God without that of Man's misery causes pride. The knowledge of Man's misery without that of God causes despair. The knowledge of Jesus Christ constitutes the middle course, because in him we find both God and our misery.

Pascal Densées

- Fascal, Felisees
V. ALIGNMENT
Job is "wisdom literature": what is wisdom? What does it mean to be wise?
To have knowledge needed to live skillfully, to be able to "wrest from the of events some semblance of in which Man is not continually at the mercy of the incalculable."
Success is:
Always? 5:8-27 – is this true?
Job is "contest literature" in which you win through not logic.
Job is Theodicy:
VI. PROLOGUE: 1:1-2:13 Why do people suffer? Purpose of suffering is,
Why does God allow evil to happen to a good man?
What does God want to prove from this?
The book shows the progression of a man into a man.
VII. EPILOGUE: 42:7-17 Is it a sin to recognize that evil and injustice are parts of God's creation? And to be unhappy about it?
III. APPLICATION
What was the sin of Job's friends?

- How does one get to the point where you do not charge God with wrongdoing?
- What are bad responses to suffering?
- Should we be more like Job?
- Why is a proper understanding of suffering important for our understanding of the Gospel?
- Why does God not answer us, sometimes?

IX. RESOURCES

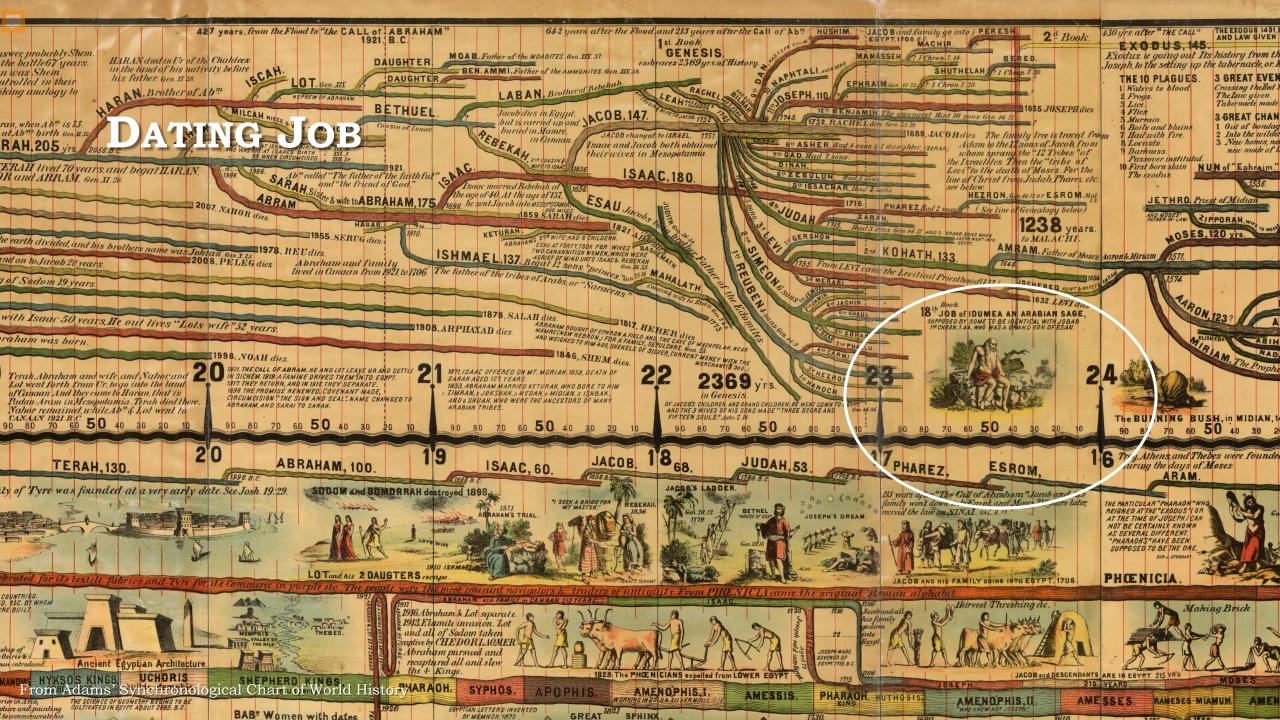
OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY I

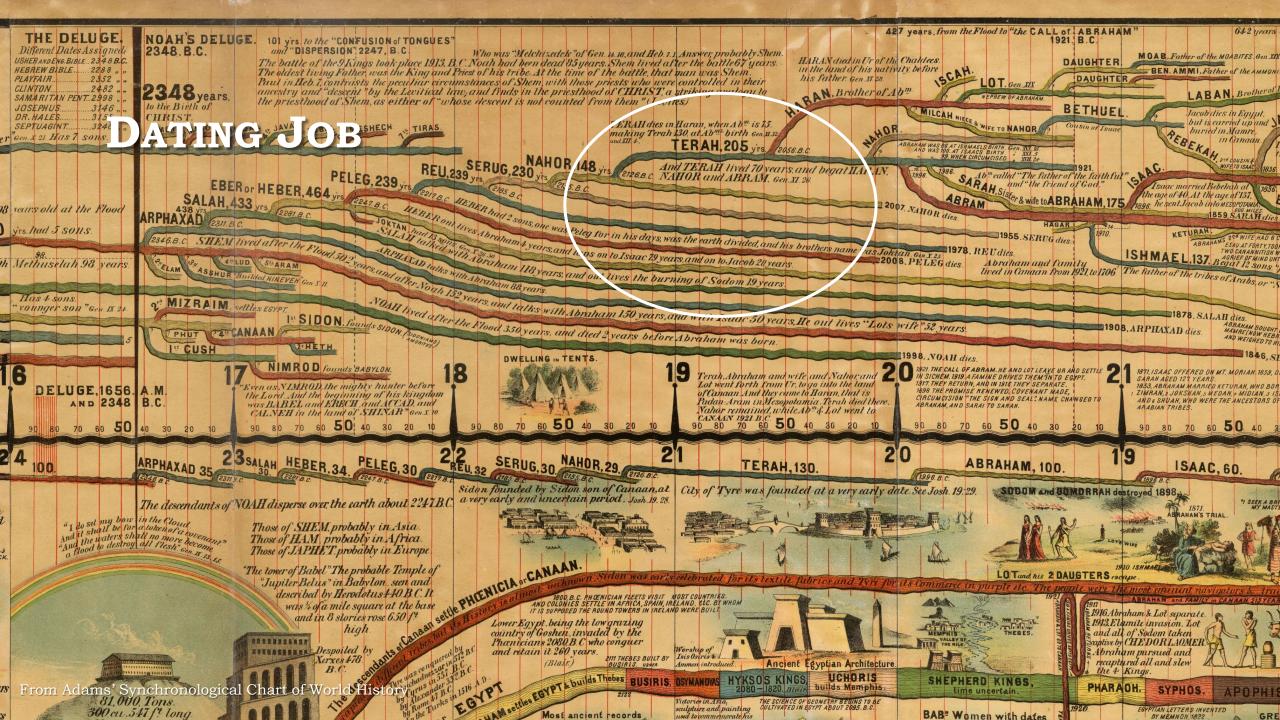
Session Eleven

WISDOM FOR SUFFERING (JOB)

WISDOM LITERATURE

- Proverbs: Wisdom for Innocence Solomon et al.
- Ecclesiastes: Wisdom for Experience Solomon
- Job: Wisdom for Suffering ????



