

Restored!

June 3, 2018

Job 42:7-17

Today, we come to the end! We began our journey through the book of Job on August 27 of last year. We have pushed and plodded our way through the dark recesses of life in this study. Indeed, we endured one sermon in the dark! But along the way, we have pondered and learned. We have learned that our pre-conceived notions of life as we think it ought to be are too shallow. We have learned that God's plan is more complex, involving even the usefulness of evil to accomplish God's purposes. We have learned that our situation may just have an element to it that is way beyond our comprehension, indeed even our imagination. What happens in the heavenlies impacts us! We have learned that people of God can be blessed and yet suffer unjustly at the exact same time. We have learned that all of creation is under the watchful eye and powerful right arm of God Almighty, even when it does not seem like it.

We have learned that it is not incongruent for blessed people of God to suffer discouragement and even despair, even though they have been faithful. We have learned that God expects us to patiently wait for Him to act. He is not like some genie in a bottle, who can be conjured up to fulfill our requests. Indeed, we may call upon Him day and night and yet He expects us to wait until He chooses to respond.

And perhaps supremely, we have learned that God's plan includes the unjust suffering of His chosen for His purposes, culminating in the sending of His own Son, Jesus, who unjustly suffered to the maximum for His purposes. Yes, the book of Job was designed to point us to Jesus, and it has.

So, today, we deal with the last verses of the last chapter. As we left off last week, I declared Job's dispute with God to be over. God has spoken and Job has responded with repentance. It is over. But the situation has not yet changed. As we left off, Job was still suffering. Everything about his life has been stolen, destroyed, killed, or diseased. He was right with God, but nothing else was right about his life. Today, we read the epilogue. At first glance, we notice that the poetry is over and it is written in prose. Three of the characters return, but the 4th is not here. And, there is no resolution to the exchange with satan. His situation is left hanging.

And then we see that Job's life of blessing is returned...and multiplied. Everything is now twice as good, twice as plentiful, twice as beautiful as before. And

in the end, Job dies full of years, a blessed man, with his children gathered around him, just as you would hope. The story is tied up as with a bow. This is how the book of Job ends, Ahhhhh....

Follow along as I read the epilogue to the book of Job, 42:7-17.

Main point: God will claim, bless and use His own.

There will be a righting of the wrongs. There will be an acknowledgement of truth. There will be a role for His own to play in the lives of others. There will be a blessing that fits. God will make things right! The end will be good! God will be shown to be trustworthy, faithful, gracious, and good. The story turns out as we would hope. (2 parts)

I. God will affirm those who have spoken rightly about Him vv. 7-9

In some ways, this is intended to comfort those of us who have stood up for God and have been ridiculed. But in other ways, this is a warning to those of us who have claimed to represent God. The truth is that not everyone who speaks for God actually does so.

7 After the LORD had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.

I notice here that the text skips over Job's response and goes back to God's words to Job. In other words, this is what God said to Job (and his response) and this is what God said to Job's friends. We are still on the subject of God's response to all that has been said about Him or in His name. It is important to note that God has already dealt with the wrong that Job has claimed about Him. In other words, as a reader you could get confused because God has just chastised Job and then here lifts up what Job has said as being true (unlike that which was said by his friends.) Both sides have spoken rashly about God. Job has been dealt with on his level, and now his friends are dealt with on their level.

And what we see is that what they have said has made God angry. That's not good. Notice the reversal. They thought God was angry with Job. But it turns out He was angry with them! What did they say? They said that the calamity that came upon Job was a consequence to Job's sin. That was their major point. The world that God set up is designed to highlight, showcase how evil is followed by punishment and good is followed by blessing. Therefore, since Job was stripped of everything he had, we know that Job deserved what had come to him. If Job would only repent, God's hand of rebuke would be lifted from him. This made God angry. Why?

The text does not tell us, but I think we can figure it out. In their system, there was no room for grace and mercy, and perhaps more importantly no room for a righteous man to suffer unjustly to fulfill God's purposes. As we noted at the time, if they were correct, then there would be no place for Jesus Christ. If bad things only happened to those who deserved it, then Jesus was a very bad man. Now, can you see why God would be angry with that? The truth is that there is a place in God's design for His creation that righteous people suffer through no fault of their own. There is redemptive suffering. There are times when God uses the suffering of His own for larger purposes. To miss this would leave no room for Him to display His grace and mercy. In Job's case, it would make God very petty. Knowing what we know about Job, God would have had to be very petty to punish him as he did. If this is how God responds to people who claim to be His, why would anyone want to be His?

But then we have the other side. What did Job say that was correct? We know of many things that Job said that were wrong, but what was right? The right part was an understanding of how God's system works. Job maintained his blamelessness. He refused to budge on this issue. And since we know the backstory, we know why this was important. If Job had acknowledged their attempt to smear him, then satan would have won. Instead, he maintained both his faith and his blamelessness. And he was right in that.

8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”

Can you see the dripping irony in this? These friends were adamant that Job was secretly evil and God was being gracious in allowing him just to be alive until he repented. But now we are here from God and He tells the friends they were wrong about Job and about Him. He then instructs them to get right with Him. They are to go to their priest and repent, to offer sacrifices because of their sin. Seven bulls and seven rams? Sounds serious! They must have really, really sinned. By the way, who is that priest? I think they know him. His name is Job! The one they ridiculed and mocked was to be their priest. That man, Job, will pray and God will accept his prayers. Their prayers would not do the job, but Job’s would. Their route to get right with God would go through him! After all, he was blameless and upright. They were not.

