

JOB

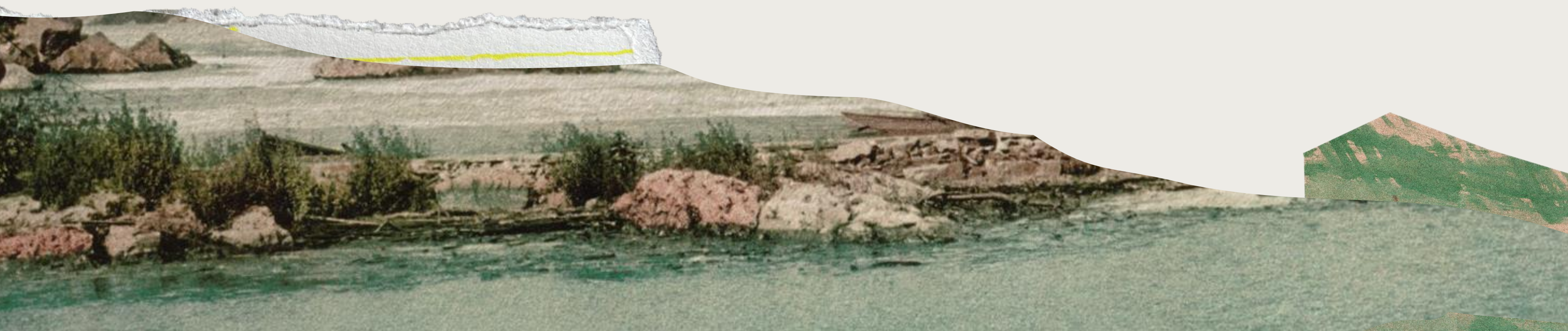


LOOKING BACK

- Job grew tired of his friends' accusations and wanted to take his questions directly to God.
- He challenged his friends for claiming to know why God had allowed his suffering.
- Job asked God to reveal the sin that supposedly explained what was happening to him.
- As Job reflected on the shortness and fragility of life, he compared humanity to a tree that can sprout again after being cut down.
- This led Job to ask, "Can the dead live again?"
- For a moment, Job imagined God remembering him, calling him, and restoring their relationship.
- But chapter 14 ended with Job's hope fading again, leaving his questions unresolved.

THE SECOND ROUND BEGINS

Job 15-17



“YOUR OWN
MOUTH
CONDEMN
YOU”

15:1-6



“Then Eliphaz the Temanite replied:

2 “A wise man wouldn’t answer with such empty talk!

You are nothing but a windbag.

3 The wise don’t engage in empty chatter.

What good are such words?

4 Have you no fear of God,

no reverence for him?

5 Your sins are telling your mouth what to say.

Your words are based on clever deception.

6 Your own mouth condemns you, not I.

Your own lips testify against you.”

“YOUR OWN MOUTH CONDEMNNS YOU”

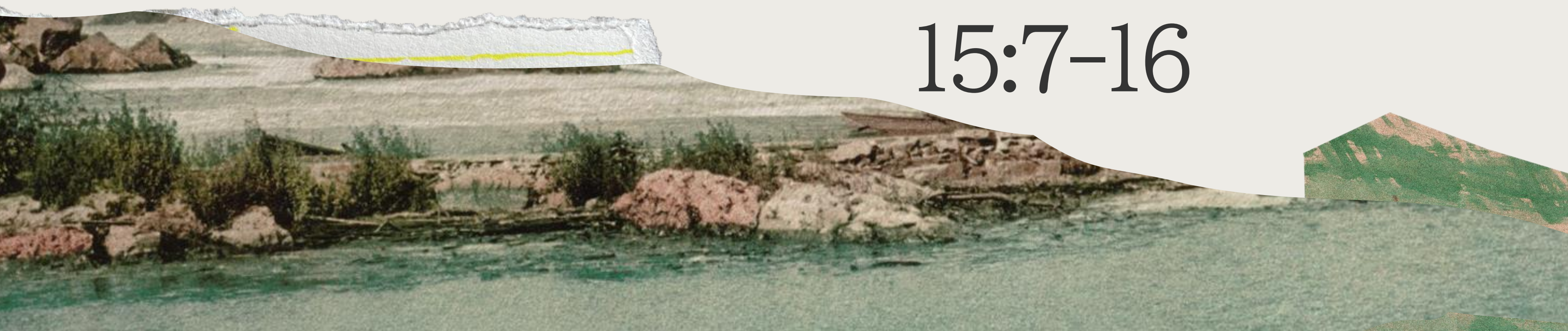
- Eliphaz's tone is harsher than in his first speech
- He no longer sees Job's words as grief; he sees them as evidence of guilt
- Eliphaz believes Job's words prove something is spiritually wrong
- The debate is shifting from disagreement toward accusation

