



Journey through the Bible

The book of Job

“Why do the righteous suffer?”

Bible readings:

Job 19:1-27 (page 369)

Matthew 16:13-27

(page 694)

Job

Job

Joe-b

Why do good people suffer bad things?

- **Bad things are caused by:**
 - The natural world
 - Poor decision making
 - Evil in the heart of man:
Jesus said, “Evil thoughts come from the inside, from people’s hearts. So do sexual sins, stealing and murder. Adultery, greed, hate and cheating come from people’s hearts too. So do desires that are not pure, and wanting what belongs to others. And so do telling lies about others and being proud and being foolish.”
(Mark 7:21–22, NIV)



Why do good people suffer bad things?

- **Where is God?**
- If God is loving and powerful why does He not protect those He loves?
- This is called the “Problem of evil.”
- The book of Job faces this problem head on.



The Wisdom Books

- Inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- Grounded in real experiences
- Truths are expressed in poetic images.
- “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.”
(Psalm 23:1–2, NKJV)



The Book of Job

- Chapters 1 - 2 are narrative (story).
- Chapters 3 - 42 record a debate between Job and his friends about suffering and God in poetry.
- Did it actually happen?
- Was there really a man called Job?

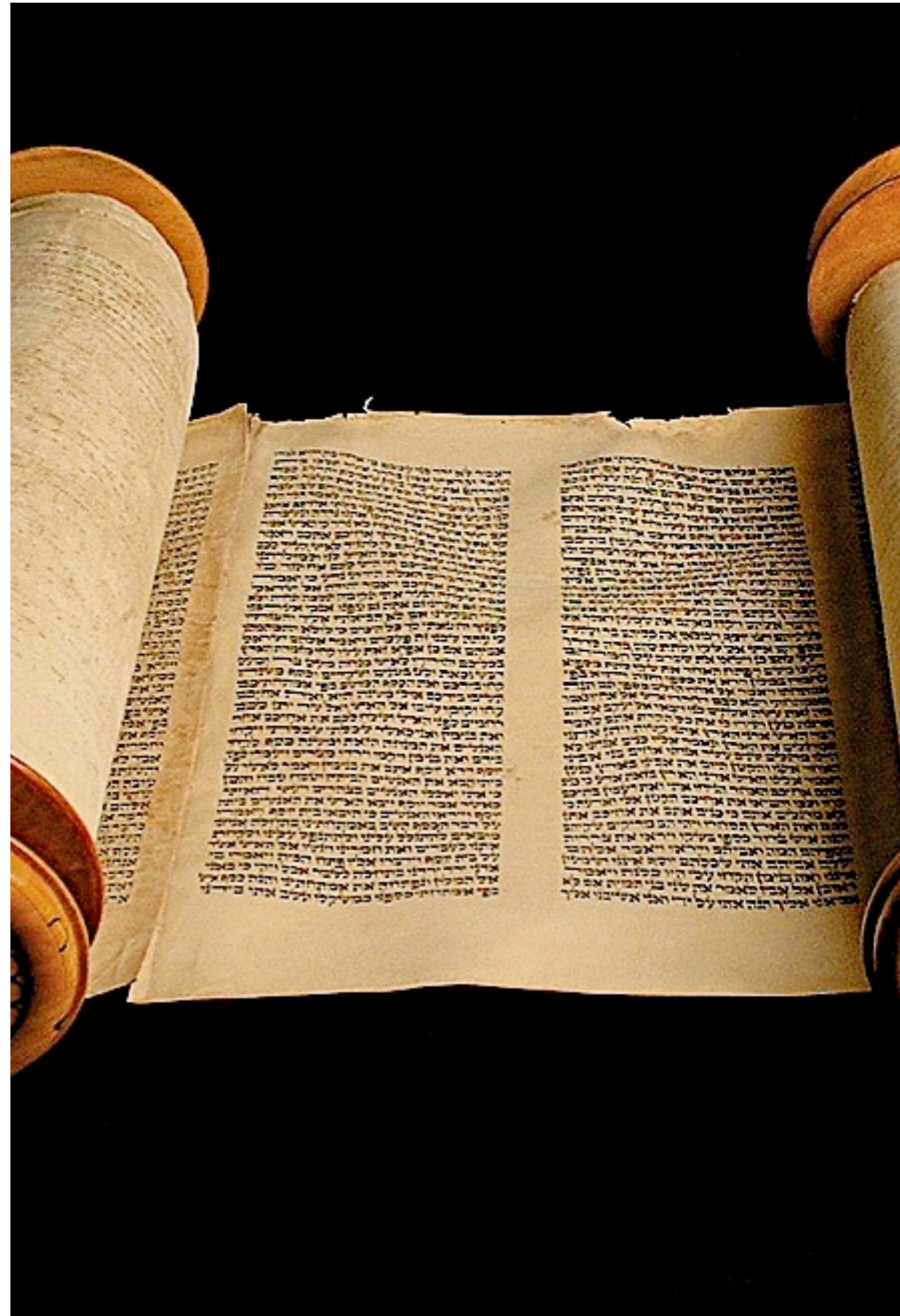


The Book of Job: evidence from the rest of the Bible.

- In the book of the prophet Ezekiel God says this: “Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it [the city of Jerusalem], they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,” says the Lord God.”
(Ezekiel 14:14, NKJV)
- “We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy.”
(James 5:11, NLT)

The Book of Job

- When was it written?
Not known.
Probably very old.
- Who was it written by?
Not known.
- The book is timeless.
It deals with the age old question of suffering.



In the Courts of Heaven

- The book begins with a description of Job's wealth, family and righteousness.
- In the courts of heaven God declares, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (Job 1:8, NKJV)



In the Courts of Heaven

- Satan says that Job only serves God because he knows God will bless him.
- “But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.” (Job 1:11, TNIV)
- God lifts His protection so Satan can attack Job.
- God does not inflict suffering: Satan does.



