

Job - Lessons from the Scene of Suffering

A Reading Guide for Job - 35 days

Day 1 - Satan's contention with God (part 1)

Job 1:

Q1: What does God make clear about Job and his character at the very beginning of this chapter?

Q2: Can Job's coming suffering be due to sin Job has committed?

Q3: Is there any evidence in this chapter of a cause-and-effect relationship between Job's sin and suffering?

Q4: Where does Job's suffering originate?

Q5: Who are the primary actors in the suffering and how are their roles related?

Q6: Are there any limitations on Job's suffering?

Q7: What does all this reveal about God?

Q8: Is there anything troubling to you in this? Humbly express to God in prayer those questions and concerns.

Q9: What comforts you in this revelation of God? Worshipfully express this to God in prayer.

Q10: Why does Satan think Job has been faithful to God?

Q11: How did Job respond once the disasters and suffering hit?

Q12: What does a righteous man say and think and do when inexplicable suffering comes?

Q13: Consider the "bookend" verses on this chapter (1:1 and 1:22). What does God make perfectly clear at the beginning about Job's character before and during the onset of his suffering?

Q14: What does Job's life impress upon you when you think about your own spiritual maturity? Worshipfully plead for the requests you have for your own spiritual maturity and growth.

Day 2 - Satan's contention with God (part 2)

Job 2:

Q1: How does Job's suffering transition in this chapter?

Q2: How is it different now?

Q3: Where does this next wave of suffering originate?

Q4: What is Satan's goal for Job in both waves of suffering?

Q5: Was Job there to see any of this conflict in heaven?

Q6: Does he know how he is an innocent victim in this conflict?

Q7: Can he understand the evil formed against him in heaven?

Q8: Can he comprehend Satan's attack on God from which his suffering comes?

Q9: What does this draw out of you that you can prayerfully and worshipfully bring to God?

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Q10: What was Job's response to his wife about receiving good and adversity from God in life?

Q11: How does this attitude and thinking challenge you? How do you need to grow? Is there anything for you to prayerfully confess and forsake?

Day 3 - Job's lament

Job 3:

Q1: How devastating was Job's suffering to him?

Q2: How did he now think of his life?

Q3: What does he express in his suffering that breaks your heart or provokes pity within you for him?

Q4: What does he express that is of concern to you?

Q5: Should a believer express these kinds of things when they suffer?

Q6: Job 3-31 is a painful back and forth between Job and his friends as both parties try to make sense of Job's suffering. Neither party could see what happened in the court of heaven. Both parties have some of the truth in Job's suffering and in general, but neither have the whole truth. How should that limitation affect what they say to each other and how much they say to each other?

Q7: As you read this long, difficult (but helpful) section (chs 3-31), put yourself in Job's shoes. Would you say what he says?

Q8: Would you want everything you said in your pain addressed?

Q9: Put yourself in Job's friends' places. Would you say what they say to him?

Q10: What would you do differently? Think about how you want to suffer well when you don't have all the answers for why you're suffering. Give thought to how you want to comfort a sufferer when you both don't have all the answers for why the suffering has come.

Day 4 - Eliphaz's first rebuke of Job

Job 4:

Q1: What did Eliphaz say about God that is true?

Q2: What did Eliphaz say about Job that is true?

Q3: Where did he incorrectly connect dots that should not have been connected in Job's case?

Q4: What assumptions did he work from?

Q5: What bothered him about Job?

Q6: What would it have been like to be Job and hear this from a friend?

Q7: How effective was Eliphaz as a friend and comforter?

Q8: Would you want a friend to be this way in your inexplicable suffering?

Q9: Do you want to be this kind of counselor for a friend suffering greatly?

Q10: What would you do or say differently?

Q11: Did he rightly interpret Job's words in chapter 3?

Q12: Does he think Job has lived up to what Job has counseled others?

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Job 5:

Q1: What does Eliphaz say he would do if he were in Job's shoes?

Q2: What does he say God is doing to Job?

Q3: Based on what you know from God's testimony about Job's character in chapters 1-2, is God disciplining Job?

Q4: What does Eliphaz believe this is that is happening to Job?

Q5: Is this helpful to Job?

Q6: What has he assumed that he shouldn't have?

Q7: What do you need to be careful about when you are caring for one who is suffering?

Pray for those you know who are suffering greatly. Pray for wisdom to be a good counselor for them. Pray for help or courage to suffer well and be gracious to the flawed counselors and comforters God will bring to you (or has brought to you already).

Day 5 - Job's first defense

Job 6:

Q1: Remember who the two primary actors were in the origin of Job's suffering. Which one does Job seem to have no awareness of in his complaint?

