

Job

Suffering - Beyond Man's Understanding?

Job 22-31

Gathering: How comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel when you don't understand things in your life?

Today's Focus: Job's discussion with his three friends concludes that they are unable to understand God's wisdom.

Key Verses: *These are but the outer fringe of His works; how faint the whisper we hear of Him! Who then can understand the thunder of His power?* Job 26:14

The fear of the Lord – that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding. Job 28:28

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Review of Studies 1 - 3

Summary of Story - Chapters 1 & 2

First OT book of poetry - Hebrew poetry is based on parallelism
What happened to Job? = Richly blessed, lost everything, covered with painful boils
How did Job respond to his losses? = mourned losses, but blessed God
What had Job done to deserve his suffering? = Nothing
Had God sent the suffering to test Job? = No, he allowed Satan, within limits
Did Job realize the reasons behind his suffering? = No
Was Job happy about what had happened? = No, he was filled with grief

Job Breaks the Silence - Chapter 3

What did Job's friends say to him the first 7 days? = Nothing
What did Job long for when he finally spoke? = Death, to be at peace & rest

The Causes and The Solutions - Chapters 4 - 14

How did Job's friends explain the cause & solution to Job's troubles?
= Job sinned greatly & needed to repent, God would respond & restore him.
Were Job's friends correct? = No, Job had done nothing to bring this on
Did Job agree with his friends' analysis? = Disagreed - "I am blameless"
Did Job thank his friends for their support? = Of no help, wisest when silent
What did Job ask of God? = What charges? Stop scaring me and speak with me

With Friends Like These - Eliphaz

How did Eliphaz address Job differently over 3 rounds of discussions?
Job 4, 15, 22 = You've helped others => You lie & reject God => You're an evil man
How did Job respond to Eliphaz's accusations?
Job 16:1-5 = Miserable comforters. I'd comfort you.
What proof did Job offer that he would comfort them if they were in his condition?
Job 29:11-12 (7-17) = I was known for charity.
What reason was given that man can't be as pure as Job said he was?
Job 15:14-19 = Angels aren't even that pure. Man is vile & corrupt.
Per Job's friends, who receives the kind of suffering Job has seen?
Job 15:20 (20-35) = The wicked is tormented his whole life. Disaster is ready when he falls.

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Review of Last Week (*continued*)

The Wicked Suffer - *Chapters 18 & 20*

What kinds of traps await the wicked?

Job 18:7-8 (5-21) = "his own schemes throw him down", receives consequences of his sins.

How do they explain that even the wicked experience joy and pride?

Job 20:4-7 (4-11) = Joy & pride is brief. Wicked perish forever. No memory is left.

How does evil taste to the wicked?

Job 20:12-14 (12-19) = Tastes sweet, but makes him sick after eating it. Returns fruit uneaten

What happens when the wicked has eaten his fill?

Job 20:23 (20-28) = The full force of misery and God's anger will come down on him.

Were the friends correct in describing reality?

The Wicked Prosper (Job) - *Chapter 21* (see also Psalm 73)

Does Job agree that the life of the wicked is full of troubles?

Job 21:7-9 (7-13) = The wicked grow old, gain power, prosper & are happy

Does Job agree that the wicked is eventually punished in life?

Job 21:17, 29-30 (17-34) = Spared from calamity, Not accused or punished

Why should the faithful then continue to be faithful?

Job 19:25-26 = I know that my Redeemer lives. After death I will see God.

Eliphaz's Last Gasp - *Chapter 22*

What does Eliphaz say to try to get Job to shut up about being blameless?

Job 22:1-3 = Man's righteousness is worthless to God, the source of all righteousness

If Job's righteousness won't get God's attention, what will?

Job 22:4-5 (4-11) = Wickedness gets God's attention; Accuses Job of specific evils

How is Job warned that God sees and knows that he is evil?

Job 22:13-16 (12-20) = Evil people in the past learned the hard way that God sees all

So, what should Job do?

Job 22:21-23 (21-30) = Return to God, repent of sin & He will restore you

Job Looks to God - *Chapter 23*

What does Job think about Eliphaz's guidance to turn to God?

Job 23:3-5 (1-7) = If I knew where to find God, I would state my case before him.

Although Job doesn't know where to find God, what does he know about God's location?

Job 23:10-11 (8-12) = He knows where I go. I have stayed in his footsteps.

How does Job feel knowing that God is watching him?

Job 23:15 (13-17) = I am terrified before him. I fear him.

What does Job ask for to be able to face God?

Job 9:33 (32-35) = If only there were someone to arbitrate between us. (NIV)

Does Job have an arbitrator?

Job 16:19-21 = My advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend, he pleads with God. (NIV)

Do we have an intercessor?