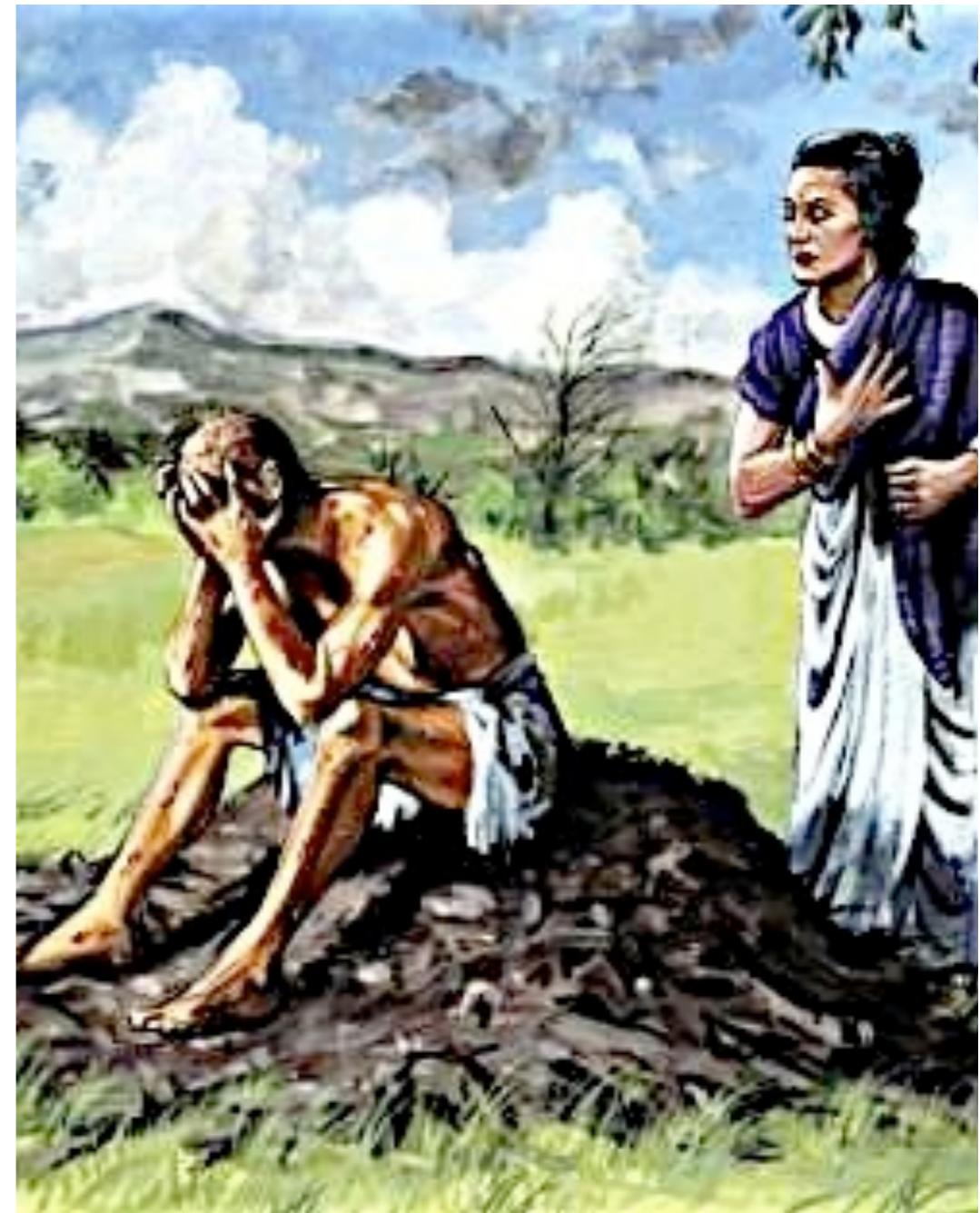
Job's sufferings begin

- Job loses everything he owns.
- His children are killed by a typhoon like wind.
- “At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.” In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.” (Job 1:20–22, TNIV)



Job's sufferings get worse

- Satan accuses Job of selfish motives: Job only worshipped God because his own body wasn't touched.
- The Lord partly lifts protection of Job's health and Satan afflicts him with a painful disease.
- Job still does not accuse God with wrong doing.
- "His wife said to him, "Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!" He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said."
(Job 2:9–10, TNIV)



Job's friends

- Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar.
- They debate with Job about why God has caused his suffering.
- They want to help but their way of helping is to accuse Job of sin and urge him to repent.
- No one knows what happened in the courts of heaven.



