

JOB

Lesson 16

Chapter 27

2. E. Job's conclusion – 27:1-23.

- I. It is ironic that as Job confesses, he accuses God, leaving him in a lurch. But Job is not shaking his fist at God. He stakes everything on a justice beyond this injustice. It is up to God to set things right in a world in which he is the sole Maker and Owner. How seriously God takes this responsibility is seen in Christ.
- II. Vv. 1-6. Job affirms his innocence.
 - a. Job appeals to a silent, absent God as one whose living reality remains beyond question.
 - b. FAITH! It is easier to believe when God is present, but what about when we are on our knees in muck and mire? Heb. 2:8-9; Eph. 2:6.
- III. Vv. 7-12. Job affirms the justice of God. The disagreement between Job and God has not been about whether God is just, but how it works in specific events, especially Job's.
 - a. V. 7. Job's statement is an imprecation, not a statement of fact.

- b. V. 8-10. There is no hope for the godless when God requires his life. He is lonely and isolated God will not hear his cry when distress comes upon him. The wicked take no delight in God and will not call upon God. Such a person has forfeited all right to call on God as Job so confidently does. Job often calls on God; his friends never do.
- c. Vv. 11-12. Who does this person think he is (boils and rashes) to declare the nature of God? Imagine a more unlikely pulpit. The Cross? 1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:16.

IV. Vv. 13-23. The Portion of the Wicked man.

- a. Vv. 13-14. Numerous children are thought to be a blessing. Here they are destined for destruction.
- b. V. 15. Children who are not destroyed by the sword will die of the plague.
- c. Vv. 16-17. Once the family is destroyed he riches will follow.
- d. V. 18. His house will be destroyed.
- e. V. 19. His riches disappear.
- f. V. 20. He has numerous fears day and night.
- g. V. 21. The wind will be of a velocity that it carries him away.
- h. V. 22. He will not be spared from the wind though he will try to flee from it.
- i. V. 23. Men are glad his is gone.

Chapter 28

3. Interlude – 28:1-28. The serenity of ch. 28 is in stark contrast to Job's usual mood. It is too calm for his friends. Each of them as lost his temper by the end of the discussions. This is an interlude between dialog in three rounds with his friends, and dialog in three rounds between Elihu and God. Job is a story teller, and it is appropriate for a story teller to tell stories. It sums up the case as it stands at this point. It emphasizes the failure of the mind to arrive at wisdom. Rather than interfering with the Lord's speeches, it lays a foundation for them by showing their necessity. Vv. 12 and 20 divide the chapter into three parts: 1) vv. 1-11. Human research has not discovered wisdom. 2) vv. 13-19. Human wealth cannot purchase wisdom. 3) vv. 21-27. God alone has wisdom, which remains his gift.

- I. Vv. 1-11. These verses express admiration for man's industry and ingenuity. They draw examples from mining technology, giving sketches of ancient engineers at work. Tribute is paid to persistence and courage. There is a hint that getting wisdom will be equally strenuous and hazardous. Technologically dominated man operates on the mythological assumption of his unlimited possibilities. From the Greeks to the 21st century optimism has always outrun mans performance.
- II. v. 12. Man's spectacular successes and superiority to all animals make his failure to find wisdom all the sadder.
- III. Vv. 13-19. The impossibility of buying wisdom.

- a. V. 13 - 14. These verses should not be taken as an assertion by Job that there is no wisdom in the world. He does assert that wisdom cannot be bought Man who does not know its value (price), but even if he had the money wisdom can't be bought in the land of the living or in nature.
 - b. Vv. 15-19. Neither can wisdom be purchased with or valued by any of the things that man values.
- IV. V. 20. From whence, then, comes wisdom and where is the place of understanding.
- V. Vv. 21-27. The answer – it comes from God.
 - a. Vv.21-24. Nothing is more infuriating to man than the narrowness of truth. The way was also narrow for God. Wisdom is hidden from the eyes of man and concealed from nature. But God understands its way and its place. He sees everything on the earth and under the sky. The place of wisdom is not simply in the mind of God. Wisdom is what God understands when he looks to the end of the earth. Wisdom is observable in the universe because God embodied it in his creation when he saw, declared, established, and searched it out. These words imply more intellectual activity than the creation words in Genesis. Men can see this for themselves, but only when God himself shows it to them (Rom. 1:18-23). This is what God will do for Job shortly when he takes Job on a tour or inspection.
 - b. Vv. 25-26. Here Job provides examples of God's wise ordering of his creation.
 - c. Vv. 27-28. Only God knows where wisdom is, but he shares

the knowledge of obtaining wisdom with man – the fear of the Lord is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding. V. 28 answers v. 20. Man must realize what is accessible, but difficult – the fear of the Lord. It was that which made Job the exemplar of wisdom, devoted to God, shunning evil (1:1). We must use wisdom to evaluate life. It is one thing to know truth, but something else to know how to apply it to life. There is no logical or technological method of removing evil.

Chapter 29

4. Job and Elihu—29:1-37:24.

4a. Job – 29:1-31:40.

4ai – Job's former estate – 29:1-25.