Hebrews 7:24-25 = Since Jesus lives forever, he always lives to intercede for us.

How does the Spirit intercede for us?

Romans 8:26 = We don't know what to pray for. Groans that words can't express.

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Job Responds to Eliphaz - Chapter 24

How does Job respond to Eliphaz's insight that God punishes the wicked?

Job 24:1, 12 (1-12) = People do evil, but God doesn't judge or punish them

How do the wicked try to keep their evil hidden?

Job 24:16 (13-17) = Murderers, adulterers, robbers do their evil in darkness & avoid God's light

Although the wicked are not necessarily punished in this life, what is in store for them?

Job 24:22-24 (18-25) = They will eventually die and God will cut them off

Bildad's Last Gasp and Job's Reply - Chapters 25 & 26

Not really having anything new to say, what does Bildad say now that it is his turn?

Job 25 = Same thing Eliphaz said in Job 15:14-16 – no way Job as a man can be righteous

In what temperament (mood) does Job reply to his friends' last comments?

Job 26:1-4 = Satire. How you have helped the helpless! What great insight!

How does Job respond to Bildad's explanation of the greatness of God?

Job 26:7-8, 14 = He is greater than you can imagine – beyond man's understanding

Note: After this, Zophar doesn't even try to say anything at his third turn

Job Shuts Up His Friends For Good - Chapter 27

Have the friends had any effectiveness on showing Job his sin?

Job 27:5-6 (1-6) = I will never admit you are right. I will maintain my righteousness.

What would Job like to see in revenge for the false accusations?

Job 27:7 (7-10) = *May my enemies be like the wicked*

How would Job like to see his enemies treated?

Job 27:13-20 (13-23) = Write list on board

Beyond Man's Understanding - Chapter 28

What hidden things are men skilled at finding?

Job 28:1-3 (1-11) = Men can find silver, gold, iron, copper, gems in hidden places.

What is man unable to find?

Job 28:12-13 (12-14) = Man cannot find wisdom and doesn't comprehend its worth.

How valuable is wisdom?

Job 28:15 (15-19) = Wisdom is too valuable to be able to buy with gold, silver, gems...

Who knows where to find wisdom?

Job 28:20, 23 (20-27) = God alone understands the way to wisdom.

How can man find wisdom?

Job 28:28 = The fear of the Lord is wisdom, to shun evil is understanding.

The Good Old Days - Chapter 29

For what did Job long?

Job 29:4-5 (1-6) = When he was in his prime, God blessed him, children were around.

Job 29:7-8 (7-11) = Was respected - Sat in the square (judged), young stepped aside, elders rose

Job 29:15-16 (12-17) = He helped others – blessed to be a blessing

Job 29:18 (18-20) = Things were good and looked like they would be good forever

Job 29:21-23 (21-25) = Men listened for what I had to say

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From Awed to Mocked - Chapter 30

How was Job now being treated?

Job 30:1 (1-8) = Now I am mocked by younger men, whose fathers are worthless.

How were these sons of worthless men mocking him?

Job 30:10 (9-14) = I am detested and spit upon, mocked in song (v9)

How secure does Job feel in his present situation?

Job 30:15 (15-19) = Terrors overwhelm me, I have no dignity, no safety.

Did Job not feel protected and supported by God?

Job 30:20 (20-23) = I cry to God and no answer, you merely look at me

How does Job summarize his state?

Job 30:24 (24-31) = I am a broken man crying for help. No one should harm me, but they do

Sins I Could Have Committed - Chapter 31

How did Job keep himself righteous?

Job 31:1 (1-4) = I made a covenant with myself

What examples does Job give of sins where he would deserve punishment?

Job 31:5, 8 (5-8) = If I lied or deceived => Others eat what I grew, crops uprooted. (NIV)

Job 31:9-10 (9-12) = If I longed for another man's wife => My wife go to another man.

Job 31:13-14 (13-15) = If I was unjust to my servants => God can be unjust with me.

Job 31:21-22 (16-23) = If I neglected the helpless (or raised hand) => Break off my arm.

Job 31:24, 28 (24-28) = If I worshipped money or the stars => Judge these sins against God.

Job 31:29 (29-30) = If I rejoiced at my enemy's troubles ...

Job 31:31 (31-32) = If any of my house ever went hungry ...

Job 31:33 (33-37) = If I hid my sins from others ...

Job 31:38, 40 (38-40) = If I abused my land or stolen its food => Let briars grow

How did Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar respond to what Job said?

Job 32:1 = They didn't, they obviously weren't getting through to him

Closing Prayer

Next Week - *Suffering – Guidance From Sin?* (Job 32-37)