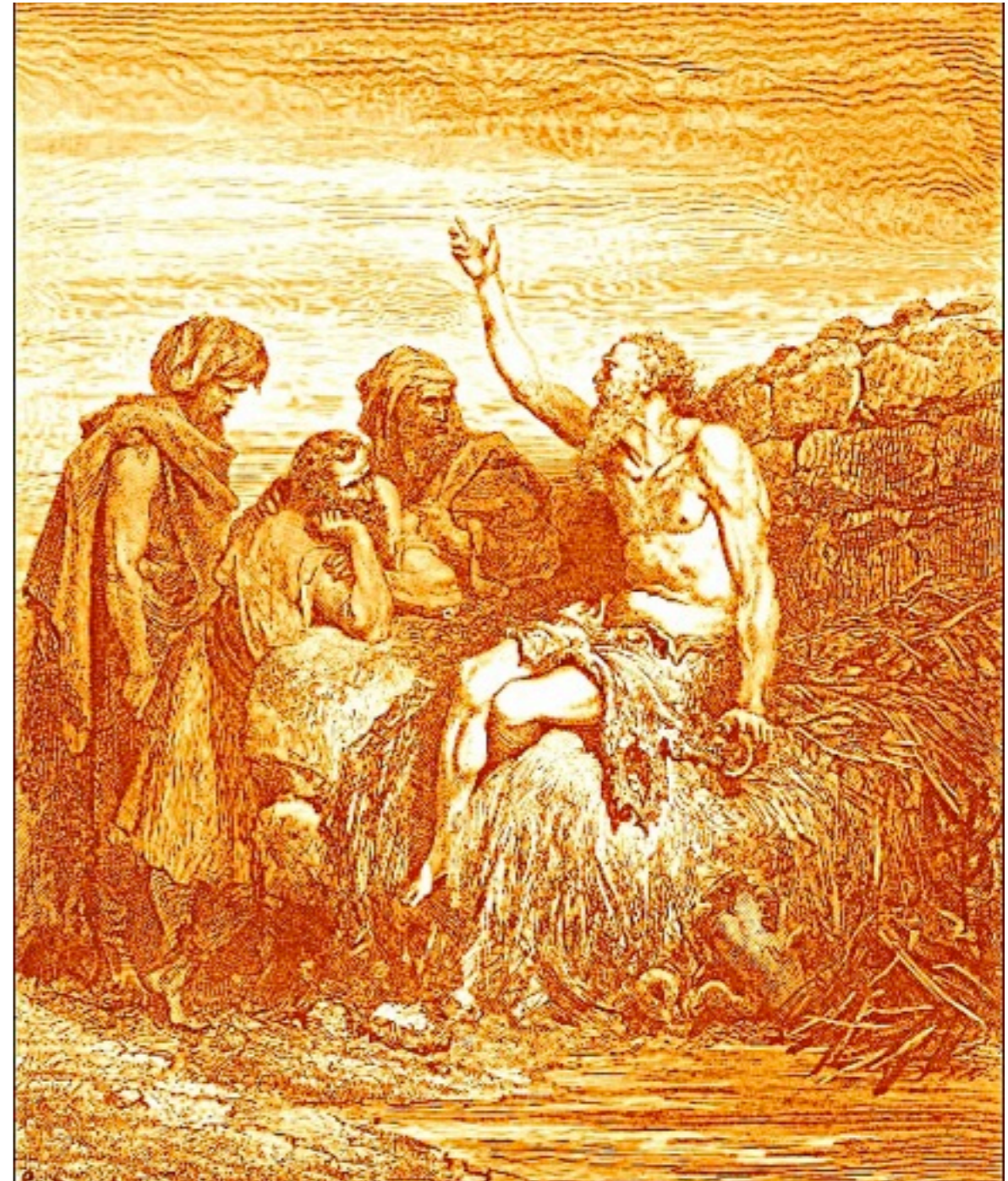
Job's Lament

- In his misery and pain Job does not curse God but he curses the day he was born.
- If this is what he was destined to suffer he would be better off dead.
- “Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, And whom God has hedged in? For my sighing comes before I eat, And my groanings pour out like water.” (Job 3:23–24, NKJV)



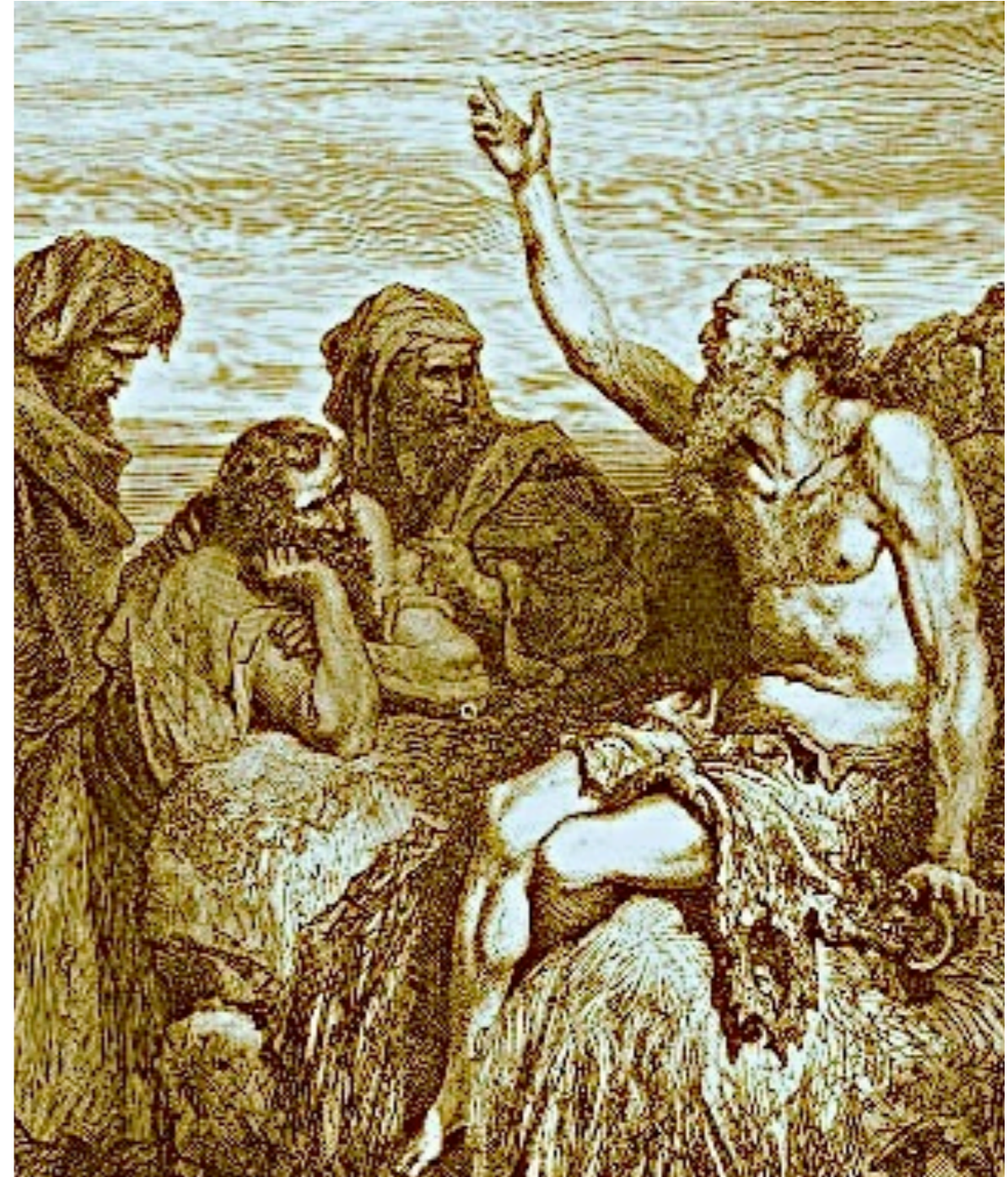
The Debate

- Eliphaz is the first to offer an explanation to which Job responds.
- This pattern is repeated with all three friends and concludes with a speech by a young man Elihu.
- The friends' argument is:
 - God rewards the righteous with blessing and punishes the evil doer.
 - Job is suffering therefore he must have sinned and God is punishing him.
 - Job must repent and God will heal and restore him.