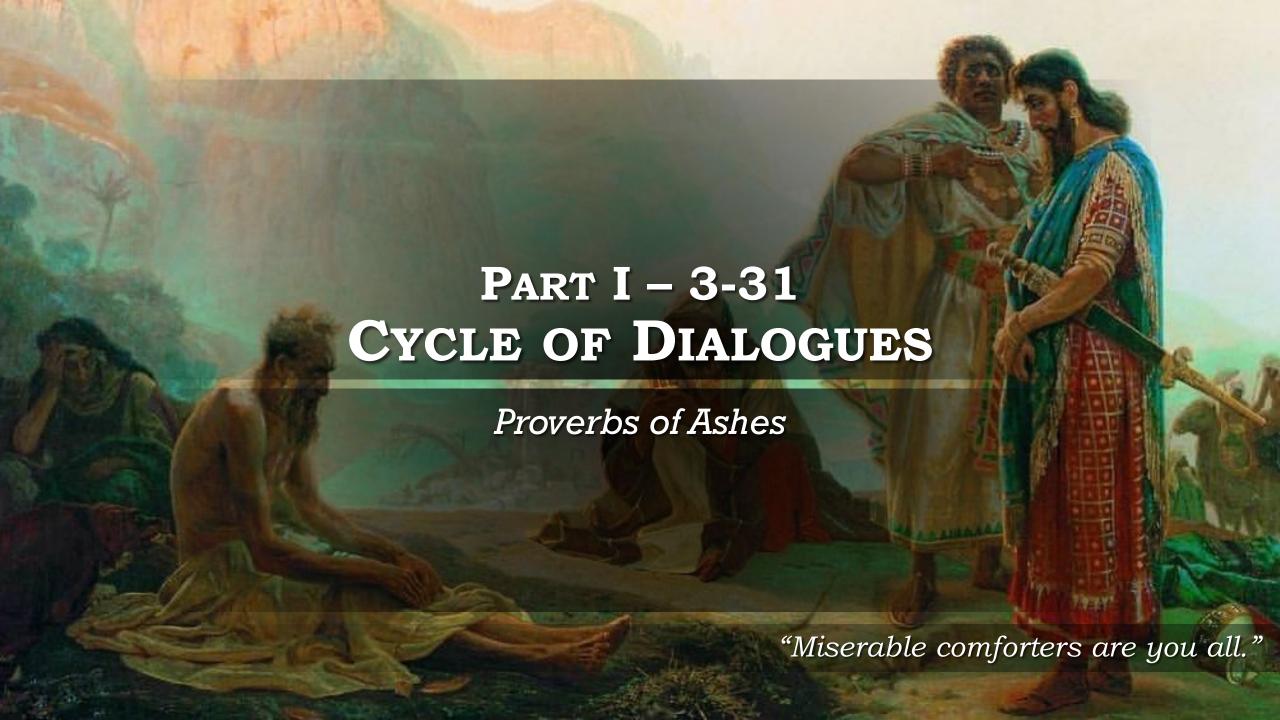


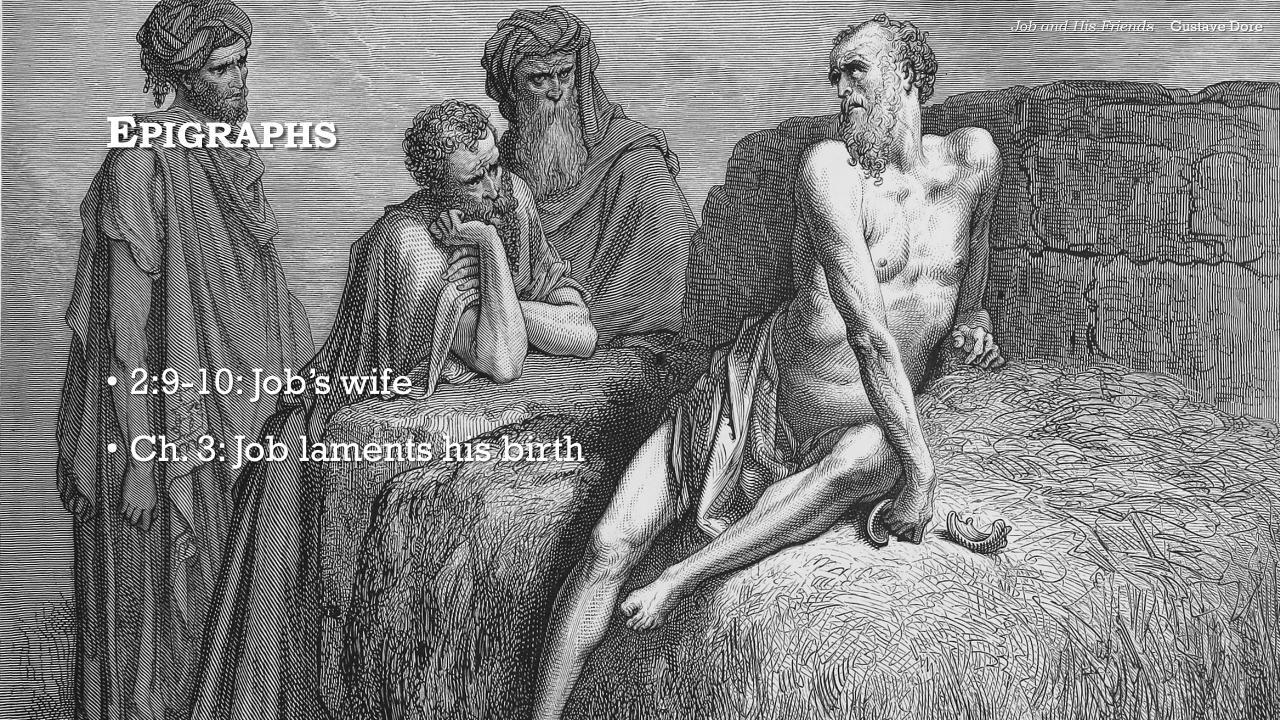
DATING JOB

- By dispensation
- By omissions
- By lifespan: 190 years minimum, possibly 248 years (Alexandrian LXX)
- By typology: does this seem like the line of Esau?
- By neighbors' ancestry
- Conclusion: c. 2080 B.C., 80 years before Abram's birth