By the way, can you see how this points us to Jesus? Who better fits this picture than Him? You know, the stone the builders rejected was to become the chief cornerstone. The One they accused of blasphemy was to be their high priest. He was to take the place of all those bulls and goats, offering His own pure and perfect blood so they might not perish. You can see this in no other way than lifting up Jesus. He supremely fits the picture.

So, how do we apply this section? First of all, we must know that not all people who speak for God actually speak truth. Many will have this scene play out before Him (or worse). They have declared things about God but were wrong. And in the course of doing so, they will ridicule the ones who actually speak for God. Does it matter? Yes! Some people will face judgment for saying wrong things as if they came from God. You can be wrong about many things, but I warn you not to speak wrongly about God.

In this sense, Job was salt and light to them. Their preservation came through Job. Their window into truth came through Job. Even though they ridiculed him, scorned him, tried to get him to admit his errors, still God gave him a role in saving them. I see this as highly instructive for us. I don’t know about you, but I want to be on the right side of God. I want to make sure what I am saying about God is actually true. Even

when I quote Scripture, I want to make sure I am quoting it correctly, applying it correctly. God takes seriously what we say about Him!

II. God will bless His own. vv. 10-17

In the part of the epilogue that causes us to sigh from relief, we see here that God did show Himself to be fair, beyond fair, good, abundantly good. God blessed Job in the end.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer.

I smile at this one. Finally, the friends join the description of Job. They did what God asked them to do. For Job, such was a way of life. But for these three distinguished friends, they heard the rebuke and followed through on the course laid out before them. And because Job was right before God, He accepted his prayer and restored the friends to rightness before God. Job was an acceptable priest, interceding with God on behalf of his people. Again, can you see the reference to Jesus? They had to go through this one priest, the one they condemned. But he was faithful in forgiving them and acting as their priest.

10 After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

As we go through this section, notice the obvious comparisons with how the whole story began. When the story began, Job was a blessed man. He was an upright man who had everything. But after the ordeal, Job's blessing multiplied. Here, he had twice as much as he started with. He had it all, had it all destroyed before his eyes, and now had twice as much. The point? God was not just restoring Job, He was blessing Him beyond measure. Before he had it all, now he had it all times two.

11 All his brothers and sisters and everyone who had known him before came and ate with him in his house. They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the LORD had brought upon him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.

Before, he enjoyed the company of his family, or more precise watched as his family had fellowship with each other. But then calamity struck him and everyone turned their backs on him. Everyone wants to be associated with a winner, but no one wants to hang out with a loser. Lose your wealth, lose your friends. That was what Job found out.

But here, his home once again became the hub of social life. He probably found out he had relatives he didn't know he had. And they weren't just there for the perks of wealth. They were true friends. They did not avoid him as they did before. They actually came to comfort and console him. Now that they could see God's hand, they knew what to say. Now that he was restored, they were able to see God's hand in what had happened. They were not good friends in the midst of trouble, but at least they were good friends in the end. They were slow in getting to the table, but at least they joined in.

12 The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys.

The numbers here are precisely twice what were recorded at the beginning. He had twice as many meals on wheels, twice as many long-haul desert semis, twice as many tractors, and twice as many pickup trucks. Back in the beginning, we imagined his string of camels as being over 6 miles long, as far as to Staplehurst. But now it would be twice as long, from here to Milford. How many sheds would he need to house his fleet of ancient tractors and desert pickups? How many servants would he need to care for them all, use them all? I think he would have needed twice as big of a farm! He had shown himself faithful with some and so was given more. Huh! That sounds like a biblical principle!!!

But the point here is that God not only replaced what he had lost, but He doubled it. He multiplied the blessing. God made it right, no He more than made it right. It turned out well in the end. Then we read about his family.

[13](#) And he also had seven sons and three daughters. [14](#) The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch. [15](#) Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.

Don't you find this strange? It is not strange that there are seven sons and three daughters. That is what he had before. The strange part is that we know his daughters' names. It is even stranger that we know their beauty was legendary. What about the sons? What are we to take from this? And then, we know that the daughters were treated as equals with regard to their brothers. Why do we need to know that? How does that fit into the book of Job?

I don't have any of the answers to these questions. One commentator suggested this is typical of epic literature of the day. Maybe, but I still don't see why. All I know is that Job was greatly blessed, he had a full quiver of children. His daughters were the most beautiful in the land. Everything turned out as we would have wished. Job's life had a fairy tale ending.

[16](#) After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. [17](#) And so he died, old and full of years.

He lived twice the expected amount of 70 years. He saw his children, grandchildren, and even great grandchildren. I envision him dying with all his family gathered around him. Job lived a long, full, and rich life. Truly, Job was blessed by God.

So, what do we make of this? Does the fact that he had seven new sons and three beautiful new daughters replace the ones he lost? Surely not. We know from the fact that his friends were consoling him that he still grieved the loss of his family. But now, with our deeper understanding of God, we can begin to appreciate how even this grief can fit into God's plan. The point here is not that God replaced, but that God blessed. And He was not stingy in His blessing. His blessing was abundant and good. He proved Himself a God worthy of trusting. Blessed be the God of Job! Amen?

If we believe this passage is the Word of God, then what should be different about our lives?

- 1) We will be confident that God will prove Himself to be faithful and true.
- 2) We will be careful to be accurate when claiming to represent God.
- 3) We will be ready and willing to act as priests for those who treat us wrongly.
- 4) We will look forward to the future as a time of blessing from God.
- 5) We will cherish the One who unjustly suffered on our behalf, who serves as our High Priest before God so that we can be right with Him. Thank you Jesus!