The Debate

- Job refutes their argument in two ways:
 1. He vows he is innocent. He has done nothing wrong. He challenges them to show him his sin.
 2. The wicked don't automatically suffer. They enjoy life to the full even though they care nothing for God or His ways.



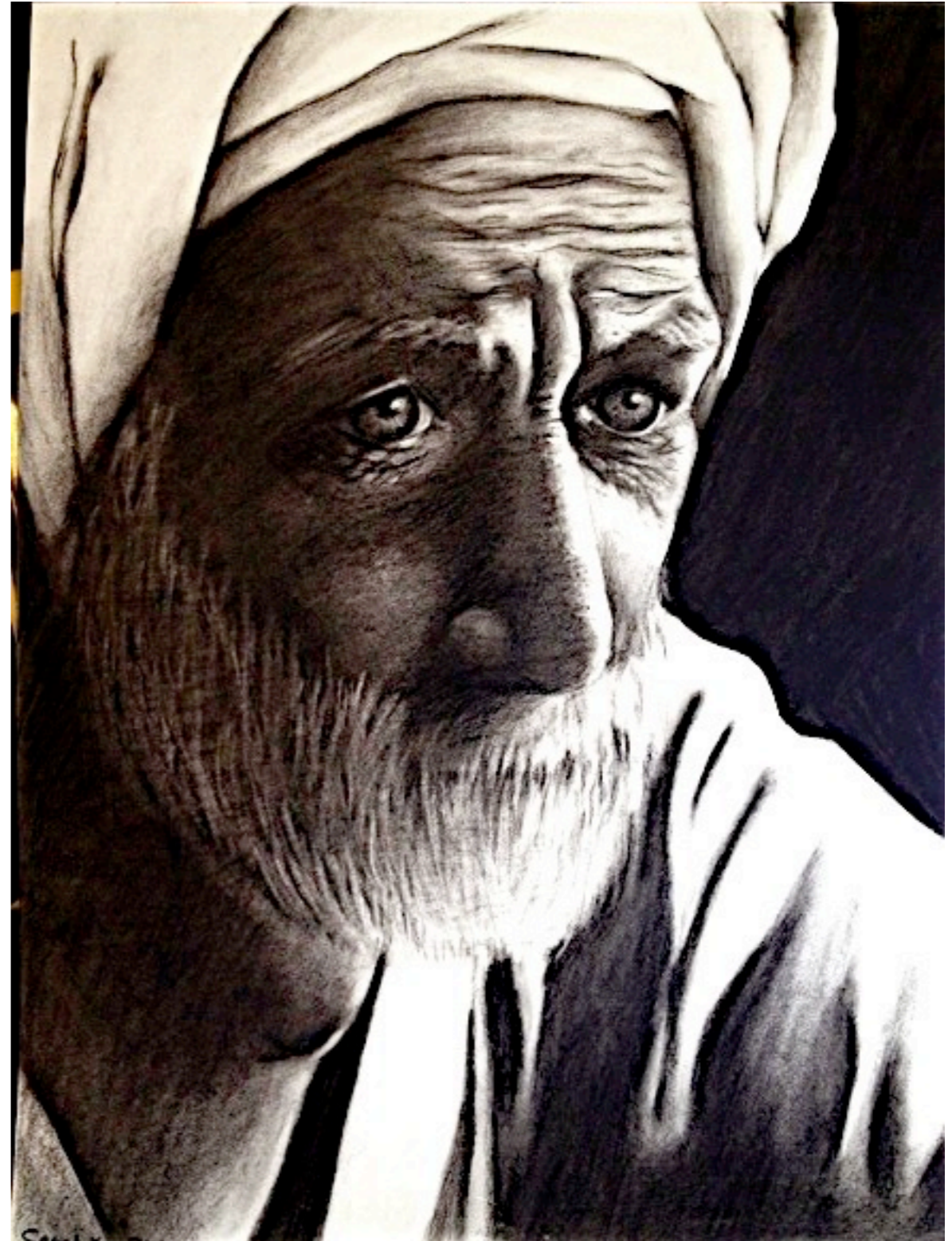
The Debate

- The friends point out that everyone is a sinner. How can Job not be a sinner?
- God is punishing Job for his unconfessed sin.
- If only Job would confess and repent God would restore his prosperity.
- “See how happy the man is whom God corrects; so do not reject the discipline of the Almighty. For He crushes but also binds up; He strikes, but His hands also heal.” (Job 5:17–18, HCSB)



