

THE 3 FRIENDS COMFORTING JOB!

Job 13:7 Will ye speak wickedly for God? And talk deceitfully for him? **Job 13:8** Will ye accept his person? Will ye contend for God? **Job 13:9** Is it good that he should search you out? Or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?

Job 2:11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. **Job 2:12** And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. **Job 2:13** So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

So, what goes wrong?

- Explaining
- Explaining with limited theological tools
- Explaining → proving → winning !

NEVER underestimate your desire to win/ be right → even if there is nothing to win!

1. Job is suffering!

Job 2:11 Now when Job's three friends **heard of all this evil that was come upon him**, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. **Job 2:13** So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: **for they saw that his grief was very great.**

This is the starting point.

However, remember that the scenes in heaven were unknown (1:6-12+ & 2:1-7+)

Job's friends:

- **Overestimate** what they know
- **Underestimate** what they don't know
- Misapply what they know
- Refuse to know all the facts

2. Suffering is caused by sin(s)!

Quid pro quo | retribution dogma (assumed but not discussed, axiomatic, a given)

If I do good, God will bless me	If I do evil, God will punish me
If I am blessed, I must be doing good things	If I am suffering, I must be doing evil/bad things

The flow of Job 4 & 5:

Job, can we talk?	Job 4:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said, Job 4:2 <u>If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?</u> But who can withhold himself from speaking?
Job, "we" need to talk!	Job 4:2 If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? But who can withhold himself from speaking?
Job, you have done a lot of talking	Job 4:3 Behold, thou hast instructed many, And thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Job 4:4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling, And thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.
Job, your talk(ing) has <u>not</u> helped you!	Job 4:5 <u>But now</u> it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled. Job 4:6 Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, Thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?
Job, let's talk about the real* cause of your suffering → Sin	Job 4:7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off? Job 4:8 Even

	<p>as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, And sow wickedness, reap the same.</p> <p>Job 4:9 By the blast of God they perish, And by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed. Job 4:10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, And the teeth of the young lions, are broken. Job 4:11 The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, And the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.</p>
<p>Job, I overheard / experienced someone or something else talking</p> <p>Job's 3 friends, as well as Elihu, appeal to various forms of authority:</p> <p>Personal &/ universal experiences</p> <p>Supernatural experiences</p> <p>Tradition</p> <p>Inspiration</p>	<p>Job 4:12 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, And mine ear received a little thereof. Job 4:13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, When deep sleep falleth on men, Job 4:14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, Which made all my bones to shake. Job 4:15 Then a spirit passed before my face; The hair of my flesh stood up: Job 4:16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: An image was before mine eyes, There was silence, and I heard a voice, saying, Job 4:17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his maker? Job 4:18 Behold, he put no trust in his servants; And his angels he charged with folly: Job 4:19 How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, Whose foundation is in the dust, Which are crushed before the moth? Job 4:20 They are destroyed from morning to evening: They perish for ever without any regarding it. Job 4:21 Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? They die, even without wisdom.</p>
<p>Job, you can talk now !</p>	<p>Job 5:1 Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; And to which of the saints wilt thou turn?</p>
<p>But Job, right after I talk some more !</p>	<p>Job 5:2 For wrath killeth the foolish man, And envy slayeth the silly one. Job 5:3 I have seen the foolish taking root: But suddenly I cursed his habitation. Job 5:4 His children are far from safety, And they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them. Job 5:5 Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, And taketh it even out of the thorns, And the robber swalloweth up their substance. Job 5:6 Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; Job 5:7 Yet man is born unto trouble, As the sparks fly upward.</p>

*****This is basically everyone but God's (& the author) answer!*****

Job 8:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, **Job 8:2** How long wilt thou speak these things? And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind? **Job 8:3** Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert justice? **Job 8:8** For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, And prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: **Job 8:13** So are the paths of all that forget God; And the hypocrite's hope shall perish: **Job 8:14** Whose hope shall be cut off, And

whose trust shall be a spider's web. **Job 8:15** He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: He shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

Job 8:20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, Neither will he help the evil doers:

Job 11:5 But oh that God would speak, And open his lips against thee; **Job 11:6** And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, That they are double to that which is! **Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.**

Job 15:15 Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. **Job 15:16** How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water? **Job 15:17** I will shew thee, hear me; And that which I have seen I will declare; **Job 15:18** Which wise men have told From their fathers, and have not hid it: **Job 15:19** Unto whom alone the earth was given, And no stranger passed among them. **Job 15:20** The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, And the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