Q2: Which one does Job hold responsible for his suffering?

Q3: Is Job aware of his innocence, that he did not do anything to deserve this suffering?

Q4: What do you think of Job's quickness to conclude what he's concluding? Prayerfully express to God what is being impressed on your heart from this.

Q5: What does Job say a despairing man should receive from a friend?

Q6: What does Job believe a despairing man is in danger of doing?

Q7: How does this sober you as you consider what is at stake for you if you ever suffer to the point of despairing?

Q8: How does this make you want to be a good friend for one suffering greatly?

Prayerfully express what God is laying on your heart from this. Pray especially for those you know who are suffering.

Job 7:

Q1: How difficult is it for Job to find contentment in his suffering?

Q2: What is his suffering impressing upon him about his brevity of life?

Q3: What does this teach you about severe trials and the weakness of the believer?

Prayerfully express to God in prayer what impacts you regarding this.

Q4: What does Job say about God concerning his suffering?

Q5: Who is the one who actually is targeting Job, that Job is unaware of?

Q6: What do you think about Job's conclusions about God that he is making and declaring at this point?

Q7: What is the suffering believer in need of learning from this?

Q8: What cautions does this lay on your heart and mind? Prayerfully express a desire to be careful in your own suffering to not draw hasty conclusions about God. Humbly

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resolve to remember you can't see everything behind your suffering, or the suffering of others, and that conclusions need to be drawn cautiously and patiently.

Day 6 - Bildad's first rebuke of Job

Job 8:

Q1: What does Bildad say about God that is true and that is not necessarily true about God in Job's situation?

Q2: What assumptions does he make about God that are not helpful?

Q3: What does Bildad say about Job that is true and that is not necessarily true about Job in his specific suffering?

Q4: Was Job "pure and right"?

Q5: What was God's testimony about Job at the beginning?

Q6: So, if Job was pure and upright, why hasn't God "roused Himself" to restore Job?

Q7: What can't Bildad see about Job's suffering?

Q8: Who is he unaware of?

Q9: What do you think about how Bildad's limited knowledge affects the quality of his care for Job?

Q10: What is there in all of this for you to prayerfully consider? Humbly express that to God now.

Day 7 - Job's second defense

Job 9:

Q1: How does Job say God compares with man and man with God?

Q2: What is Job's point in accenting the great difference between God and man?

Q3: What do you think of Job's point that he's trying to make?

Q4: Does he believe the best about God at this point?

Q5: Why doesn't Job believe God is listening to him?

Q6: Try to summarize Job's assessment of God in his suffering at this point. What is Job saying that is true, or at least was true at the onset of his suffering?

Q7: What is he saying now that is questionable?

Q8: How is Job's attitude toward God and view of God shifting now?

Q9: Does Job think God is on his side?

Q10: Does he think God will support and defend him?

Q11: What effect has Job's suffering had overall on his view of God?

Q12: What do you think about this?

Q13: How does it make you want to pray for those suffering?

Q14: Do you need to pray and confess anything to God in your suffering? Pour out your heart to God what is burdening your heart from this chapter.

Job 10:

Q1: What is the conundrum Job can't get out of in 10:7?

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- Q2: If a man is innocent, but suffering comes, what does Job expect God should do for that man?
- Q3: How direct does Job see God connected to his great loss and pain?
- Q4: But how does the role of Satan in his loss and pain relate?
- Q5: What do you think about Job's conclusion on this?
- Q6: How far off is he?
- Q7: Does Job at this point see any benefit from being righteous over being wicked?
- Q8: Why or why not?
- Q9: What is Job questioning in 10:18ff?
- Q10: What is he really struggling with?
- Q11: What makes no sense to him in his suffering?
- Q12: Does any purpose God has for a man make sense for Job at this point?
- Q13: Remember Satan's aim with Job. Is it working?
- Q14: How seriously do we need to take suffering and its spiritual effect on the believer's relationship with God? Think of Scripture's teaching elsewhere on God's aim with trials and suffering. Consider God's aim for you in trials next to what Satan was after in Job. Compare these aims. Pour out your heart in prayer based on what is at stake in our suffering.

Day 8 - Zophar's first rebuke of Job

Job 11:

- Q1: How much is Job talking according to Zophar?
- Q2: What might a man who is suffering greatly be tempted to do with every thought he thinks?
- Q3: Zophar thinks Job is busily defending himself and his innocence. Do you think Zophar is right?
- Q4: How is Zophar trying to help Job in 11:7ff.
- Q5: What do you think about his help?
- Q6: Is this what Job needs?
- Q7: Why or why not?
- Q8: What does Zophar still see as the cause of Job's great suffering?
- Q9: Does he have a category for an innocent man suffering?
- Q10: What do you think Zophar should do and say instead?
- Q11: What should he help Job focus on?
- Q12: Job thinks he know what's going on. Zophar thinks he knows what has happened. Are either right?
- Q13: Are either in a position to help the other make sense of this suffering?
- Q14: How dangerous is it to go on an untested assumption at the scene of suffering?
- Q15: What does this make you want to pray? Pour out your heart to God in prayer.