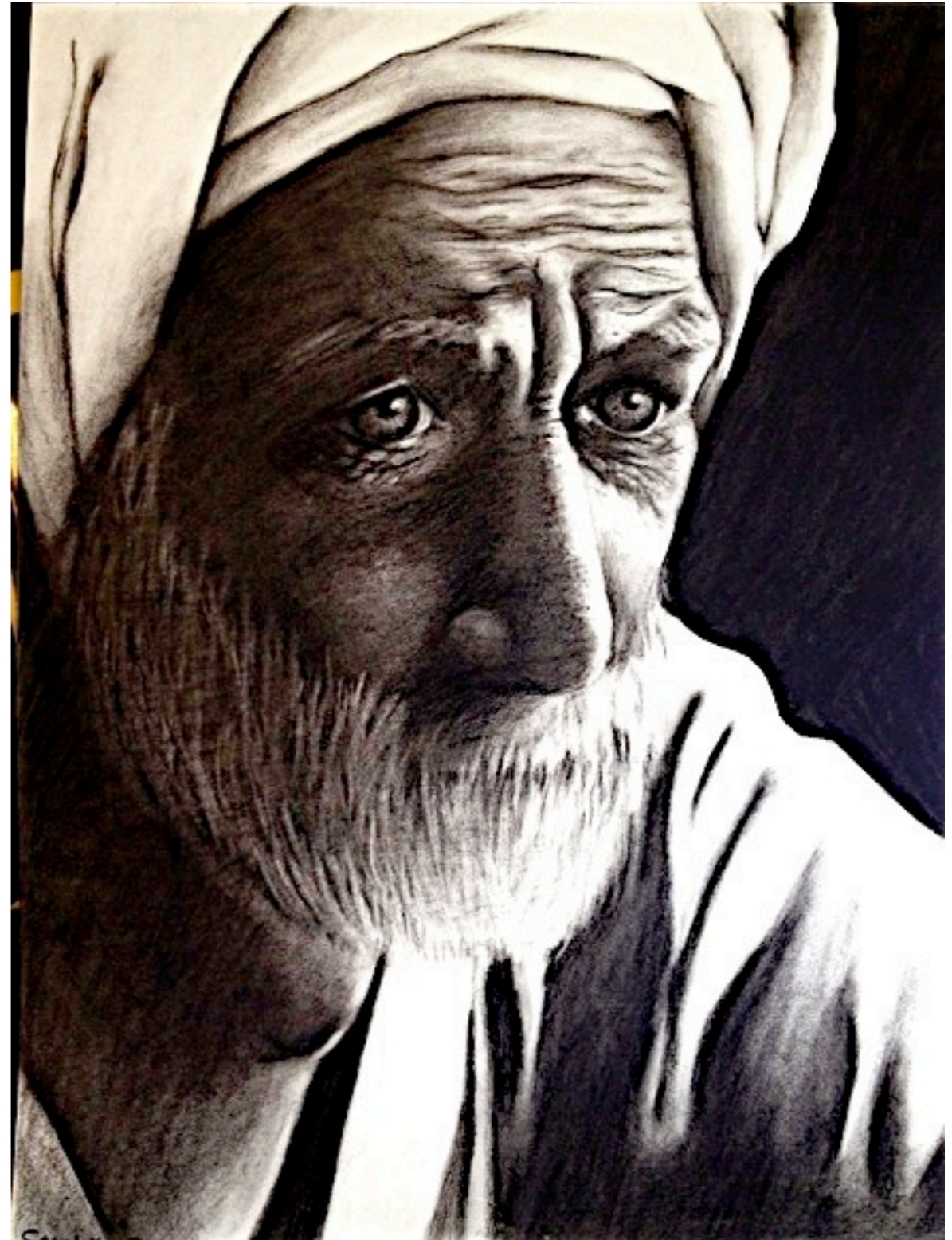
Job cries out to God

- Job tells his friends that their argument is rubbish!
- “Your maxims are proverbs of ashes; your defences are defences of clay!” (13:12)
- Job cries out to God to show him if he has sinned:
“Teach me, and I will keep quiet. Show me what I have done wrong.” (Job 6:24, NLT)



The Debate

- Job longs for a mediator to stand between him and God.
- “For He is not a man like me, that I can answer Him, that we can take each other to court. There is no one to judge between us, to lay his hand on both of us. Let Him take His rod away from me so His terror will no longer frighten me. Then I would speak and not fear Him. But that is not the case; I am on my own.” (Job 9:32–35, HCSB)



