

thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

- 3) While God often leaves us in the dark as to why trials and afflictions come our way, God always knows and has a good reason. *"Rejoice in the Lord" God never moves without purpose or plan...*
- 4) Those suffering often feel hopeless. It is comforting for us to seek to give them hope, either temporal or eternal. (Rev 21:4) *"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."*
- 5) Job looked to the Redeemer for hope. Instead of focussing on our woes, we ought to focus on God's character and promises. (Ps 56:3) *"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."*

Conclusion: I want to encourage you to download these notes and keep them close each time you read the book of job.

When a friend is suffering, seek to be an empathising comforter, not a painful critic.

When you are suffering, seek to focus on the Lord, count your blessings, rejoice in the Lord, cast your burden on the Lord, and meditate on comforting Scriptures. Though this is not easy, we know it is right.

Song: Cast your Burden on the Lord

Answering Critics

3 April 2022 PM – Job 4-31 – Job2022 – Scott Childs

Introduction: God introduced us to Job as a man who, by God's statement, was *perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil*. At Satan's request, God allowed Satan to take away all that Job had except his wife and to plague his body with painful sores. Even his wife told him to curse God and die.

The bulk of the book describes the months (cf., Job 7:3; 29:2) of Job's physical suffering intensified by the redundant criticism from his three friends. In Job 4-31, we find three cycles of criticism from his friends. Whether these cycles were back to back or separated by some time in between, I cannot tell.

Transition: This evening I want to give you a brief summary of the criticism Job suffered from his friends, a condensation of Job's answers, and then a few principles that we can learn from this section.

1. Job's "comforters" added to his pain.

a. Round one

- 1) Eliphaz – (Job 4:1-5:27) Job, you are not practising what you taught. Innocent and righteous people do not perish. Because of the principle of sowing and reaping, since you are reaping bad, you obviously sowed bad. Thorns and robbers ruin the fool's harvest. All affliction and trouble have a cause. You need to seek God and stop despising God's chastening. God will bless you if you repent.
- 2) Job – (Job 6:1-7:21) *You underestimate my grief. You do not grasp my despair. You lack true empathy. You have no evidence that I have sinned. Stop accusing me falsely. I feel that I have no more hope than a slave. He told God that he must have sinned and begged God to forgive him.*
- 3) Bildad – (Job 8:1-22) History confirms that God is just, and that calamity is punishment for sin. If you get right with God, your latter end will greatly increase. God will not cast away a perfect man, nor will he help evil doers.
- 4) Job – (Job 9:1-10:22) *He begins with a question that we can answer better than he could (9:2). Justification is only*

through Christ's atonement. Job responds by affirming God's wisdom and power. He denies that tradition is a good source of knowledge. God reveals much about himself in nature. Job longed for a daysman (i.e., an umpire) between God and man (9:33). Job cannot identify any sin that would cause God to punish him. He again asked to die.

- 5) Zophar – (Job 11:1-20) Being blunter than his two friends, Zophar calls Job a liar. You are obviously suffering because of sin. You need to get right with God.
- 6) Job – (Job 12:1-14:22) Job rebuked his friends and defended his righteousness. He then appeals to God rather than to his unkind friends. He calls his friends liars and speakers of wickedness and deceit. "In his despair Job claims that the fate of a tree is better than the fate of a man, since the tree can sprout again." (Ryrie)

b. Round two

- 1) Eliphaz – (Job 15:1-35) He accuses Job of empty talk, ignoring ancient wisdom and, he is like the wicked because he is in distress.
- 2) Job – (Job 16:1-17:16) He rebukes his mockers. He knew that it was God who allowed his sorrows, but he knew not why. He felt even more hopeless.
- 3) Bildad – (Job 18:1-21) Bildad rebukes Job for his arrogant words about them, and affirms that the wicked, like he, are weakened, ensnared, diseased, insecure, forgotten, hated, and alone. <https://bible.org/article/argument-book-job>
- 4) Job – (Job 19:1-29) He complained about his friends and about God treating him harshly. He begged for pity. His hope seems to revive as he looked to his redeemer (19:25-27).
- 5) Zophar – (Job 20:1-29) He accused Job of being a hypocrite who would perish. He accused Job oppressing the poor, but he gave no evidence. He was sure that the heavens would reveal Job's iniquity.
- 6) Job – (Job 21:1-34) God does not always judge the wicked, as these men claimed. The wicked sometimes die without

a struggle. ^{Ryrie} Many evil men escape punishment and live.

c. Round three

- 1) Eliphaz – (Job 22:1-20) After again instructing Job on God's ways, he harshly condemned Job of several uncaring sins and told him to repent.
- 2) Job – (Job 23:1-24:25) Job longed for God and defended his innocence. He admitted that God was fulfilling His will in his life, though he did not understand. Job notes that many people sin, but God does not have fixed times for punishment. God will deal with them in his time.
- 3) Bildad – (Job 25:1-6) Because God is great, and you are a sinner, you cannot be justified with God.
- 4) Job – (Job 26:1-27:23) He assured his friends that he already knew that God was great. The wicked do not always prosper. He affirmed his innocence. He then addressed his "friends" as enemies. Job agrees that God will justly punish the wicked.

2. Principles for us today

a. Principles learned from Job's friends

- 1) We must not assume that bad things only happen to bad people. We live in a sin-cursed world.
- 2) It is not true that God always punishes bad people right away (cf., Ps 73).
- 3) We cannot see the hearts nor the motives of others.
- 4) The truth of God's word always trumps the opinions of man.

b. Principles learned from Job

- 1) We must seek to empathise with those who are suffering rather than attacking them. They need pity, not punishment. (Matt 7:12) "*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*"
- 2) Sin is not the only reason that trials afflict a Christian. While we ought to probe our own hearts for sin during trials, we must not assume that this is God's motive. (2Cor 12:9) "*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for*