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Day 9 - Job's third defense

Job 12:

- Q1: How do Job and his friends view each other now?
 - Q2: What has happened to their relationship?
 - Q3: What does Job think about them now?
 - Q4: What does suffering have the potential to do among friends who need to help one another think rightly in suffering?
 - Q5: Whose hand is responsible for this suffering according to Job?
 - Q6: Is he right? Explain.
 - Q7: What important party can Job not see at all in his suffering?
 - Q8: How does that affect the way he thinks about God's involvement in his suffering?
 - Q9: What is dangerous or concerning about this?
 - Q10: Does Job think he has God figured out?
 - Q11: Is he right?
 - Q12: How is he wrong in his conclusions about God in his suffering?
 - Q13: What is there to be careful about in your thinking when great suffering comes?
- Plead with God for wisdom to not think wrong thoughts about Him when you suffer. Ask Him for wisdom to help a suffering brother not draw wrong, premature or incomplete conclusions about God in his suffering.

Job 13:

- Q1: How would you describe the level of competition that now exists between Job and his friends?
- Q2: Is that what they both need at this point in his suffering?
- Q3: What went wrong that they are turning against each other and competing against each other's knowledge?
- Q4: What does Job desire to do with God at this point?
- Q5: What does Job think about his friends' care of him?
- Q6: Is he right?
- Q7: Who does Job have at this point to help him think rightly about God and to help him find the right posture before God in his suffering?
- Q8: How conflicted is Job about God at this point (13:15)?
- Q9: Is God slaying him? Explain.
- Q10: Does Job hope in God?
- Q11: Should he argue with God?
- Q12: What effect can suffering have on its victim?
- Q13: How does this make you want to pray for yourself when suffering comes?
- Q14: How does it make you want to be a good counselor for one suffering under this kind of conflicting thoughts?
- Q15: How convinced is Job of God's role in his suffering?
- Q16: Is he right?
- Q17: What can't he see?
- Q18: Should he draw this kind of conclusion about God?
- Q19: Should he accuse God of being responsible? Explain.

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Q20: Is there any evidence from chapters 1-2 that God considers Job his enemy?

Q21: Is Job's suffering proof that God sees Job as His adversary?

Q22: What can happen to the sufferer's view of God in suffering?

Q23: Is Satan making progress in his aim for Job in this suffering? Pour out to God in prayer what you are learning about how severe the scene of suffering is.

Job 14:

Q1: According to Job, who has more hope before God, a tree or a man?

Q2: What do you think about Job's state of mind and sensibleness at this point?

Q3: What could his friends do to help Job?

Q4: What does Job say God does with a man's hope?

Q5: Can Job see God at all as one with compassion at this point in his suffering?

Q6: How directly is Job's suffering affecting his view of God?

Q7: How does this lead you to pray for those in their own scene of suffering? Pray for them now.

Day 10 - Eliphaz's second rebuke of Job

Job 15:

Q1: What does Eliphaz say about the quantity of Job's words?

Q2: What does he liken Job's words to in creation?

Q3: What does he say Job's words or mouth proves regarding his suffering?

Q4: Is he right?

Q5: How helpful is Eliphaz's counsel or rebuke then?

Q6: What does Eliphaz accuse Job of thinking of himself?

Q7: What do you think about the direction the whole dialog has turned?

Q8: As Eliphaz recalls who he has seen suffering in his past, what kind of a person suffers in this manner according to him?

Q9: Does Job's suffering match Eliphaz's experience?

Q10: What is this impressing upon your heart and mind about the weight your experiences should have in your counsel for another who is suffering?

Q11: What would it be like to be mischaracterized and misunderstood like Job is in his suffering?

Q12: How could that complicate your suffering? Talk to God about what He is laying on your heart about wanting to care well for those who suffer.

Day 11 - Job's fourth defense

Job 16:

Q1: What does Job think of his friends abilities to comfort him in his suffering?

Q2: Does Job only need comforting in his suffering?

Q3: What does he say in this chapter that reveals he also needs some correcting?

Q4: What kind of spiritual maturity does it require to properly comfort and correct the one who is suffering greatly?