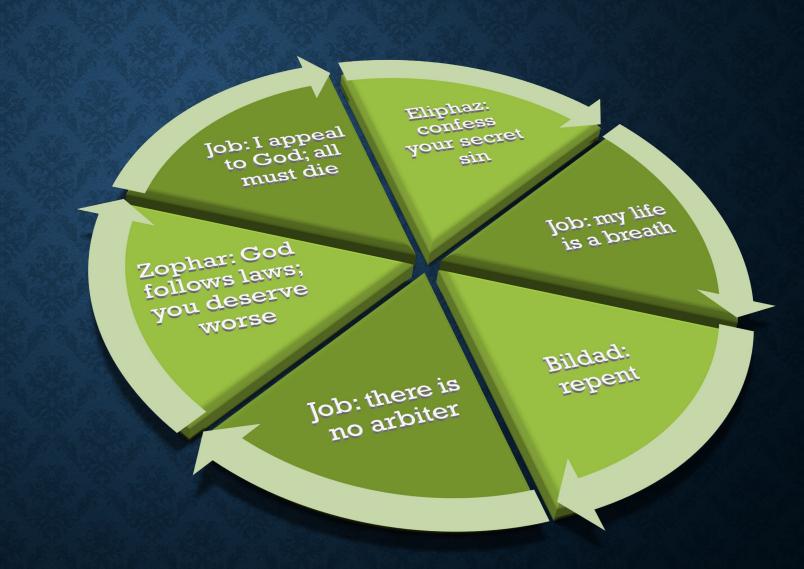
NAME MEANINGS

- **Job**: "hated, persecuted" possibly Jobab, nephew of Esau (I Chron. 1:44); or more likely Jobab, son of Joktan (Gen. 10:28) contemporary of Serug, Abram's great-grandfather
 - http://ww.setterfield.org/Jobab.html
- Eliphaz: "my God is (fine) gold" descendant of Tema [voice of experience]
- **Bildad**: "contender" from Shua (common female name), ancestry uncertain [voice of tradition]
- Zophar: "sparrow, departer" ancestry unknown [voice of legalism]
- **Elihu**: "He is my God" descendant of Buz, of the family of Ram (probably Raamah, Gen. 10:6); co-located with Dedan and Tema (Jer. 25:23) [voice of God-fearing]