- I. Vv. 1-10. The Outward Aspect. Chapter 28 closes with a hymn to the Lord's beauty and power in creation characterized by a tone of unshakeable confidence and quiet meditation on wisdom. Chapter 29 begins with a mood of gentle nostalgia. Perhaps Job was thinking that

if he had not won through to victory, he had at least greater acquiescence to his condition. But in chapter 30 a wave of desolation breaks over Job like we have not heard before – panic and mockery.

a. V. 1-4. Job was filled with nostalgia, remembering when life was not stagnant, pointless, and unworthy. He remembered a happier time that enabled him to forget the harsh realities of his present condition. Job's former happiness was based on three relationships: 1) fellowship with God, 2) companionship with his children, and 3) the respect of his community.

i. V. 3 is a metaphor for God's blessings and presence.

ii. V. 4. This was a time when he was mature and prosperous and God watched over his home.

b. Vv. 5-6. These verses described traditional tokens of God's approval and were that which Job had had before it was all lost.

c. Vv. 7-10.

i. V. 7. Job had social prestige and a prominent place in the community.

ii. V. 8. His public image was projected by the reaction of the young and the old.

iii. Vv. 9-10. Job's public influence was further demonstrated by the quietness of princes and nobles. Their tongue stuck to their palate, having surely concluded that Job deserved God's blessings.

d. Vv. 11-17.

i. Vv. 11-12. The cause of his honored condition was his benevolence and righteousness. When those in the gate heard of his deeds they praised him. Observers gave

great witness. This was not obsequious honor given to the rich because of political power and economic influence. (See Eliphaz charge against Job, 22: 6ff.)

ii. Vv. 13-17. Ministering to those in despair evokes blessings on Job. It was publically visible to all. The social significance of Job's piety is described in beautiful fashion (See Jas. 1:27). Job fed them, protected them, and provided for their personal and social welfare. He sought out those who needed help. Job rescued the poor and destroyed the oppressor.

iii. Vv. 18-25. The honor that was Job's.

1. V. 18. Praised and honored by God and man, Job felt secure in blessings and prosperity. He thought he would live to a ripe old age and die surrounded by his children.

2. V. 19. Job's prosperity is expressed by the image of a tree.

3. V. 20. His respect and social rank will continue undiminished. Job never anticipated his current condition.

4. Vv. 21-25.

a. The response that others afforded him when he spoke is described in v. 21.

b. Like E.F. Hutton – when Job spoke, people listened. His was the last word.

c. When he had spoken there was nothing left to be said (v. 22).

- d. His hearers drank up his words as the parched ground absorbs the rain (v. 23).
- e. A smile from Job was an undeserved reward. The despondent did not affect his cheerfulness (v. 24).
- f. When Job gave instructions they were carried out (v.25).

Chapter 30

4.a. iii – Job’s present humiliation – 30:1-31.

Chapters 3 and 30 are similar, but Job has come a long way. Chapter 3 focuses on immediate pain. In chapter 30 he is more widely aware of the social and spiritual dimensions of his predicament. He has returned to ch. 1:21—the Lord gives (ch. 29) and the Lord takes away (ch. 30). His present loss is made worse by his past achievements.

- I. Vv. 1-8. Chapter 30 is the most pathetic of all of Job’s poems of grief and it is fitting and to all others. It is more subdued, more reflective, and less defiant. It shows Job in his weakness is no longer able to hope for even one touch of friendliness from man or God.
 - a. V. 1. Job has exchanged the respect of the most respectable

people for the contempt of the most contemptible.

- b. V. 2. They were useless and weak, not profitable to anyone.
- c. V. 3. They were gaunt from famine and scavenging for food.
- d. V. 4. They survive on mallow, a saline plant with sour leaves, a bitter diet that would be eaten only by the poor.
- e. V. 5. They are driven from the community like thieves.
- f. Vv. 6-7. They live in caves, dry riverbeds and thorn bushes.
- g. V. 8. They were so foolish in their behavior that they didn't even deserve a name, but should be run out of town.

II. Vv. 9-15. The irony is deep. Job has been humane to such (v. 25). A person's last claim to humanity is gone when he becomes a common jest for the most depraved.

- a. Vv.9-10. Yesterday kings and princes revered Job. Today even the scourges of his day considered him lower than themselves. This taunting deeply wounded Job. Their words cut into his wounded heart and afflicted his soul.

- b. V. 11. Homer Hailey has the best discussion of his verse. :
"Who is the 'he' that loosed the cord? What is the cord?
Judging from Job's former charges and conclusion (16:7-14 and 19:6-12), it is reasonable to conclude that he speaks of God who loosed the cord. Throughout the book Job has recognized God as the cause and source of his blessings and woes. Shall it be 'his cord' or 'my cord' that was loosed? Of ten translations considered, two prefer 'his (God's) cord' and eight prefer 'my (Job's)' cord. The word translated 'cord' is also translated 'tent-cord' (4:21) and "bowstring" (NASB). If 'cord.' Then it is the cord of life, Job's health which had been broken, bringing

him near death; if it is “bowstring,” then God had taken away his means of defense against his enemies. The several possibilities leave any conclusion uncertain. However, the main point is clear; in the light of God’s removing the cord or bowstring and afflicting him, the young rowdies were now unbridled – without restraint in their abusing Job.

- c. V. 12. The rabble attacked from his right side. The “right side” is often used in scripture as a metaphor for the place of honor. However, it can also be used as the place of enemies that seek, in this case, Job’s destruction (See, Psa. 109:6; Zech. 3:1).
- d. V. 13. The taunting continues. The rabble make the path of Job’s life impossible. They are young by general reckoning and have no reputation of their own with the exception of “rabble,” but they have brought Job down by themselves without the help of others. (This adopts the translation of the ESV.)
- e. V. 14. As if in an inexhaustible stream, Job’s enemies keep coming.
- f. V. 15. The terrors fall upon Job from all that he has endured. His honor is blown away with the wind. His welfare (prosperity, NASV) is gone with the wind.