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- Q5: How does Job describe God in his suffering?
- Q6: What do you think about this vivid description of God from Job?
- Q7: Is Job right about God?
- Q8: Is there any evidence that God was angry with Job in chapters 1 or 2?
- Q9: Is there any evidence that God set Job up as His target to personally, directly hit?
- Q10: Again, what couldn't Job see about the cause or source of his suffering?
- Q11: Job is left to guess what the cause of his suffering is. Has he guessed right?
- Q12: How sure does Job seem about his suffering (where it has come from)?
- Q13: Does being certain mean he is right?
- Q14: What is there to be cautious about with the mysteries of the causes of our suffering?

Job 17:

- Q1: Describe the hopelessness and level of despair Job feels at this point. If he thinks God is targeting him as an adversary and his friends are mockers provoking him, where is he to turn for hope?
- Q2: What does this reveal about how important it is to help the one suffering maintain a right attitude and view of God in his suffering?
- Q3: How important is it for friends and counselors to make sure they are not drawing false conclusions about the sufferer?
- Q4: How does the sufferer's hope depend on these two things? Pour out your heart in prayer to God for those suffering and those trying to care well for those suffering. Lift them up before the Lord now.

Day 12 - Bildad's second rebuke of Job

Job 18:

- Q1: Does Bildad find Job's words about his friends to be offensive?
- Q2: What does Bildad say that indicates that he thinks Job has too high of thoughts of himself?
- Q3: Does Bildad or his friends seem to be budging from their conclusion that Job must have some wickedness somewhere for this suffering to have come?
- Q4: Are they becoming more cemented in their conclusions or becoming open to considering another conclusion?
- Q5: Has Job been persuasive in their minds?
- Q6: Has Job found his friends persuasive?
- Q7: What hope, then, is there in this scene of suffering?
- Q8: What is this impressing upon your heart about not letting either the sufferer or the counselors get out of control? To keep it from becoming personal? Talk to God about what you are learning.

Day 13 - Job's fifth defense

Job 19:

- Q1: What does Job think his friends are doing to him?

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- Q2: Can Job see the wrong thinking he has?
- Q3: Can his friends see the wrong they are doing Job?
- Q4: Has God done Job wrong in this suffering?
- Q5: So why does Job so confidently declare God has wronged him?
- Q6: Does Job think he deserves an answer from God in his suffering?
- Q7: Do you?
- Q8: Does Job seem quick to defend himself against false accusations?
- Q9: Do his friends seem quick to defend themselves against Job's accusations?
- Q10: Consider God. Is He quick to speak up and defend Himself though He is being misrepresented and misunderstood in this suffering?
- Q11: Has the hand of God struck Job?
- Q12: Has Job lost all hope (19:25-27)?
- Q13: What is he talking about here?
- Q14: How will he see God one day from his flesh?
- Q15: Remember the time and setting of this book in the Old Testament. How well did this old patriarch understand the resurrection?
- Q16: Did his contemporary Abraham understand the place that the resurrection held in God's promises?
- Q17: What questions do you have? Bring them to God in prayer. Lay them out before Him as you marvel at His word.

Day 14 - Zophar's second rebuke of Job

Job 20:

- Q1: How did Zophar describe his inward condition as he observed and heard Job (and the dialog)?
- Q2: Did you imagine that there could be such inward agitation going on, being added to the burden of caring for a suffering friend?
- Q3: How did he respond to Job's rebuke?
- Q4: How teachable are the parties here?
- Q5: Are any of them approachable at this point?
- Q6: Zophar places the demise of the wicked man alongside Job's extreme suffering. What's the point he's trying to make in his analogy between Job's situation and the wicked man?
- Q7: Has this book offered any evidence that Job is a wicked man or that his suffering is due to his wickedness?
- Q8: Again, how certain are Job's friends that they know why he is suffering?
- Q9: Does their certainty mean they are right?
- Q10: How does this make you want to pray for those (and yourself) who are in the scene of suffering?

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Day 15 - Job's sixth defense

Job 21:

- Q1: What does Job describe about the wicked man's life in comparison to what Zophar described in chapter 20?
- Q2: What does Job say about the ease that wicked men experience in life?
- Q3: Is what he said often true?
- Q4: Is Job experiencing an easy life like the wicked often do?
- Q5: Then, how different is Job from wicked men and what they often experience?
- Q6: How did Job just use the example of the wicked to prove just the opposite of what his friends tried to prove by referring to the wicked?
- Q7: Do you think this kind of argumentation will be effective?

