

Jewels From Job

Introduction. We learn a lot about people when they are put to a test. When people struggle and are afflicted, it shows their real character. Real character then reflects on real wisdom. One of the most curious questions in our universe is, "Why do good people suffer?" It is certainly a question I have wrestled with and I know you have reflected on it also.

In the story preserved in the book of Job the Lord draws back the curtain of a great man's heart and lets us behold the struggle that took place in his soul as he grappled with one of the universal problems of life -- that of suffering without any known cause.

As we look at the man Job, we see in him a godliness that seems unparalleled today. Throughout the book, Job makes certain statements about himself, the nature of man and the nature of God that are priceless. I do not believe that Job repeated words that God put in his mouth. In cases like the book of Job, inspiration simply means that the words the men said are not misrepresented. If this is indeed true, the words that we will consider today came from someone who had an extraordinary concept of God, but yet needed to learn some things along the way. This lesson is not so much about suffering, but the wisdom we hope to gain from experiencing suffering.

I. **Job 1:21-22**

- A. Job conducted himself like a man; he was humbled in the presence of God. His attitude shows us that no matter how many material possessions we have, they are all nothing in the sight of death and affliction (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 12:7; 1 Timothy 6:7). We are born; we die. We use what we have and leave it all.
- B. Job gave glory to God. He acknowledged the hand of God in the physical blessings he had. God allowed these calamities instigated from Satan, but did not Himself execute the actions. His attitude reflects a pattern throughout the Bible which teaches us to accept God's plan for us (1 Samuel 3:18; Mark 14:36; Acts 21:14).
- C. Job loved God in both positions. Whether we are rich or poor, our task is to glorify God (John 15:8; 1 Corinthians 6:20). Affliction cannot turn us away from doing what is right, but it must make us stronger. In this first test Job was victorious; he held fast his faith in God and His providence. He was not overcome to the point of charging God with folly, though he did not know the background of his trials.

II. **Job 9:32-33**

- A. Job speaks harshly to God because there is no mediator between the two. Basically, Job "complains" that God cannot hear his case. Job

would have gladly turned the matter over to an umpire or mediator, but there was none worthy to be found.

- B. Since there is no one higher than God to judge between God and man, then it would require one who would be God and man. We do not know whether this entered the mind of Job, but it is doubtful. Nevertheless, the cry expressed the need of mankind that has been answered in Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5).
- C. We are in not so unfortunate a position. We do have a mediator (Isaiah 59:15-20; 63:5; Ezekiel 22:30). We should be so grateful that a mediator is now here for us (1 John 2:1). Jesus is the God-man who stands before God on our behalf, beholding the problem of sin and righteousness from both God's and man's point of view (Hebrews 2:16-18; 4:14-16; 5:7-10). Jesus is here and He cares. He especially cares if you have not obeyed His gospel (Luke 19:10).

III. **Job 14:1-2**

- A. God's failure to respond left Job in a state of despondency, especially as he thought of the brevity of life. In a former speech he had discussed the swiftness of life's passing, likening it to a runner, a swift ship and an eagle (9:25-26). The few days that are granted to man are "full of trouble," turmoil and strife both from external disturbances and affliction and from internal perplexity and failure to comprehend life's problems.
- B. Indeed our lives are as nothing. Not only are we short-lived, but we are sad-lived as well. Probably not one day goes by that we do not worry or fret about something. We are so frail that we literally have to hang in doubt all our lives. When we are younger, we worry about dying in car accidents and as we grow older, we worry about dying of diseases.
- C. In the next few verses, Job compared his life to that of a tree and concluded that the tree's life was better because it can sprout again. No more are we out of the cradle, than it seems as if we are ready to die. That is about how quickly time passes (1 Chronicles 29:15; James 4:14). Our life is numbered not by decades or years, but by days (vs. 5).
- D. Are you ready for what lies ahead? Do you have the right attitude about the suffering that we endure (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:8)? Paul could say that and have that confidence only because he was in Christ.

IV. **Job 19:25-29**

- A. Job's friends felt that he had sinned and brought this calamity on himself. Perhaps they felt that if they could get Job to confess, they could

return home knowing that Job's wickedness had been judged. However, Job steadfastly maintained his innocence. It is in this context that he makes this great statement of hope.

- B. Job's redeemer was the "Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 49:26; 54:8; 60:16; 63:16). The same language is used in Isaiah 33:17. The same word is also used of a next of kin. Under the law of Moses, this next of kin had the right to redeem a mortgaged estate (Leviticus 25:25). We also need to be redeemed. We are being "foreclosed upon" by sin. We cannot get ourselves out of the wages of sin (Romans 6:23), therefore we need the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Will you let God deliver you out of the blazing furnace (Daniel 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8)?
- C. Job stated that he would see God; the word there means to "behold." We eventually will be able to see God as He is (1 John 3:1). What a wonderful promise. Some of the brethren at Sardis would have the opportunity to walk with God (Revelation 3:4).

V. **Job 27:7-10**

- A. Job poses a thought-provoking question for us. The godless man was one who forgets God, leaves Him out of his thinking and lives in opposition to Him. What is the hope of the godless? What will be the outcome for those who do not obey God (1 Peter 4:17)?
- B. Why do we think that we can just pull God out of our wallets whenever we need Him? Sin deceives us into thinking that we do not need anyone. In reality, we need God.

VI. **Job 42:1-6**

- A. Solomon once said, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof" (Ecclesiastes 7:8). So it is in the book of Job. Job here is thoroughly humbled for his folly in thought and speech, and it was forgiven him. After God's majestic speech in chapters 38-41, Job answered not by way of contradiction, but by submission.
- B. Job's repentance began with the acknowledgment of truth (2 Timothy 2:25). When we do evil, it is either because we are corrupt at heart or we neglect or disbelieve the principles of truth. Job knew that God could do everything.
- C. Job proclaimed that he was ignorant of God's plans, and so are we. We can see God's plans in action, but we neither know why He does it, what He is aiming at or what it will come to. The reason why we want to blame God is because we do not understand Him (Isaiah 55:8-9).
- D. Job found contentment in the knowledge that he had God's fellowship. This is the great lesson of the book. If we really know God, we do not need to know why He allows us to experience what we do. He is not only in control of the universe and all its facets but also of our lives.

He loved us enough to give up His Son for us (John 3:16). God is always in control of all things, even when He appears not to be. We cannot criticize because His ways are beyond our comprehension.

Conclusion. Sometimes the best advice our parents could give was to simply leave things alone. The same philosophy is true here. We need to leave it to God to govern the world. What we need to be thinking about is how to govern ourselves. Job's statements will tell us how to do that if we have the right perspective. Isaiah 6:5 says, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" If you are here and are undone, do not let that situation continue. Obey the gospel today.