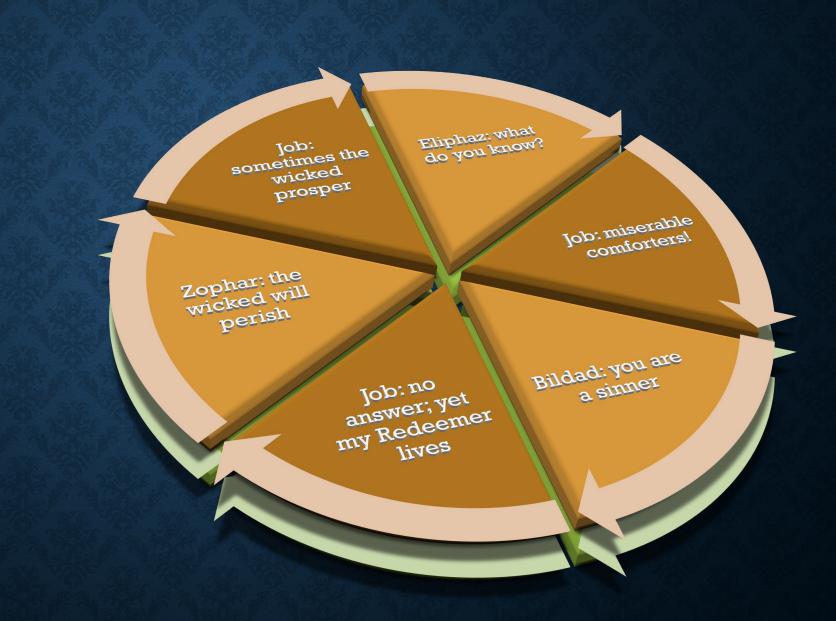




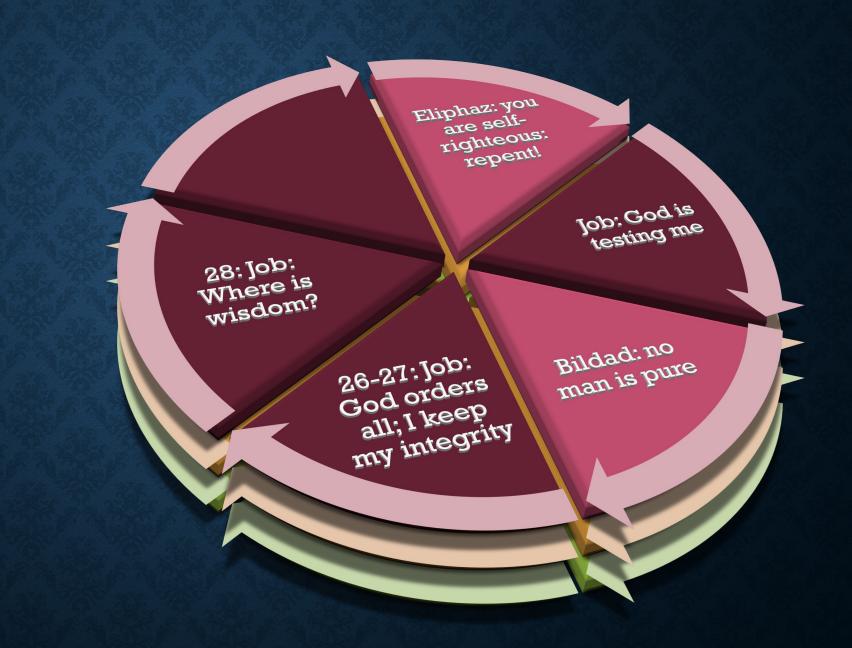
FIRST CYCLE

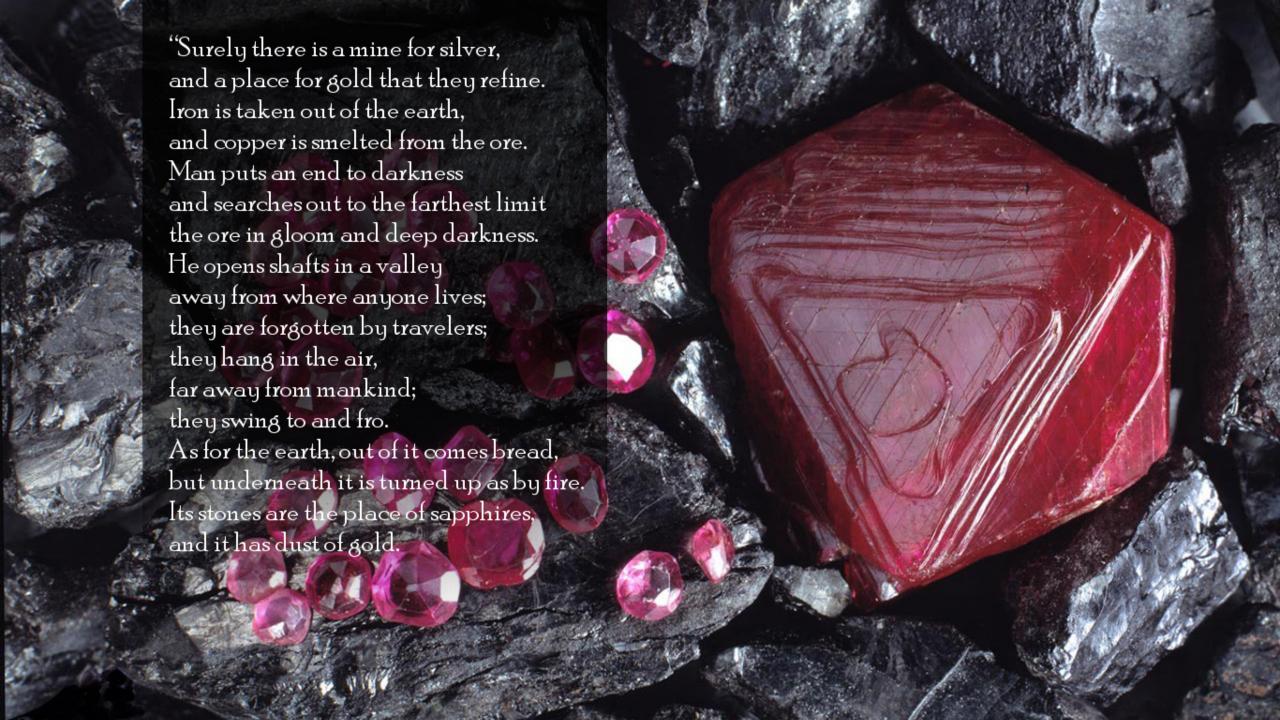


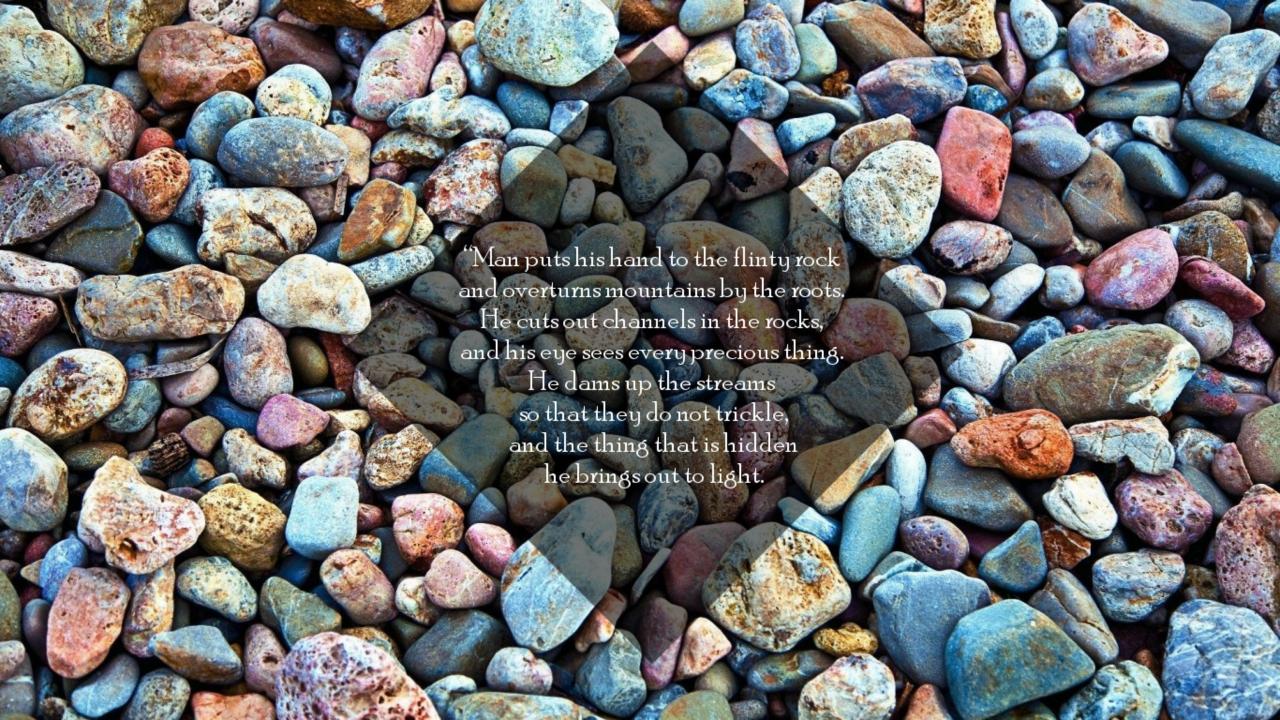
SECOND CYCLE

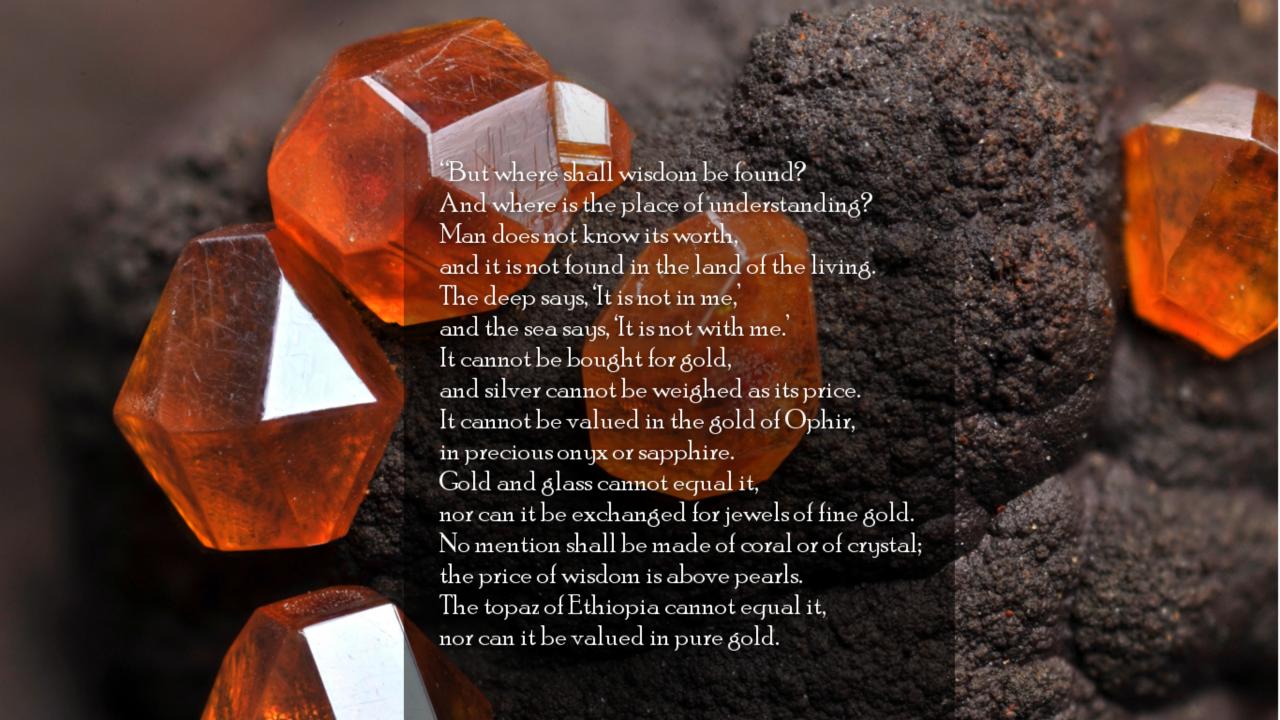