Day 16 - Eliphaz's third rebuke of Job

Job 22:

- Q1: Does Eliphaz have a category or explanation that anyone else besides God could be directly responsible for Job's suffering?
- Q2: So what kind of a man must Job be to be suffering directly from the hand of God according to Eliphaz?
- Q3: How certain is Eliphaz that Job has somehow been wicked?
- Q4: What kinds of accusations of wickedness does Eliphaz make?
- Q5: What effect will this have on Job in his suffering?
- Q6: Again, is there evidence of this kind of wickedness in Job?
- Q7: What was God careful to say about Job's holiness at the onset of the suffering?
- Q8: What does Eliphaz say Job needs to do to be at peace with God and restored to Him?
- Q9: Is he right?
- Q10: Before you call someone to repentance, what do you need to be certain of?
- Q11: How can this shape your prayers and your approach to those suffering who need a good counselor?

Day 17 - Job's seventh defense

Job 23:

- Q1: What is Job finding perplexing about God in his suffering?
- Q2: Why do you think God is pausing so long in not answering Job as he suffers?
- Q3: What are we to humbly be prepared for when we walk through our own scenes of suffering regarding God's timing to answer us or not?
- Q4: What does Job say about his own integrity and character?
- Q5: Does he know God is in control?
- Q6: Based on not hearing anything from God, if he did come face to face with God, what does he imagine it would be like to see Him?
- Q7: Though Job is deeply perplexed by God's silence, is he going to give up?

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Q8: What does a sufferer like this need most from his friends and counselors?

Q9: How would you want to be cared for at this point if it were you?

Q10: What could you hear about God that would help you the most? Pour out to God in prayer what you are learning about how sobering the scene of suffering is and how spiritually challenging or refining it is.

Job 24:

Q1: Job's friends keep telling him about how God brings severe judgment on the wicked (Job's suffering looks like that judgment to them). What is Job trying to do by telling them about the wicked in life who seem to NOT get the judgment they deserve?

Q2: What is Job trying to do to their line of argument with this?

Q3: Meditate on this scene of suffering and where it has degenerated. Counselors are accusing an innocent man of being wicked. They are not able to comfort at all a man suffering greatly and innocently. They are calling an innocent man to repent of wickedness he has not committed. This only adds to his pain. Job believes God has directly brought this suffering on him, and God must explain Himself to Job. And Job is perplexed by God's silence. And Job is spending energy to rebuke his counselors with no fruitful outcome. Neither side has the crucial missing information of Job 1-2. They could not see into the court of heaven to witness what happened there to cause this suffering. And so both sides, without the "why" of Job's suffering available to them, are bludgeoning each other. If you're familiar with the rest of the story of Job, does God ever give him the "why" of his suffering?

Q4: Is that ever the goal God has for Job in his suffering (to find out why it is happening)?

Q5: What has happened to this scene of suffering when both parties think they know the "why" of Job's suffering (but both parties are wrong)?

Q6: What role do you think the "why" of your own suffering should play as you endure suffering?

Q7: What dangers need to be considered if the sufferer and comforters both crave to know the "why" of suffering?

Q8: Is there a better thing to crave in the scene of suffering?

Q9: What would both parties benefit from more than an answer to the "why" of suffering?

Day 18 - Bildad's third rebuke of Job

Job 25:

Q1: What does Bildad think of Job's declaration of innocence before God?

Q2: Is Job suffering because he was an unjust or impure man?

Q3: Has Bildad's wrong thinking about Job changed at all?

Q4: And is Job's suffering coming directly from God? Explain.

Q5: Has Job's wrong thinking about God changed?

Q6: What does Bildad say that is true about God and man in this short chapter?

Q7: Is his correct theology and anthropology changing his incomplete theology in another area?

Q8: What do you think about this phenomenon in the scene of suffering?

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Q9: What kind of wisdom and spiritual maturity is needed to sift through right and wrong thinking, complete and incomplete theology?

Q10: What kind of wisdom and spiritual maturity is needed to disentangle each other from wrong thinking to right thinking? Pour out to God in prayer what He is impressing upon your heart from this.

Day 19 - Job's eighth and last defense (part 1)

Job 26:

Q1: What does Job think of his friend Bildad's counsel so far?

Q2: Pull back for a moment and just observe what is happening. Job is suffering greatly. He needs proper care from his friends to remain faithful to God as he perseveres. His friends are rebuking him from incomplete information about his suffering. Job is resorting to sarcasm now. Describe how far off track this scene of suffering is. The last thing that is happening is comfort for a suffering friend. It has all become personal. What does this teach you about how wrong things can go in the scene of suffering if we are not alert and careful?

Q3: How can you be on guard against this? Prayerfully consider how God might equip you to protect the scene of suffering from degeneration into these kinds of personal attacks.

Q4: How does Job describe God?

Q5: Is his theology right?