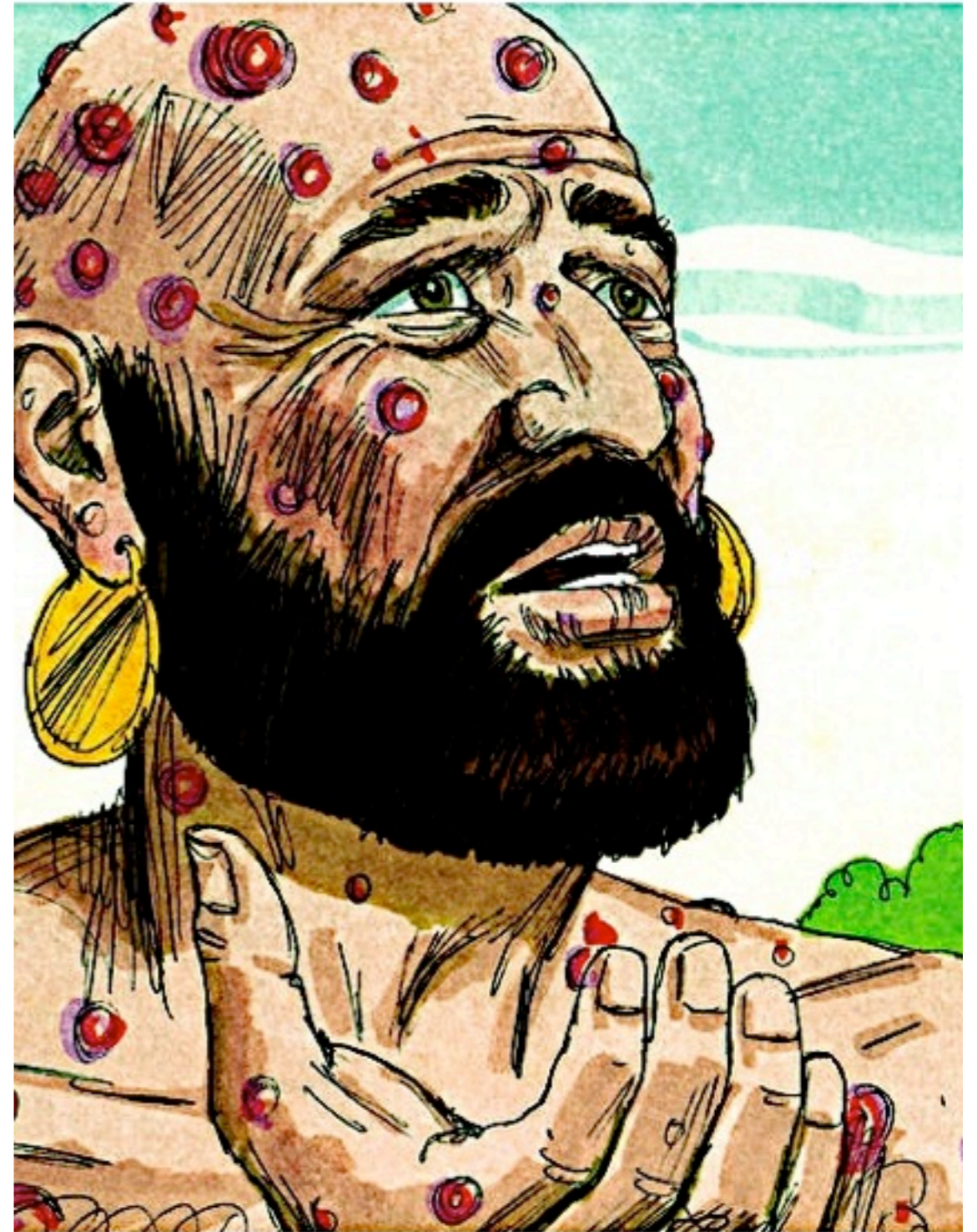
The Mediator

- “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.” (1 Timothy 2:5–6, NIV84)
- Jesus is the one who lays His hand on our shoulder and God’s “shoulder”. Its a beautiful picture of reconciliation between friends.



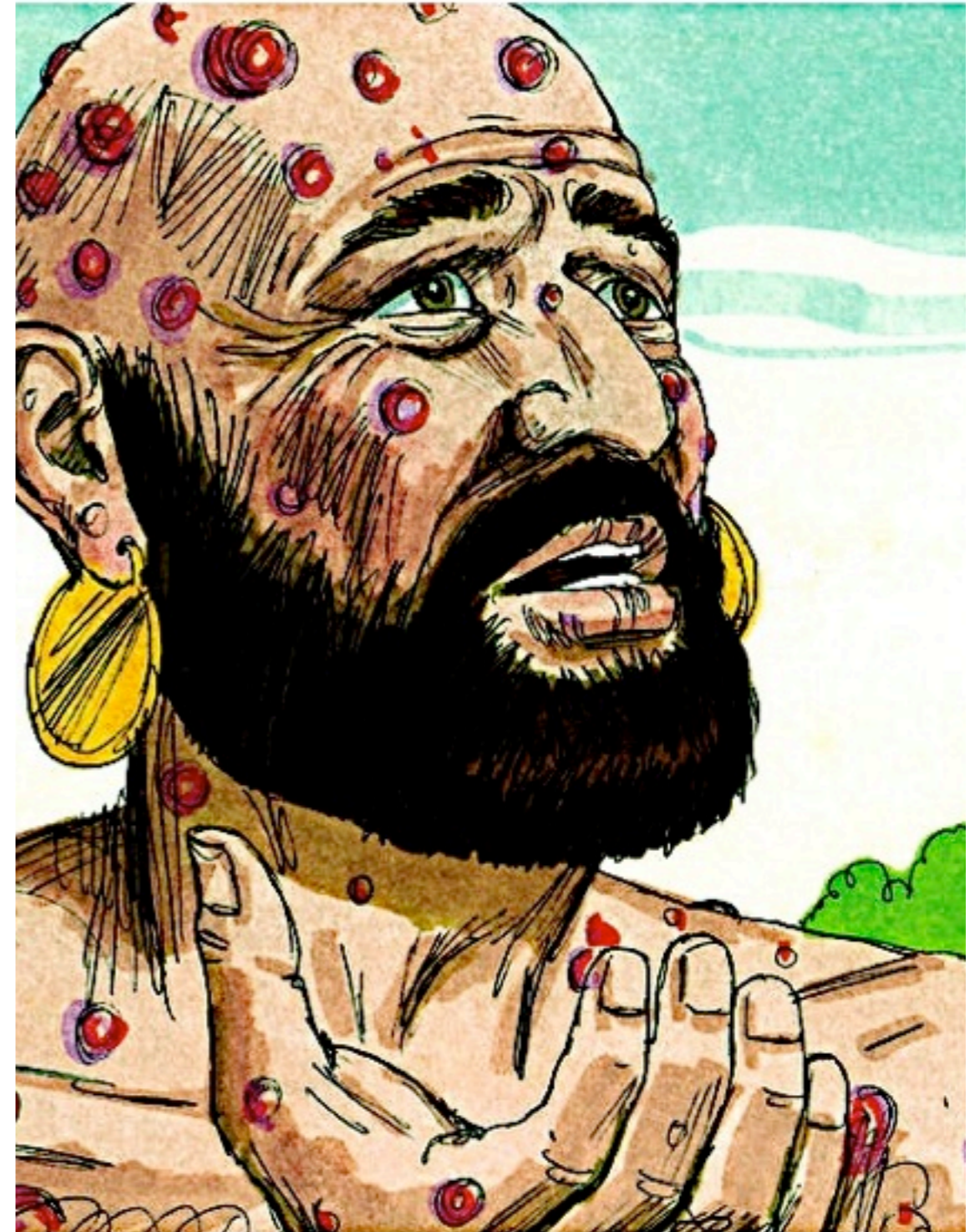
Job thinks God is testing him and abandoned him.

- “But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.” (Job 23:10, NIV84)



