

*These excerpts from the Book of Job are mostly drawn from the **New Revised Standard Version** translation, though a few portions draw on the wording used in “**The Message**” as well as the translation of the text from theologian **Ellen Davis**.*

*As it is laid out here, these passages are meant to be read antiphonally - with one reader reading the voice of Job and the other reading the voice of God.*

**Job:** After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. Job said: “Let the day perish in which I was born... Let that day be darkness! May God above not seek it, or light shine on it. Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.”

**God:** Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind: “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?... Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?... Who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?”

**Job:** “Look, he [the LORD] passes before me, and I do not see him; he moves on, but I do not perceive him... If I summoned him and he answered me, I do not believe that he would listen to my voice. For he crushes me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause; he will not let me get my breath, but fills me with bitterness.”

**God:** “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place?... Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? ... Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?”

**Job:** “I am allotted months of emptiness, and nights of misery are apportioned to me. When I lie down, I say, ‘When shall I rise?’ But the night is long, and I am full of tossing until dawn... Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good... Therefore I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.”

**God:** “Who has cut a channel for the torrents of rain, and a way for the thunderbolt, to bring rain on a land where no one lives, on the desert, which is empty of human life, to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground put forth grass?”

**Job:** “My eye has grown dim from grief, and all my members are like a shadow... My days are past, my plans are broken off, the desires of my heart.”

**God:** “Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, or loose the cords of Orion? Can you get Venus to look your way, or get the Great Bear and her cubs to come out and play? Do you know the

ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth? Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, so that a flood of waters may cover you?"

**Job:** "The night racks my bones, and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest... He has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes. I cry to you and you do not answer me; I stand, and you merely look at me."

**God:** "Who do you think set the wild donkey free, opened the corral gates and let him go? I gave him the whole wilderness to roam in, the rolling plains and wide-open places. He laughs at his city cousins, who are harnessed and harried. He does not hear the shouts of the driver. He grazes freely through the hills, nibbling anything that's green... Will the wild buffalo condescend to serve you, volunteer to spend the night in your barn?... Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, and spreads its wings toward the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high?"

**Job:** "Yes, I talked but did not understand, of things too wondrous for me, that I did not know... I had heard of you by hearsay, but now my eye has seen you. Therefore I recant and change my mind concerning dust and ashes."

**Job:** "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not a stranger."

**Amen.**