Q6: So, has ALL of Job's view of God degenerated or been weakened?

Q7: How do friends need to watch each other lovingly, carefully in regards to their whole view of God in the midst of suffering? Ask God for wisdom to know how to affirm right thinking about God in the scene of suffering, but to charitably and carefully listen for where wrong thinking or wrong theology has crept in.

Q8: If you hear wrong thinking from a suffering brother, should you assume ALL his thinking is wrong?

Q9: Similarly, if you hear right thinking from a suffering brother, should you assume all his thinking is correct? The same could be applied to the counselor.

Q10: How should we walk in love with each other down the long, hard path of suffering?

Day 20 - Job's eighth and last defense (part 2)

Job 27:

Q1: How committed is Job to his innocency in the cause of his suffering?

Q2: Does it look like he's going to give in to his friends' view of him?

Q3: Should he give in to their view of him?

Q4: If he doesn't, what explanation might they have for why he won't accept their view of him?

Q5: Try to describe what Job is doing in these interchanges with his friends that is good and wise, and what is not good and unwise. Prayerfully consider just how mixed we

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creatures are in the scene of suffering. What is God laying on your heart to prayerfully consider?

Q6: What does Job say about how secure the wicked man's life is before God?

Q7: Is he right?

Q8: How similar are Job's thoughts here about the wicked compared to what his friends have been saying?

Q9: Where do they agree and disagree?

Day 21 - Job's eighth and last defense (part 3)

Job 28:

Q1: To what extent does Job say man is willing to go to search for unseen treasure deep in the earth?

Q2: Is God's wisdom to be found in similar places as earthly treasures?

Q3: Is it to be found in the same manner or effort one puts into finding earthly treasure?

Q4: How elusive is God's wisdom to man and this world?

Q5: Who does know where God's wisdom is to be found?

Q6: How can God's wisdom come to man?

Q7: What does God say wisdom is?

Q8: What do you think about what Job is saying?

Q9: Is he right and does what he says make sense?

Q10: In this moment of clarity for Job, what would God's wisdom focus him on in his suffering?

Q11: What would God's wisdom focus his counselors on?

Q12: How would both parties fearing the Lord and turning away from evil help at this point in the suffering?

Q13: What is wisdom's goal for the one suffering (28:28)?

Q14: What should we help those suffering do while they suffer?

Q15: Will this wisdom of God reveal to Job the "why" of his suffering?

Q16: What will it do for Job instead in his suffering?

Q17: What do you think about that? What is God impressing upon your heart about what is good to focus on in our suffering?

Day 22 - Job's eighth and last defense (part 4)

Job 29:

Q1: Describe how and what Job remembers of his past. Was it pleasant in his mind?

Q2: What did he think God was like toward him back in those pleasant days?

Q3: Has God stopped "watching over" him (29:2)?

Q4: Has God ceased being "friends" with Job (29:4)?

Q5: Has God left Job (29:5)?

Q6: Is Job accurately representing God in his suffering?

Q7: Why does Job think God has changed toward him?

Q8: What does Job need help from his friends to do concerning his view of God?

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Q9: How does this help prepare you to watch over your friend who may be suffering?

Q10: Ask God for help for how to gently help your friend to maintain right thinking about God even though mystery may still remain in his suffering. Prayerfully resolve now to allow those around you to help you maintain a right view of God while you suffer.

Day 23 - Job's eighth and last defense (part 5)

Job 30:

Q1: How does Job describe his present condition compared to his past (chapter 29)?

Q2: When Job says that God does not answer him (30:20), does that mean Job doesn't have enough from God in his suffering (recall 28:28)?

Q3: So then, why has Job NOT heard from God that he desperately wants an answer for?

Q4: What does Job say God has become to him (30:21)?

Q5: According to Job 1-2, who has been cruel to Job? Think carefully on this - Job is attributing to God what Satan has been toward him!

Q6: Does Job seem certain of this conclusion?

Q7: But is he right?

Q8: How would you try to help Job in this if you could? Pour out to God in prayer what this is impressing on your heart.

Day 24 - Job's eighth and last defense (part 6)

Job 31:

Q1: Look back through the previous chapters to see where this latest response from Job began. How long is this response of his compare to his prior responses?

Q2: Look forward a bit. Will Job have any more responses to his friends?

Q3: What does Job declare one more time about himself in this chapter? Go back and refresh your memory with what God said to Satan about Job's character in Job 1-2.

Q4: Again, is Job accurately representing God while he suffers?

Q5: What does this reveal about what one of the main goals must be when we suffer?

Q6: What must we be careful of and request help from others for when we suffer?