ELIPHAZ NO LONGER SEES A HURTING FRIEND – HE
SEES A GUILTY MAN



“DO YOU KNOW
SOMETHING WE
DON’T?”

15:7-16



“Were you the first person ever born?

Were you born before the hills were made?

8 Were you listening at God’s secret council?

Do you have a monopoly on wisdom?

9 What do you know that we don’t?

What do you understand that we do not?

10 On our side are aged, gray-haired men

much older than your father!

11 “Is God’s comfort too little for you?

Is his gentle word not enough?

What has taken away your reason?

What has weakened your vision,[\[a\]](#)

13 that you turn against God

and say all these evil things?

14 Can any mortal be pure?

Can anyone born of a woman be just?

15 Look, God does not even trust the angels.[\[b\]](#)

Even the heavens are not absolutely pure in his sight.

16 How much less pure is a corrupt and sinful person

with a thirst for wickedness!”

“DO YOU KNOW SOMETHING WE DON’ T?”

- Eliphaz sarcastically challenges Job’s claim to wisdom
- Eliphaz believes his counsel represents God’s comfort and “gentle words”
- Repeats his appeal to age, tradition and previous generational wisdom
- He uses true teaching about human sin to support an unproven conclusion about Job

A TRUE PRINCIPLE CAN STILL BE WRONGLY APPLIED



“THE WICKED SUFFER”

15:17–35



“If you will listen, I will show you.
I will answer you from my own
experience.

18 And it is confirmed by the reports of
wise men

who have heard the same thing from
their fathers—

19 from those to whom the land was
given

long before any foreigners arrived.

20 “The wicked writhe in pain
throughout their lives.

Years of trouble are stored up for the
ruthless.

The sound of terror rings in their ears,
and even on good days they fear the
attack of the destroyer.

22 They dare not go out into the darkness
for fear they will be murdered.

23 They wander around, saying, ‘Where
can I find bread?’[\[c\]](#)

They know their day of destruction is
near.

24 That dark day terrifies them.

They live in distress and anguish,
like a king preparing for battle.

25 For they shake their fists at God,
defying the Almighty.”

“Holding their strong shields,
they defiantly charge against him.
27 “These wicked people are heavy and
prosperous;
their waists bulge with fat.
28 But their cities will be ruined.
They will live in abandoned houses
that are ready to tumble down.
29 Their riches will not last,
and their wealth will not endure.
Their possessions will no longer spread
across the horizon.
“They will not escape the darkness.
The burning sun will wither their shoots,
and the breath of God will destroy them.

31 Let them no longer fool themselves by
trusting in empty riches,
for emptiness will be their only reward.
32 They will be cut down in the prime of life;
their branches will never again be green.
33 They will be like a vine whose grapes are
harvested too early,
like an olive tree that loses its blossoms
before the fruit can form.
34 For the godless are barren.
Their homes, enriched through bribery, will
burn.
35 They conceive trouble and give birth to
evil.
Their womb produces deceit.”