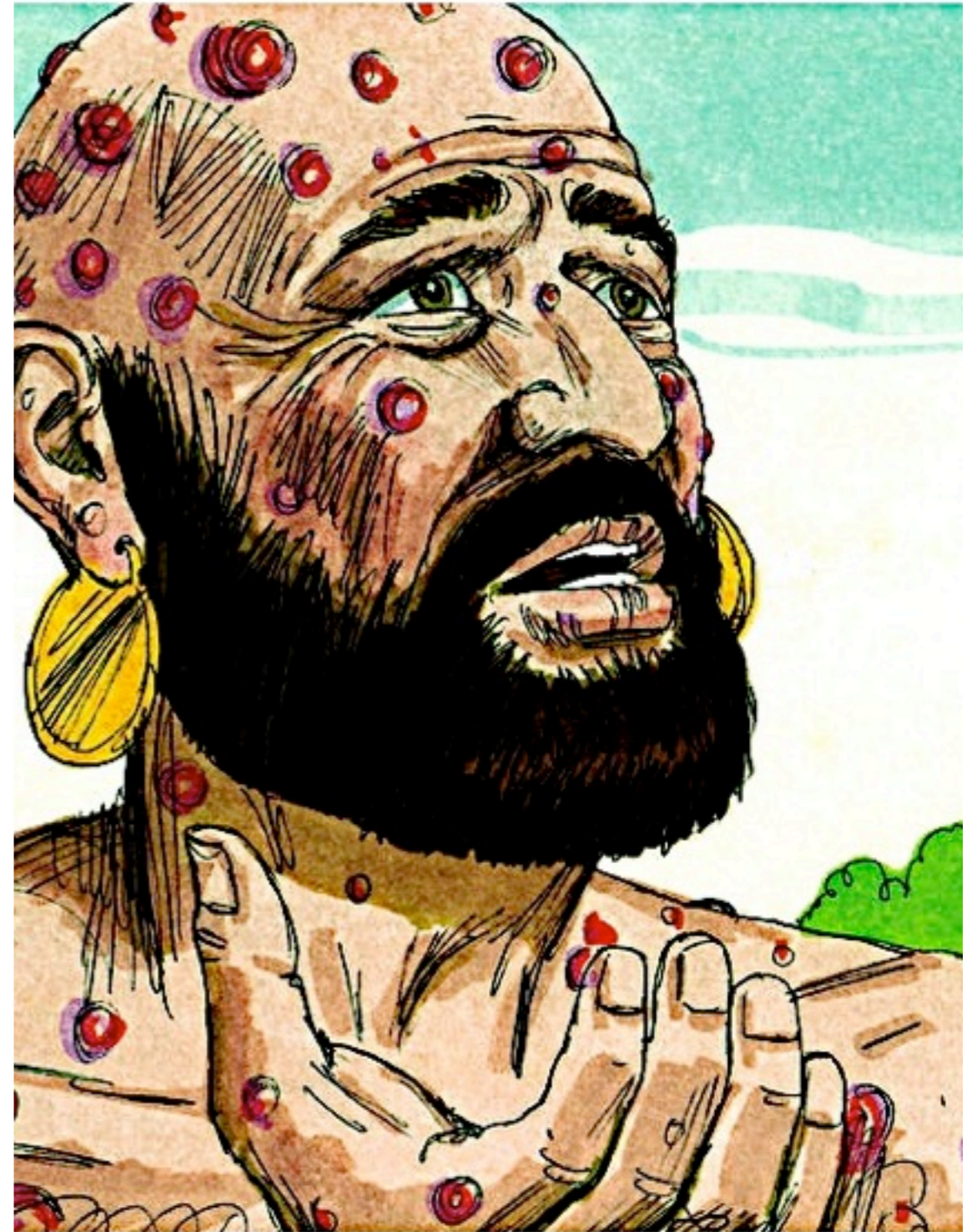
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- “Oh, for the days when I was in my prime, when God’s intimate friendship blessed my house, when the Almighty was still with me and my children were around me,” (Job 29:4–5, NIV84)



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- “Oh, for the days when I was in my prime, when God’s intimate friendship blessed my house, when the Almighty was still with me and my children were around me,” (Job 29:4–5, NIV84)
- “And now my life ebbs away; days of suffering grip me. Night pierces my bones; my gnawing pains never rest. In his great power God becomes like clothing to me; he binds me like the neck of my garment. He throws me into the mud, and I am reduced to dust and ashes.” (Job 30:16–19, NIV84)



God speaks

- Chapter 38-40 God enters the debate.
- He does not give Job a direct answer as to why he is suffering and being tested.
- In a series of questions God describes the beauty, power and complexity of His creation.
- By looking at His creation man can see that God's power and wisdom is infinitely greater than man's. Therefore how dare man question God's motives and character?