THIRD CYCLE







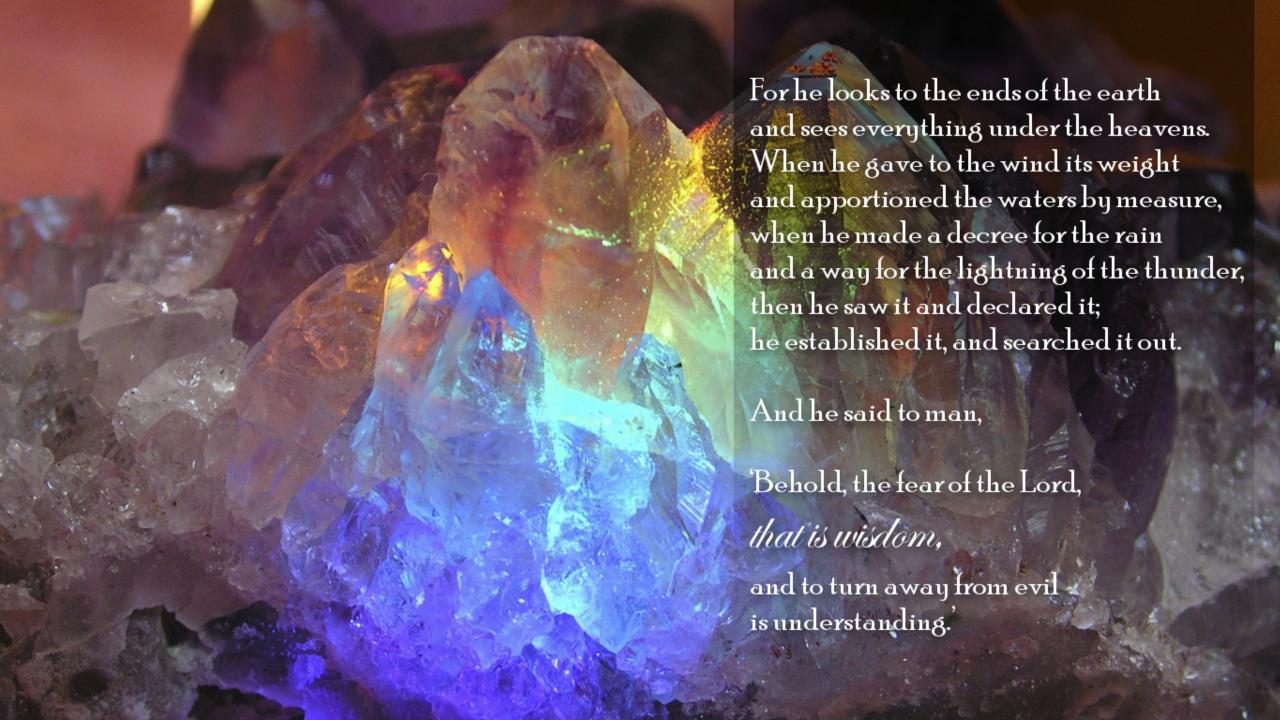




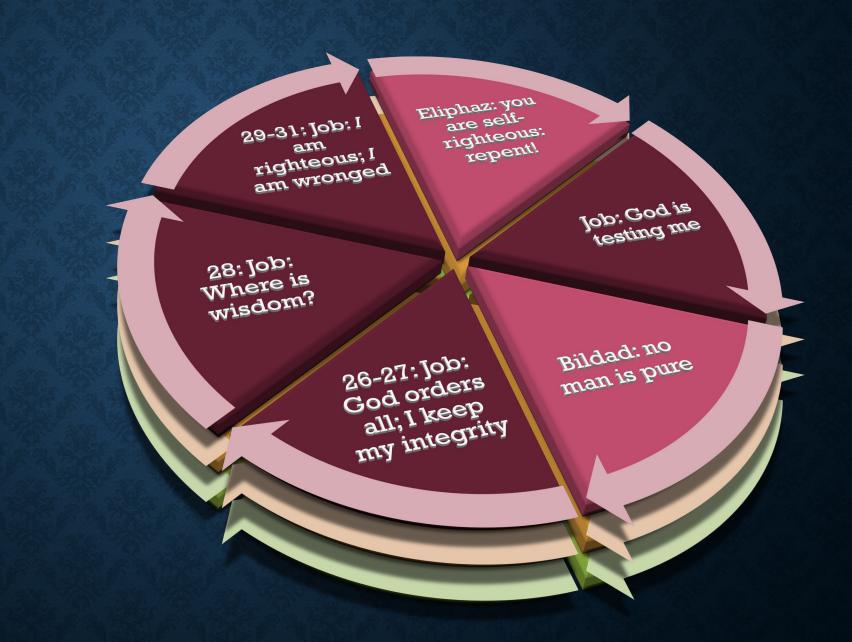


"The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor can it be valued in pure gold.





