

Chapter 20 Zophar's 2nd cycle response

Zophar is primarily concerned with crimes against society, specifically the rulers who crush the poverty-stricken. These individuals, acting as tyrants, suffer from hubris (excessive pride that offends the gods), which creates traits of greed or arrogance. The tragic flaw threatens God, so God must resort to punishment. Job's friends think he is an incredibly arrogant fool. Job claims to know that God thinks him blameless and righteous even though all the evidence proves otherwise. Retribution against his inflated ego causes the cosmos to rail against him, and celestial forces align bringing about his destruction to restore order in the universe. All of Job's former success and blessings were the result of his insatiable greed for all that is good, which is ultimately his downfall. Zophar bases his logic on ancient tradition as a source of truth.

Chapter 21 Job's 3rd response to the 2nd cycle

Job counters with an opposing argument against his friends' 'truth'. Since God provides the final verdict, his friends' logic is ultimately invalid.

1st claim (prosperity gospel): if you follow God's laws, you will reap lavish rewards

Counter to 1st claim: the wicked do not rely on God, but they still prosper—crime pays since there is no motivation in being righteous

2nd claim (generational condemnation): if you aren't punished in this life, your lineage will at some point be punished

Counter to 2nd claim: if God is righteous and just; then God fairly judges everyone according to their own actions.

Closing argument: How many times does retribution actually fall upon the wicked? Furthermore, life, whether a good or an evil one, in the grand scheme of things, is meaningless. Everyone, regardless of their character, cries out in the suffering of some existential angst at some point.

- Ecclesiastes: 9:2-6
- Macbeth: Act 5, Scene 5, line 19-28
- Waiting for Godot (Samuel Beckett): To every man his little cross. Till he dies. And is forgotten.