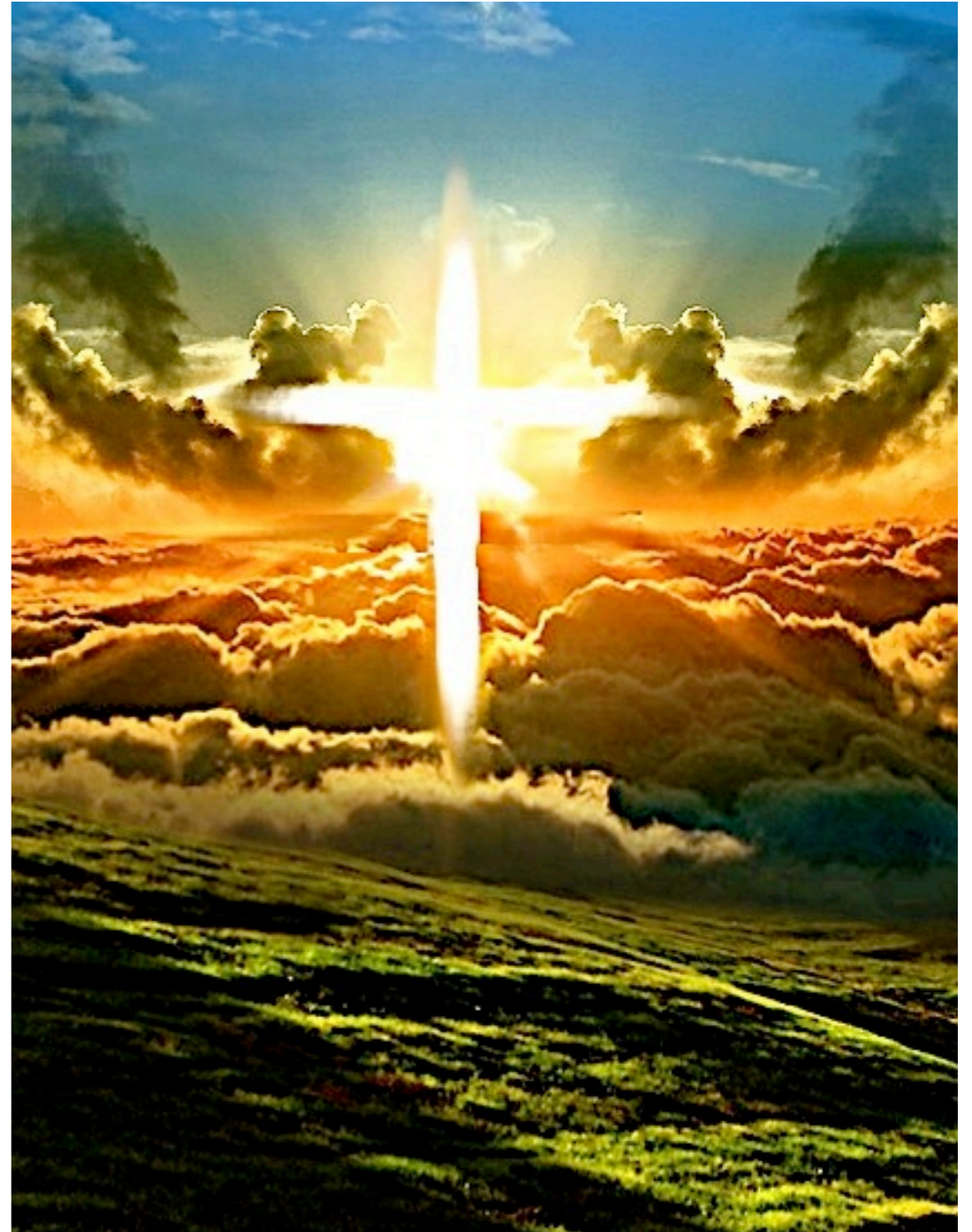
God speaks

- “Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said: “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it.” Then Job answered the Lord and said: “Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth.” (Job 40:1–4, NKJV)
- The only answer Job is given is that he must know that God is trust worthy and will do what is right and just.



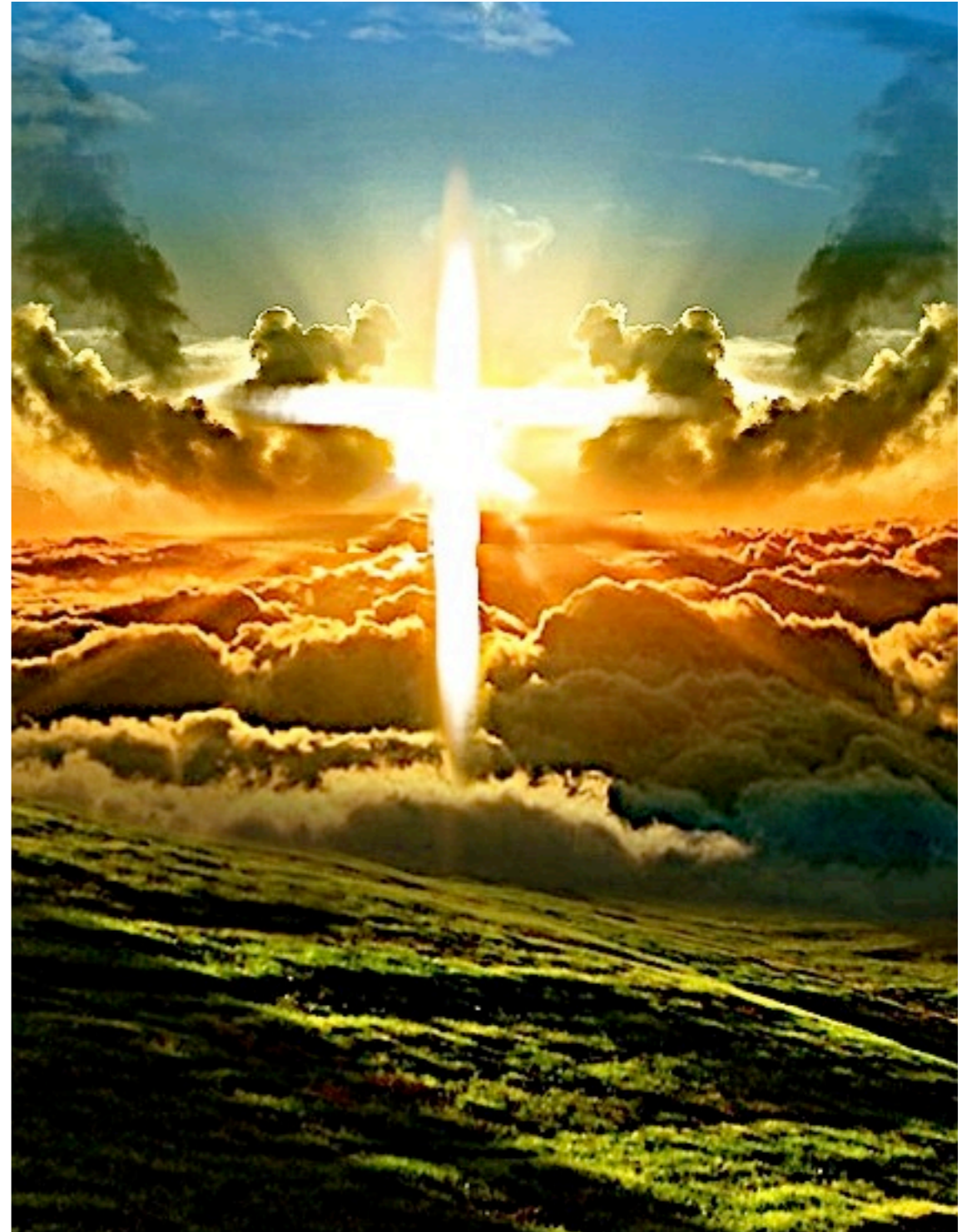
Revelation in Jesus

- Jesus revealed that beyond this life there is judgement and justice, forgiveness and love that will right all wrongs, heal all ills, and comfort all tears.
- When you look only at this world and this life, not everything will make sense. Only in Jesus do we begin to understand and only when we have died and come before Him all will be revealed.



Revelation in Jesus

- “Now we see only a dim likeness of things. It is as if we were seeing them in a mirror. But someday we will see clearly. We will see face to face. What I know now is not complete. But someday I will know completely, just as God knows me completely.” (1 Corinthians 13:12, NIV)



Revelation in Jesus

- “For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25–27, NKJV)