THIRD CYCLE





ELIHU

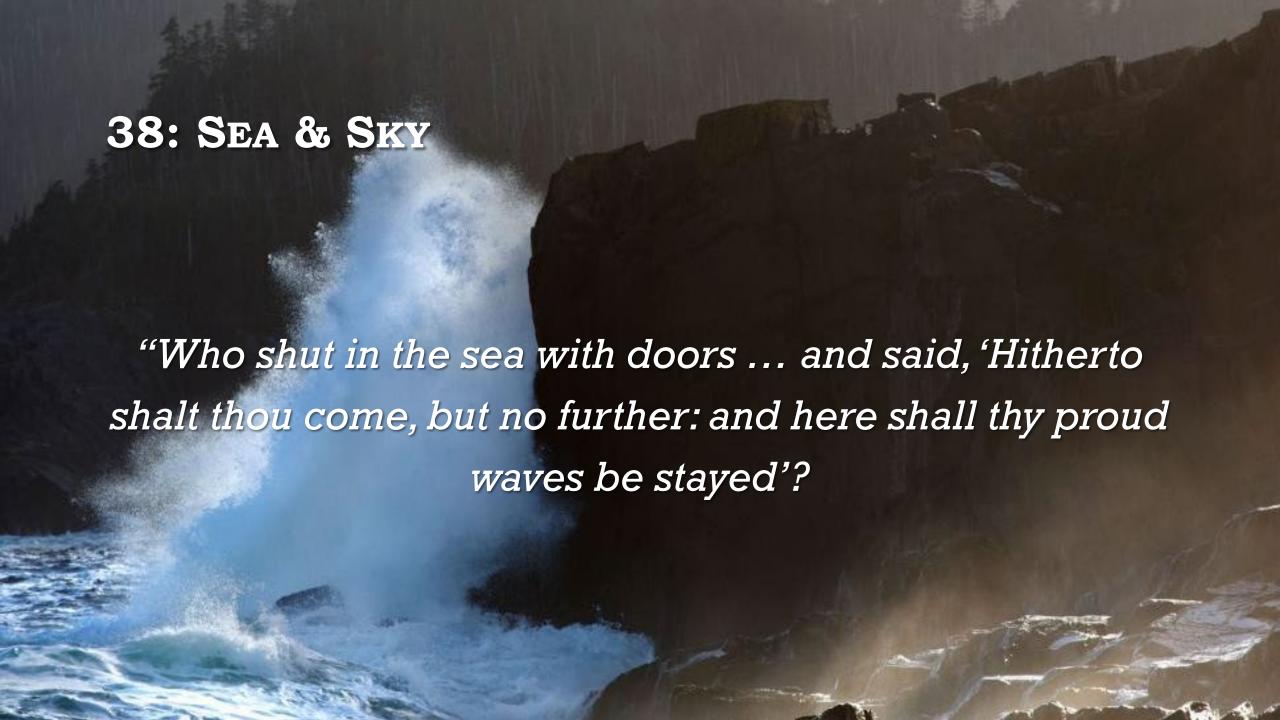
(FROM J. VERNON McGEE'S OUTLINE)

- Chapter 32 —Elihu is angry because:
 - He feels that Job justified himself and condemned God (v. 2).
 - He feels that the three friends of Job have failed to answer him adequately.
- Chapter 33 Elihu maintains that:
 - God is right in all that He does;
 - God created man (v. 4);
 - God is responsible to no one (v. 13);
 - God speaks to man by dreams and visions [before He gave a written revelation] (vv. 14, 15);
 - God instructs men through discipline (vv. 29, 30). Notice that he suggests the reason for the Incarnation (vv. 6, 7).
- Chapter 34 Elihu declares that God never acts wickedly nor commits wrong acts (v. 12).
- Chapter 35 Elihu reproves Job for inferring that he is more righteous than God (v. 2). God is teaching Job a lesson, and both Job and his friends missed the truth of this answer due to pride (vv. 10-12).
- Chapter 36 God is the great Teacher (v. 22). (It was said of Jesus, "Never man spoke like this man" [John 7:46].)
- Chapter 37 Elihu infers that God is too far removed for man to communicate with Him (vv. 22, 23). However, it is not the greatness and majesty of God that has separated man from Him; it is man's sin that has caused the disruption (see Isaiah 59:1,2). [The ordered violence of nature is a prologue to God's forthcoming speech.]

PART III – 38:1-42:6 I AM SPEAKS

Interrogation

"He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him, thick clouds dark with water."

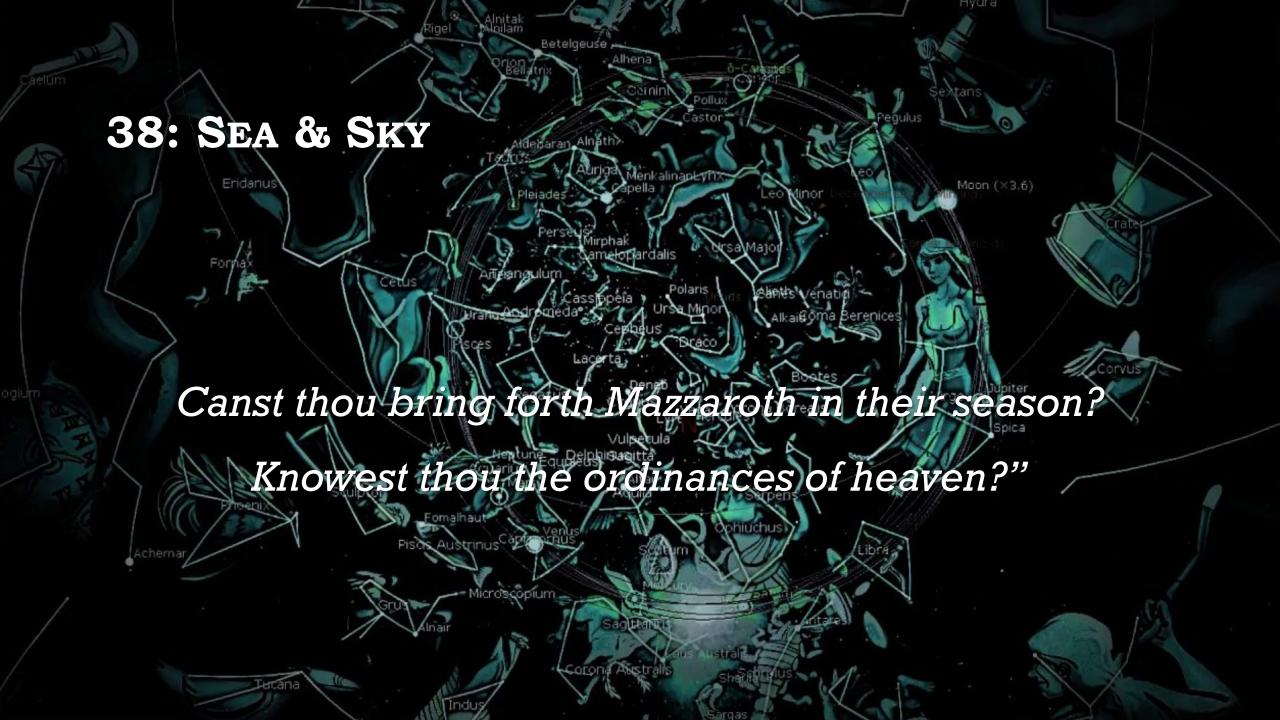


38: SEA & SKY

"Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain, or a way for the thunderbolt?"

38: SEA & SKY

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?



38: SEA & SKY

"Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, 'Here we are'?"





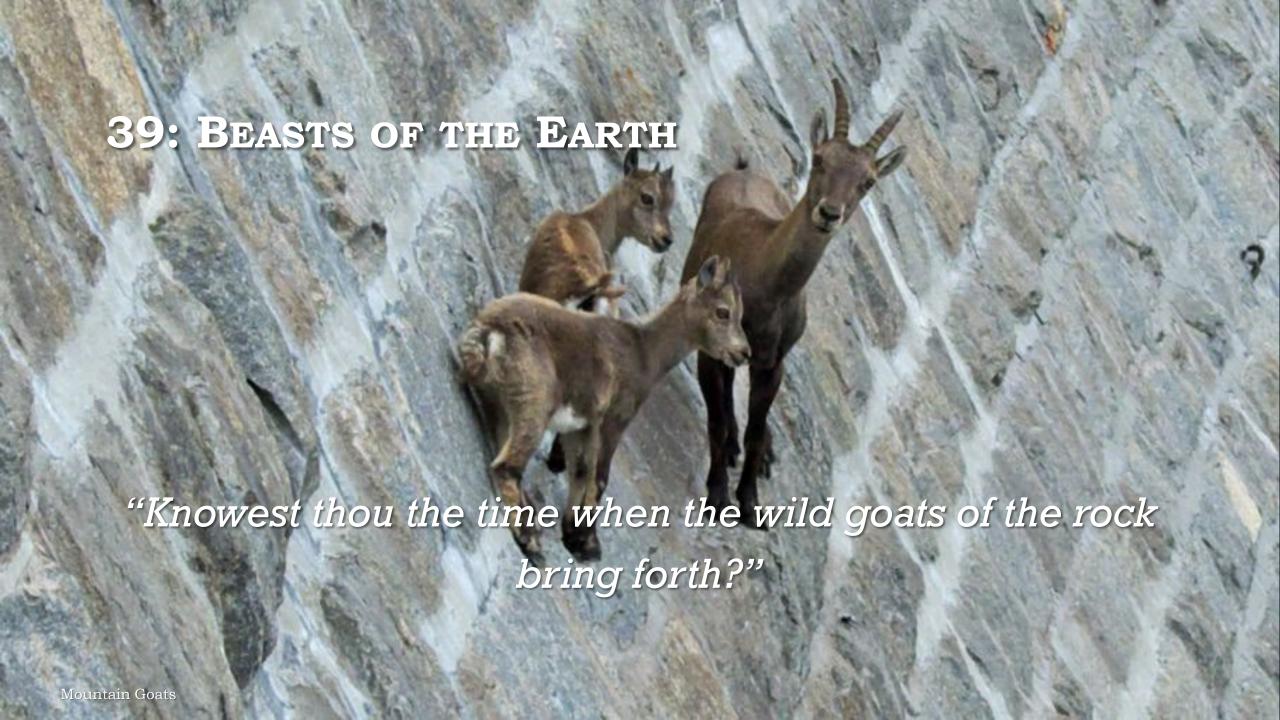








38: SEA & SKY "Who can number the clouds by wisdom?"





"Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?"











"Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom?

Doth the eagle mount up at thy command?"

40: SILENCE AND REBUTTAL













THE LESSONS

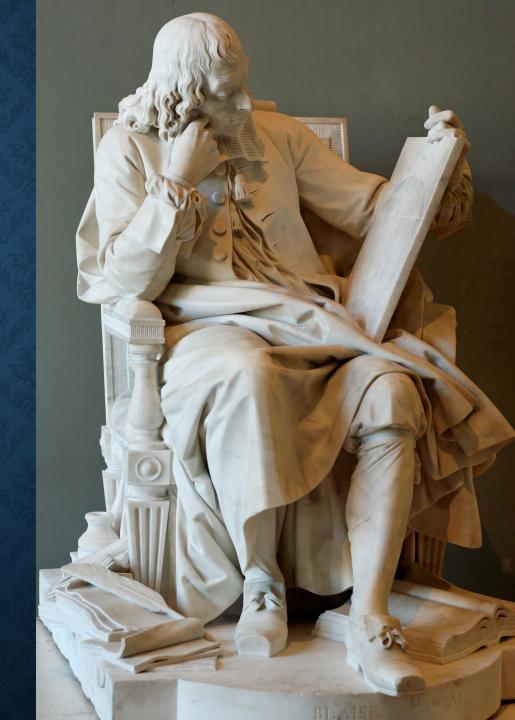
- Evil is part of God's order, represented by the sea and by mythic creatures, and humanity has
 no hope of controlling such beasts of the earth: they are wild, powerful, untamable, uninstrumentalizable. They don't rely on man for their provision, and some have power that don't
 fit our categories of morality.
- Light exposes the wicked—both light and darkness have their place in God's order.
- God orders it all, both things that fit orthodoxy and those that don't; he transcends all perspectives and has made a place for chaos and evil to accomplish His purposes.
- There is no "divine revelation" in God's monologue. (He isn't ready to speak to men yet: there is no law or tabernacle.) All He does is point Job back to nature; and that is enough.
- God's governance includes chaos, but it is bounded by goodness and He doesn't have to explain it—in fact, we couldn't understand it if He tried.
- God addresses humans not as part of creation but as those involved in its government.
- A man reaps what he sows, but God is not bound so that a man reaps only what he sows.



THE INTERCESSOR

"The knowledge of God without that of Man's misery causes pride. The knowledge of Man's misery without that of God causes despair. The knowledge of Jesus Christ constitutes the middle course, because in him we find both God and our misery."

- Blaise Pascal, Pensées





THE BOOK OF JOB IS...?

Wisdom Literature

Wisdom: To have knowledge needed to live skillfully, to be able to "wrest from the chaos of events some semblance of order in which Man is not continually at the mercy of the incalculable."

Contest Literature

A dialogue or debate in which you win through brilliant rhetoric, not logic.

Theodicy

The problem of evil: If God is good and all-powerful, why does He allow evil?

STRUCTURE: CHIASM

A. Prologue: Job blessed and righteous

B. Prologue: Job accused by Satan and destroyed

C. Dialogue: Job laments (de-creation, order to chaos)

D. Dialogue: Preventative chastening (Eliphaz's first speech)

E. Dialogue: Sin & retribution (three friends)

F. CENTRE: Wisdom is with God, not men, not earth (Job ch. 28)

E'. Dialogue: Sin & retribution (Job)