“THE WICKED SUFFER”



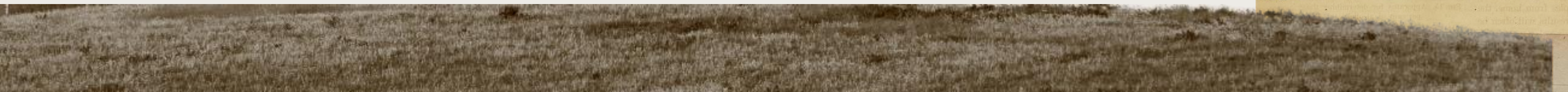
- Eliphaz describes the suffering and eventual destruction of the wicked

- His theology hasn't changed, but his accusation has intensified

- Much of his description closely resembles what has happened to Job

- Clear implication: “Look at what happens to the wicked – and look at yourself

ELIPHAZ IS NO LONGER HINTING AT JOB'S GUILT; HE'S BUILDING A CASE FOR IT



“MISERABLE
COMFORTERS
ARE YOU ALL”

16:1-6



“Then Job spoke again:

2 “I have heard all this before.

What miserable comforters you are!

3 Won’t you ever stop blowing hot air?

What makes you keep on talking?

4 I could say the same things if you were in my place.

I could spout off criticism and shake my head at you.

5 But if it were me, I would encourage you.

I would try to take away your grief.

6 Instead, I suffer if I defend myself,
and I suffer no less if I refuse to speak.”

“MISERABLE COMFORTERS ARE YOU ALL”



- The debate is going in circles
- Job imagines how differently he would respond if their positions were reversed
- Job's friends have become another source of pain
- Their desire to correct Job has overtaken their original desire to comfort him

WHEN PROVING YOUR POINT BECOMES MORE
IMPORTANT THAN HELPING THE PERSON,
COMFORT BECOMES CONDEMNATION



“GOD HAS
SHATTERED
ME”

16:7-14



“O God, you have ground me down
and devastated my family.

8 As if to prove I have sinned, you’ve
reduced me to skin and bones.

My gaunt flesh testifies against me.

9 God hates me and angrily tears me
apart.

He snaps his teeth at me
and pierces me with his eyes.

10 People jeer and laugh at me.

They slap my cheek in contempt.

A mob gathers against me.

11 God has handed me over to sinners.

He has tossed me into the hands of the
wicked.

12 “I was living quietly until he shattered
me.

He took me by the neck and broke me
in pieces.

Then he set me up as his target,

13 and now his archers surround me.
His arrows pierce me without mercy.

The ground is wet with my blood.[\[a\]](#)

14 Again and again he smashes against
me,

charging at me like a warrior.”

“GOD HAS SHATTERED ME”

- Neither speaking or remaining silent brings Job relief

- Job believes God has turned His power against him.

- His violent imagery reveals how intensely he experiences his suffering

- Job describes how God feels from inside his pain – not necessarily the complete reality of what God is doing

JOB CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE GOD HE
ONCE EXPERIENCED AS HIS PROTECTOR NOW
FEELS LIKE HIS ATTACKER



“MY
WITNESS IS
IN HEAVEN”

16:15-22



“I wear burlap to show my grief.

My pride lies in the dust.

16 My eyes are red with
weeping;

dark shadows circle my eyes.

17 Yet I have done no wrong,
and my prayer is pure.

18 “O earth, do not conceal my
blood.

Let it cry out on my behalf.

19 Even now my witness is in
heaven.

My advocate is there on high.

20 My friends scorn me,
but I pour out my tears to God.

21 I need someone to mediate
between God and me,
as a person mediates between
friends.

22 For soon I must go down that
road

from which I will never return.”