Q7: What should we ask each other to listen for in our words when we "vent" in our suffering? Talk to God about how you want to be well prepared for suffering when it comes to you or to those around you.

Day 25 - Elihu's one rebuke of the three and Job (part 1)

Job 32:

Q1: Why did Job's three friends cease answering Job?

Q2: Was Job helpful in their interchanges?

Q3: Go back and make sure those three friend's names are clear in your mind (see 2:11). Write them down. Who is this Elihu mentioned in Job 32?

Q4: How old is he in comparison to his other three friends of Job?

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- Q5: Where has he been this whole time?
- Q6: Why has he waited til now to speak?
- Q7: What is his demeanor toward Job and the three friends?
- Q8: Why is he angry with Job and should he be? Explain.
- Q9: Why is he angry at the three friends and should he be? Explain.
- Q10: What does Elihu say the three failed to do with Job (32:12)?
- Q11: Has it been easy for him to stay silent for so long?
- Q12: What does Elihu hope to be toward both parties (32:21)?
- Q13: How helpful do you think that will be at this point?
- Q14: Glance ahead to see how long Elihu's words last. What immediately follows his lengthy speech?
- Q15: Does Job respond to him?
- Q16: Whose turn will it be to finally speak after Elihu?
- Q17: Glance forward to 42:7-9. Is Elihu included in the group who was foolish?
- Q18: Did God include him in the group who spoke what wasn't right?
- Q19: What impact does that have on how we should view Elihu's speech in Job 32-37?
- Q20: How are his words different from the other three friends' discourses with Job?

Day 26 - Elihu's one rebuke of the three and Job (part 2)

Job 33:

- Q1: How does Elihu initially seek to gain a hearing from Job (33:1-7)?
- Q2: Did the other three try to do this?
- Q3: Is Elihu afraid to correct Job?
- Q4: What does Elihu say Job's complaint against God has been?
- Q5: Does God have to give an account to us of all His doings in our suffering?
- Q6: What will happen to us if we condition our trust, contentment and happiness on God explaining all that He is doing in our suffering?
- Q7: What effect does Elihu say severe suffering often has on a man?
- Q8: What does Elihu desire to do to Job (33:32)?
- Q9: What effect might that have on Job upon hearing it?
- Q10: What do you think of Elihu's words to Job?
- Q11: How is he different from the other three?
- Q12: What made him more winsome in Job's suffering than the other three?
- Q13: What is God laying on your heart that you want to prayerfully consider for your own growth?

Day 27 - Elihu's one rebuke of the three and Job (part 3)

Job 34:

- Q1: When Elihu quotes Job, do you think he was fair and accurate?
- Q2: Or did he give a too general summary of what he thought Job was trying to communicate?

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Q3: How important is it, if we are going to quote one another's words, to be accurate and fair with our treatment of each other's words?

Q4: What did Elihu think of Job's claims?

Q5: How many other men does Elihu say are like Job in claiming what he claims (34:7)?

Q6: Do you think Job has put himself in a unique category, different from others?

Q7: What might be the danger in thinking that your suffering is not like what any other person has gone through?

Q8: How unique, though, is Job's suffering to him?!

Q9: What do you think about Elihu's descriptions of God

Q10: Is he right?

Q11: How might this whole scene of suffering have gone differently if either the three friends or Job admitted they did not see the whole picture and did not know everything (34:31-32)?

Day 28 - Elihu's one rebuke of the three and Job (part 4)

Job 35:

Q1: What does Elihu say Job thought about how right he was in his complaint compared to how right God was in his suffering (35:2)?

Q2: Do you see how Job wandered over time in all of the dialog to this unfortunate thinking and that he didn't get there all at once?

Q3: What should this alert us to as we care for one another in our suffering? Big shifts in thinking may happen all at once, but it is important to walk with one another over the long haul and watch for incremental shifts in our thinking.

Q4: Where does Elihu say Job's case of suffering and complaints are (35:14)?

Q5: What must he do now as one of God's creatures?

Q6: What should Job be careful not to do while he waits longer than he would like to?

Q7: What are we prone to do with our words the more we speak in our suffering?

Q8: What do you want to pour out in prayer to God from this?

Q9: How can we help each other think carefully about how much we should give words to our suffering?

Day 29 - Elihu's one rebuke of the three and Job (part 5)

Job 36:

Q1: Whom does Elihu say he wants to speak for (36:1)?

Q2: Elihu does not mean he has perfect knowledge of God in the sense that he knows everything there is to know about God. But he does mean he has a more complete view that is not marked by gaping holes. What do you think about what Elihu said about God?

Q3: Do you agree?

Q4: Is there anything you disagree with?

