



# 103

UNCERTAINTY, SUFFERING, AND A SOVEREIGN GOD

*“How Not to be a Miserable Comforter”*



# JOB

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## Job 2:11-13

<sup>11</sup> When Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him,

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## **Job 2:11-13**

they set out from their homes and met together  
by agreement to go and sympathize with him  
and comfort him.

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## Job 2:11-13

<sup>12</sup> When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads.

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## Job 2:11-13

<sup>13</sup> Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.

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## **Job 16:2b**

**you are miserable comforters, all of you!**

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# What They Got Right

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Purposed together to go and minister

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Purposed together to go and minister  
Experienced deep grief and compassion

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Purposed together to go and minister  
Experienced deep grief and compassion  
Entered into mourning with Job

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Purposed together to go and minister  
Experienced deep grief and compassion  
Entered into mourning with Job  
Sat in silence for 7 days

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# What They Got Wrong

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## Job 4:1-8

<sup>1</sup> Then Eliphaz the Temanite replied:

<sup>2</sup> “If someone ventures a word with you, will you be impatient? But who can keep from speaking?

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## Job 4:1-8

<sup>3</sup> Think how you have instructed many,  
how you have strengthened feeble hands.

<sup>4</sup> Your words have supported those who  
stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees.

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## Job 4:1-8

<sup>5</sup> But now trouble comes to you, and you are discouraged; it strikes you, and you are dismayed.

<sup>6</sup> Should not your piety be your confidence  
and your blameless ways your hope?

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## Job 4:1-8

<sup>7</sup> “Consider now:

Who, being innocent, has ever perished?  
Where were the upright ever destroyed?

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## Job 4:1-8

<sup>8</sup> As I have observed, those who plow evil  
and those who sow trouble reap it.

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## Job 5:1-4

- <sup>1</sup> “Call if you will, but who will answer you?  
To which of the holy ones will you turn?
- <sup>2</sup> Resentment kills a fool, and envy  
slays the simple.

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## Job 5:1-4

<sup>3</sup> I myself have seen a fool taking root,  
but suddenly his house was cursed.

<sup>4</sup> His children are far from safety,  
crushed in court without a defender.

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## Job 8:4-6

<sup>4</sup> When your children sinned against him,  
he gave them over to the penalty of their sin.

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## Job 8:4-6

<sup>5</sup> But if you will seek God earnestly and plead with the Almighty, <sup>6</sup> if you are pure and upright, even now he will rouse himself on your behalf and restore you to your prosperous state.

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## Job 11:5-6

<sup>5</sup> Oh, how I wish that God would speak,  
that he would open his lips against you  
<sup>6</sup> and disclose to you the secrets of wisdom,  
for true wisdom has two sides.

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## **Job 11:5-6**

Know this:

God has even forgotten some of your sin.

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## **Job 11:12**

But the witless can no more become wise  
than a wild donkey's colt can be born human.

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## Job 42:7

After the Lord had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth about me, as my servant Job has.

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## John 9:1-3

- <sup>1</sup> As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.
- <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

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## John 9:1-3

<sup>3</sup> “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

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## **Job 19:21**

Have pity on me, my friends, have pity,  
for the hand of God has struck me.

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# What We Must Always Take into Account

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# 1. The mystery of suffering

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1. The mystery of suffering
2. The complexity of human nature

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1. The mystery of suffering
2. The complexity of human nature
3. The meaning of grace and the cross

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