Job 20:1 Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, **Job 20:4** Knowest thou not this of old, Since man was placed upon earth, **Job 20:5** That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? **Job 20:6** Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, And his head reach unto the clouds; **Job 20:7** Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: They which have seen him shall say, Where is he? **Job 20:8** He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: Yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. **Job 20:9** The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; Neither shall his place any more behold him. **Job 20:10** His children shall seek to please the poor, And his hands shall restore their goods. **Job 20:11** His bones are full of the sin of his youth, Which shall lie down with him in the dust. **Job 20:12** Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, Though he hide it under his tongue;

Job 22:5 Is not **thy** wickedness great? And **thine** iniquities infinite?

Job 25:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, **Job 25:4** How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? **Job 25:5** Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. **Job 25:6** How much less man, that is a worm? And the son of man, which is a worm?

Job 34:1 Furthermore Elihu answered and said, **Job 34:5** For Job hath said, I am righteous: And God hath taken away my judgment. **Job 34:9** For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing That he should delight himself with God. **Job 34:10** Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: **Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. Job 34:11** For the work of a man shall he render unto him, And cause every man to find **according to his ways. Job 34:12** Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

[2b. The hidden premise: Suffering is **only and **always** caused by sin!]**

The problem is not whether suffering can be caused by sin – it can be

The problem is the **hidden** premise – suffering is **only** & **always** caused by sin!

John 9:1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. **John 9:2** And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? **John 9:3** Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. **John 9:4** I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

James 5:13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

James 5:14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: **James 5:15** And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Most people want to blame Job:

Front door: the 3 friends

You are suffering because of some sin

Back door: Satan

Suffering will cause you to sin & worse!

Side door | side window: Elihu & his proponents

You are **not** suffering because of sin

But you are sinning because of suffering

3. The suffering might be slow in coming!

Job 5:3 I have seen the foolish taking root: But **suddenly** I cursed his habitation. **Job 5:4** His children are far from safety, And they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.

Your previous prosperity might not mean godliness but simply short-term pleasure!

4. Repentance is the solution!

Job 5:8 I would seek unto God, And unto God would I commit my cause: **Job 5:9** Which doeth great things and unsearchable; Marvellous things without number: **Job 5:10** Who giveth rain upon the earth, And sendeth waters upon the fields: **Job 5:11** To set up on high those that be low; That those which mourn may be exalted to safety. **Job 5:12** He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, So that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. **Job 5:13** He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: And the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. **Job 5:14** They meet with darkness in the daytime, And grope in the noonday as in the night. **Job 5:15** But he saveth the poor from the sword, From their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty. **Job 5:16** So the poor hath hope, And iniquity stoppeth her mouth. **Job 5:17** Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: **Job 5:18** For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: He woundeth, and his hands make whole. **Job 5:19** He shall deliver thee in six troubles: Yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. **Job 5:20** In famine he shall redeem thee from death: And in war from the power of the sword. **Job 5:21** Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. **Job 5:22** At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

Job 8:5 If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, And make thy supplication to the Almighty; **Job 8:6** If thou wert pure and upright; Surely now he would awake for thee, And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. **Job 8:7** Though thy beginning was small, Yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

Job 11:13 If thou prepare thine heart, And stretch out thine hands toward him; **Job 11:14** If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, And let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. **Job 11:16** Because thou shalt forget thy misery, And remember it as waters that pass away: **Job 11:17** And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; Thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning. **Job 11:18** And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; Yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. **Job 11:19** Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; Yea, many shall make suit unto thee. **Job 11:20** But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, And they shall not escape, And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

Job 22:21 Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: Thereby good shall come unto thee.

Job 22:22 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, And lay up his words in thine heart. **Job 22:23** If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. **Job 22:24** Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, And the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. **Job 22:25** Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, And thou shalt have plenty of silver. **Job 22:26** For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, And shalt lift up thy face unto God. **Job 22:27** Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, And thou shalt pay thy vows.

Job 36:11 If they obey and serve him, They shall spend their days in prosperity, And their years in pleasures. **Job 36:12** But if they obey not, They shall perish by the sword, And they shall die without knowledge. **Job 36:13** But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: They cry not when he bindeth them. **Job 36:14** They die in youth, And their life is among the unclean. **Job 36:15** He delivereth the poor in his affliction, And openeth their ears in oppression. **Job 36:16** Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait Into a broad place, where there is no straitness; And that which should be set on thy table should be full of fatness.