Q5: What effect might turning Job's eyes and his friends upward to God's character and nature have on both parties? Give some extended thought to how meditation on what

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you DO know about God's heart is better than fixating on what you DO NOT know about God's hand in your suffering.

Day 30 - Elihu's one rebuke of the three and Job (part 6)

Job 37:

Q1: What does Elihu hope will be the effect of meditating on God's surpassing greatness for Job (37:14ff)?

Q2: Job in all his extreme suffering, needs to be led to humility rather than being wise in his own eyes. How might Elihu's words help him do that? Pour out to God in prayer how you hope to become well equipped in this yourself, so you can help those who are suffering to walk humbly before God as they endure their suffering.

Day 31 - God's rebuke of Job and Job's first reply (part 1)

Job 38:

Q1: God finally speaks!! How does God describe Job (38:1)?

Q2: Give thought to how suffering tempts us to talk about things, give words to things we do not know in our suffering. What impact did Job's "words without knowledge" make on his counsel?

Q3: What is there for you to consider and pray about from this in the scene of suffering?

Q4: What is God trying to accomplish with Job through his many questions to Job?

Q5: What does Job need to realize that he hasn't adequately considered throughout the dialog with his friends in his suffering?

Day 32 - God's rebuke of Job and Job's first reply (part 2)

Job 39-40:5:

Q1: As God's questions continue to come hard and fast at Job, what is the understood answer for Job for each question?

Q2: What effect should this have on Job?

Q3: What does God say Job has become (40:2)?

Q4: And what has Job the "faultfinder" been doing with God in His suffering?

Q5: What does Job conclude that he truly is before God (40:4)?

Q6: If he concludes that he is "insignificant," what does that mean he had been acting like prior to coming to this realization?

Q7: What role does humility need to have in our suffering?

Q8: What dangers might result from thinking too highly of ourselves in our suffering?

Q9: Job had been very talkative, opinionated, willing to question God and his friends. Is he still that way?

Q10: Why not?

Q11: Has God told him the "why" of his suffering?

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Q12: What do you think about that? Pour out in prayer to God what He is laying on your heart through this.

Day 33 - God's continued rebuke of Job and Job's second reply (part 1)

Job 40:6-24:

Q1: In Job's eagerness to justify himself in his suffering (40:8), what did he unfortunately do? Meditate on this just a bit: In our suffering we may get so caught up in self-vindicating ourselves and our theological positions that we end up impugning God and His reputation.

Q2: What is God continuing to do with his words to Job?

Q3: What result is he after with Job?

Day 34 - God's continued rebuke of Job and Job's second reply (part 2)

Job 41-42:6:

Q1: What are the obvious answers for Job to God's many questions?

Q2: If Job, in his mind, kept answering each one ("Not me," "No," "I don't know," "No, I wasn't there," "I don't know how that is done either," "I have no idea," etc.) what effect would that have on him in his suffering that he needed?

Q3: Has God been limited at all in Job's suffering?

Q4: Has He been able to do everything He wanted?

Q5: Have any of His purposes been thwarted in Job's suffering?

Q6: What does Job say about God that he now knows?

Q7: What does Job say now that indicates he is teachable?

Q8: Was he teachable before?

Q9: What does this reveal that one of the goals in suffering must be?

Q10: What do we need to try to be even when we are suffering greatly?

Q11: What does Job now think of his prior attitude and actions and words in his suffering?

Q12: What does he claim now (42:6)?

Q13: How does Job's statement of repentance fit with God's initial statements about his sinlessness prior to his suffering?

Q14: Does a good start in suffering mean we won't stray into sinful areas?

Q15: Does God think the one suffering greatly is beyond the need for correction or rebuke?

Q16: How important is it to shepherd your heart when you are suffering greatly to humbly receive correction? Pour out to God in prayer what He is impressing on your heart from this scene of suffering.

Day 35 - God's restoration of the three and Job

Job 42:7-17:

Q1: Which friends of Job is God wrathful toward?

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Q2: Why is He wrathful toward them?

Q3: Is there any friend left out of this list that God is not angry with?

Q4: If so, what does that mean about that friend's counsel he gave?

Q5: What does God say about Job's view of Him compared to His friends'?

Q6: Was Job's view of God in his suffering always right? Explain what God means then.

Q7: How did God help Job's view of God not stray too far off?

Q8: Was Job correctable?

Q9: What are the three friends to do to be restored?

Q10: How will God work through Job to quench His anger toward them?

Q11: What place, then, does Job take between God and the three who need God's wrath assuaged?

Q12: What did God do for Job when he prayed for his friends?

Q13: How did Job's final blessing compare to the prior good that he knew before his suffering?