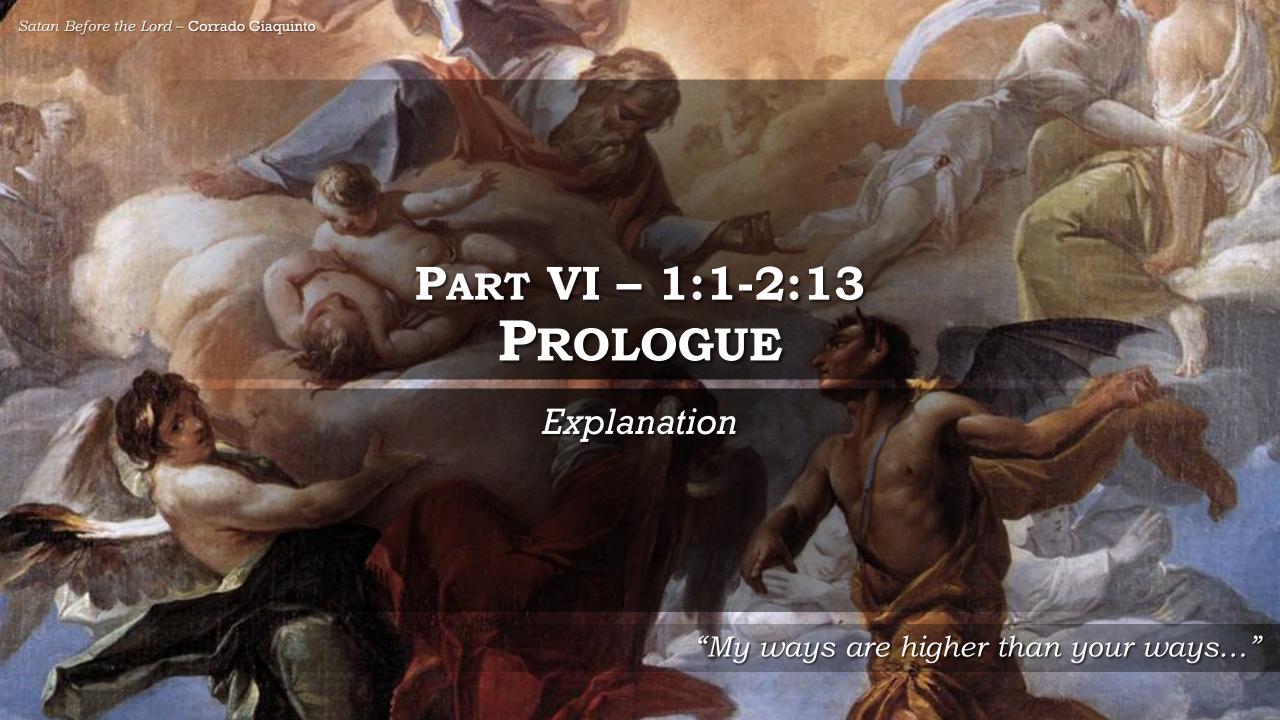
D'. Dialogue: Preventative chastening (Elihu)

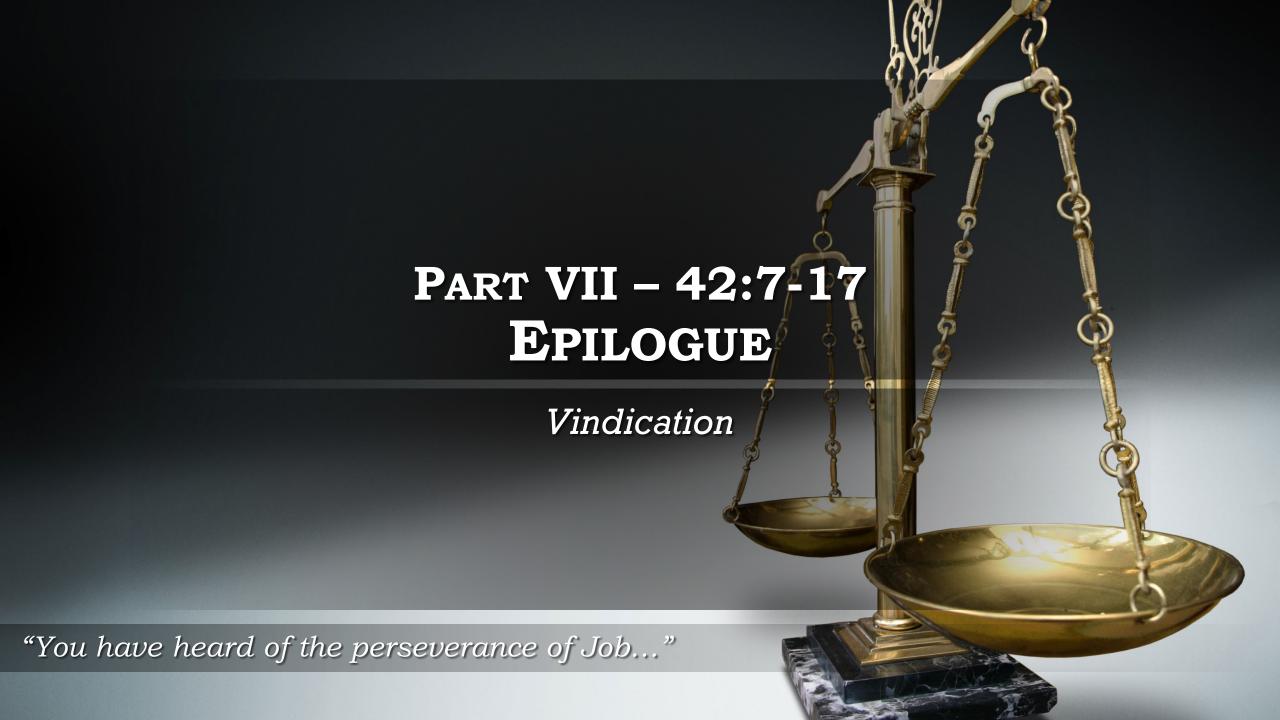
C'. Dialogue: The LORD speaks (creation, chaos to order)

B'. Epilogue: Job vindicated by the LORD and restored

A'. Epilogue: Job blessed and righteous









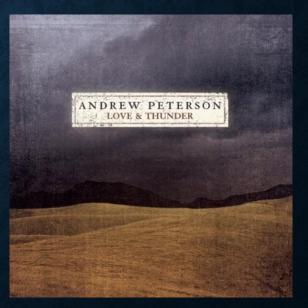
QUESTIONS

- What were the sins of Job's friends?
- How does one get to the point where you do not charge God with wrongdoing?
- What are bad responses to suffering?
- Should we be more like Job? Have we become so accustomed to the notion that we're sinners that we think all our suffering is deserved? Is that false humility? (or self-hatred?)
- Why is a proper understanding of suffering important for our understanding of the Gospel?

RESOURCES/ACTIONS

- Michael Card, "Job Suite"
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7XVS1VIzHc
- Andrew Peterson, "The Silence of God"
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvytewIxll0







We are the sheep of the shepherd who leaves us. We follow a leader who leaves his followers to hunt down those who are not.

Now, of course He also says "I will never leave you." And of course we know He's omnipresent. But consider Job. Can he look back at the single set of footprints and say "Oh, that's when God was carrying me"? Maybe not. Maybe in some significant sense, God really walked away for a while. And if so: why? Maybe because it's not all about me.

If your life, Christian, appears not to be organized for your comfort, convenience, and prosperity: maybe it's because the Creator is re-organizing reality to call the comfortable and prosperous out of themselves and into Him. If justice for you seems delayed: maybe it's because He is still extending patience and mercy to your persecutors. If He seems sometimes absent from you and the rest of the ninety-nine: maybe it's because He's off chasing the one.

Maybe all this makes you question why we call Him the "Good Shepherd." But while you're asking that question, maybe you can also take the time to ask why we call it "Good Friday."