“MY WITNESS IS IN HEAVEN”

- Job continues to maintain his integrity despite his friends' accusations
 - He wants his suffering and innocence to testify on his behalf
 - Job now speaks of a “witness in heaven” and an “advocate on high”
 - Job's earlier longing for a mediator is developing into a longing for someone in heaven who knows the truth

WHEN NO ONE ON EARTH UNDERSTANDS JOB, HE
BEGINS LOOKING TOWARD HEAVEN FOR SOMEONE WHO
DOES



“MY SPIRIT IS
CRUSHED”

17:1-5



“My spirit is crushed,
and my life is nearly snuffed out.
The grave is ready to receive me.
2 I am surrounded by mockers.
I watch how bitterly they taunt me.
3 “You must defend my innocence, O God,
since no one else will stand up for me.
4 You have closed their minds to understanding,
but do not let them triumph.
5 They betray their friends for their own advantage,
so let their children faint with hunger.”

“MY SPIRIT IS CRUSHED”

- Job believes death is drawing near
 - Job feels abandoned by those around him
 - Job asks God Himself to guarantee his innocence
 - While struggling with God, Job still believes God is ultimately the one who must make things right



THE GOD JOB STRUGGLES TO UNDERSTAND
IS STILL THE GOD JOB TURNS TO FOR
VINDICATION



“GOD HAS
MADE ME A
BYWORD”

17:6–10



“God has made a mockery of me among the people;
they spit in my face.

7 My eyes are swollen with weeping,
and I am but a shadow of my former self.

8 The virtuous are horrified when they see me.
The innocent rise up against the ungodly.

9 The righteous keep moving forward,
and those with clean hands become stronger and stronger.

10 “As for all of you, come back with a better argument,
though I still won’t find a wise man among you.”

“GOD HAS MADE ME A BYWORD”

- Job's suffering has affected his reputation as well as his body
 - A once-respected man has become an object of ridicule
 - Job still refuses to accept his friends' explanation
 - The friends may return with more arguments, but Job does not believe they understand his situation

JOB HAS LOST ALMOST EVERYTHING – INCLUDING THE WAY OTHERS SEE HIM – BUT HE WILL NOT CONFESS TO SOMETHING HE DID NOT DO



“WHERE
THEN IS MY
HOPE?”

17:11–16



“My days are over.

My hopes have disappeared.

My heart’s desires are broken.

12 These men say that night is day;
they claim that the darkness is light.

13 What if I go to the grave[\[a\]](#)
and make my bed in darkness?

14 What if I call the grave my father,
and the maggot my mother or my sister?

15 Where then is my hope?

Can anyone find it?

16 No, my hope will go down with me to the grave.
We will rest together in the dust!”

“WHERE THEN IS MY HOPE?”



- Job believes his future, plans, and desires are disappearing
 - Death feels closer to him than restoration
 - His brief glimpse of a heavenly witness gives way again to despair
 - Job ends not with an answer, but with a question:
“Where then is my hope?”

JOB CAN STILL IMAGINE HOPE, BUT HE
CANNOT SEE HOW THAT HOPE SURVIVES
THE GRAVE



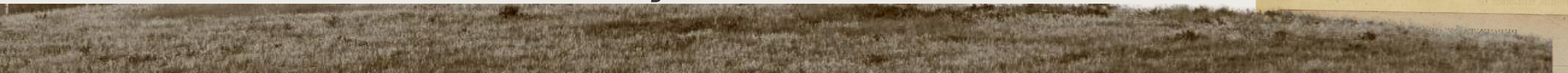
BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER



- Eliphaz becomes harsher while offering essentially the same explanation.
- Job's friends increasingly become accusers rather than comforters.
- Job feels attacked by both his friends and by God.
- Yet Job still looks toward heaven for a witness and advocate.
- Hope appears briefly, but chapter 17 ends with Job staring toward the grave.

Bottom Line:

As Job's earthly support disappears, he increasingly longs for someone in heaven who truly knows his case.



WHAT DO WE TAKE WITH US?

- Truth spoken without understanding can still wound
 - Listening becomes difficult when we are more interested in proving our position than understanding the person
 - Faith can contain tremendous tension
 - Job's longing for an advocate points beyond what Job himself can yet see

