

Comments About Job 3

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of June 2, 2018.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss the book of Job. There will be times when we talk about (1) a group of chapters, (2) one chapter and (3) a portion of a chapter. Today, we will discuss Job 3.

I hope this project encourages you to review the valuable history and lessons found in the book of Job.

Three truths

In previous articles, we established the following truths.

- Following the two trials in chapters 1 and 2, Job's initial reaction was exemplary (Job 1:20-22 and Job 2:10).
- The book of Job mentions his sin in Job 35:16 ("Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain; he multiplies words without knowledge" and in Job 38:2 ("Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?").
- The words of the three friends were generally a negative influence upon Job (Job 42:7).

Chronology of the dialogue

Following is the chronology of the dialogue between the three friends and Job.

- Job spoke in chapter 3.
- Eliphaz spoke in chapters 4-5.
- Job spoke in chapters 6-7.
- Bildad spoke in chapter 8.
- Job spoke in chapters 9-10.
- Zophar spoke in chapter 11.
- Job spoke in chapters 12-14.
- Eliphaz spoke in chapter 15.
- Job spoke in chapters 16-17.
- Bildad spoke in chapter 18.

- Job spoke in chapter 19.
- Zophar spoke in chapter 20.
- Job spoke in chapter 21.
- Eliphaz spoke in chapter 22.
- Job spoke in chapters 23-24.
- Bildad spoke in chapter 25.
- Job spoke in chapters 26-31.

Important observation

Because of Job 42:7, Bible students accept that the words of the three friends were a negative influence upon the thoughts of Job and the words he used in expressing those thoughts.

However, did you notice that the words of Job in chapter 3 were expressed by him before he heard the words of the three friends (which began in chapter 4)?

While it is true that the words of the three friends toward Job were a negative influence upon him in chapters 4-31, his words in chapter 3 were spoken before they were a bad influence upon him.

Deplored his birth

Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth (Job 3:1).

Job 3:3-5—"May the day perish on which I was born, and the night in which it was said, 'A male child is conceived.' May that day be darkness; may God above not seek it, nor the light shine upon it. May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; may a cloud settle on it; may the blackness of the day terrify it."

Job 3:11-13—"Why did I not die at birth? Why did I not perish when I came from the womb? Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts, that I should nurse? For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep; then I would have been at rest.

Job 3:16—"Or why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, Like infants who never saw light?"

Job 3:20-22—"Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, who long for death, but it does not come, and search for it more than hidden treasures; who rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?"

Job 3:26—"I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes."