

**JOB**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Job chapter 7 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Now keep in mind that back in Job chapters 4 and 5 we saw a friend of Job's, Eliphaz tell Job the reason Job was experiencing all this calamity in his life. And His counsel can be summed up very simply. It went like this. "The innocent do not suffer. Thus Job is suffering because he is not innocent but has some concealed sin in his life. Job, you need to confess your sin!" Here was a friend of Job and notice how cold, how unloving, how unsympathetic, how unmerciful he was.

Eliphaz told Job in very eloquent terms, that the death of his children and the loss of all his servants and possessions was the result of some hidden sin in his life and he needed to get right with God. In the mind of Eliphaz the righteous are blessed and the wicked are punished. As we saw, even during the time of Jesus they still believed that.

It is out of all of that we see Job cry out in chapter 6 and tell Eliphaz that his words are dry, his words are empty, his words are nothing more than a bunch of hot air.

Now, as we move into Job chapter 7 this evening, Job is continuing to pour out his heart and now his focus is God. He feels that God is bringing trials that he can't handle and thus, he is getting more than he deserves. With that as our background, let's begin reading in Job chapter 7, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

**JOB 7****VERSES 1-5**

1. As you read this you can see the dismal picture that Job has. He was discouraged and saw no end in sight! And I believe what we see here is Job comparing his life to what others face in their lifetime. One of the differences is that their problems last for days, and Job sees his problems lasting for months. He speaks of a military man, one who does “**hard service**” and yes his time is hard but after he serves, then it is over. There is even an allotted time to serve for the hired man.

And yet for Job the days went into months, and still there was no rest. When night would come, there was still no comfort, there was still no rest. He only tossed and turned due to the pain and itching of his blisters and the extreme loneliness he was suffering. And as morning came, it was another day of sorrow and pain. There seemed to be no rest for Job. His flesh was covered with worms, eating away at the dead tissue that was blistering and cracking away. The days for Job were long and hard and his nights were restless. There was no comfort, no rest no matter what time of day it was for Job. And thus, as you can see, Job was a broken man, and thus he is speaking forth from this condition. And the result of all this upon Job as he tries to deal with this on his own is ***DEPRESSION*** and ***DESPAIR, UTTER HOPELESSNESS!***

VERSES 6-10

1. Job is coming face-to-face with his own mortality and he sees his life coming quickly to an end. His days drag on and yet, his end is quickly coming and he has no hope of recovering. Do you think he is a little depressed? Absolutely and many today who are having problems we often send them to a psychiatrist or therapist. And you may not agree with me on this, you may even get mad at me as I have had some in the past do over this issue. But there is only one that can help and that is Jesus!

How can I say that? Very easily because God tells us in Isaiah 9:6, **“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”** Who is the **“Wonderful Counselor”**? No, it is not Sigmund Freud or Carl Yung or B. F. Skinner or Abraham Maslow, it is ***JESUS CHRIST!***

What about Christian counselors? Who do they study? Not the Bible but these men, these unbelievers! And the reality is, why have a middle man when you only need One Man, Jesus Christ. That is who we need to bring our cares to. And please, I am not downplaying what Job was going through or what you are going through right now, but the key is you can't handle it and you need to take it off your shoulders and give it to Jesus and rest in Him so you can have a good nights sleep, you can look forward to a new day!

You see, hopefully in our own life we see that adversity causes us to focus on the things that are truly important. Those things that may have seemed important yesterday become meaningless when we are looking at sickness, family issues or even death. If our focus is not in the Lord, resting in Him, then we will struggle through life with all kinds of ups and downs depending upon the situations we are facing.

And make no mistake about it, our life is a breath, it is short, and we should use it to the fullest in serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We should be involved in the work He has called us to do, whatever that may be. And whatever people may think, the death rate remains the same, one per person! Keep your eyes upon Jesus and rest in Him!

2. Now here is the tragedy for many today. You see, when people sink to this level, they have no hope, they see no good coming into their life, and so many times they just end it by committing suicide. And if any of you are at that point in your life, don't give up. "How can you say that to me Pastor Joe? You don't know what I am going through! It is hopeless!"

Here's the thing. If you were to read ahead in Job and finish this book you would see that for Job the best years of his life were still ahead of him, God was going to bless Job twice as much as before this trial began. There was still good that would come into Job's life. Remember what Psalm 23:4 s tells us, "**Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.**"

Notice that David did not say that we are to be staying in the valley of death, but our Shepherd will lead us through it and as we move towards the mountain top, a place of rest, as we have grown in the valley experience. Now sometimes that does mean the Lord will take us home but most of the time, in this life, it is a lesson we learn as we follow our Shepherd Jesus Christ!

Let me share this with you and hopefully you will see what I mean. There was a woman that was asked by her pastor what her favorite Bible verse was, and she said, "And it came to pass." Obviously the pastor was a little confused by what she said. So he asked this woman how this verse helped her? How was this verse helpful to her? She told him that when she goes through difficult times, trials, that she always remembers, "It will come to pass!" May we remember that, it will come to pass and not stay! It may take days, weeks, months, maybe even years but it will come to pass. What we need to do as we go through those times is keep our eyes upon Jesus and rest in Him!

3. And for Job, he is longing for death and he sees it as the end of everything, which is not true. In death we do not enter a state of nothingness and that goes for the just and the unjust. Hebrews 9:27 says, “**And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.**” We are not recycled or reincarnated until we attain some spiritual level of holiness. You only have one chance in this life, and if you reject Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you lose. God has done everything possible to have you enter into that abundant life, but if you don’t accept it, He will not force it upon you, but you will suffer the fate of rejecting the truth. You will enter the Lake of Fire for eternity separated from God. If you receive Jesus you will enter into eternity with Him and it does not get any better than that!

#### VERSES 11-16

1. Job is going to pour his heart out, not holding anything back. And let me say this, it is wrong to be angry with God but it is not wrong to honestly come before Him and ask God to help you to understand what is happening in your life. He wants to comfort you, and He might not always give you all of the answers that you want, but He will give you what you need to know to help you through those times. And sometimes the answer is just found in knowing the goodness of God, and falling back upon His character, never really understanding why, but knowing the richness and depth of God’s love for you. That will comfort your heart.

But for Job, he is questioning God, and asking Him why He is watching over his life so closely, like a watchman who is standing guard on board a ship, watching out for any sea serpents. I think Spurgeon nails it when he wrote, “Listen. To argue from our insignificance is poor pleading; for the little things are just those against which there is most need to watch. If you were a sea, or a whale, God might leave you alone; but as you are a feeble and sinful creature, which can do more hurt than a sea, or a whale, you need constant watching. . . . Do not say, ‘Am I a sea, or a sea-monster, that thou settest a watch over me?’ for the Lord may answer, ‘You are more capacious for evil than a sea, and more wild than a sea-monster.’”

God watches over us not only to keep us from evil but because He loves us so much that He wants what is best for our lives. And yes, even going through difficult times, as hard as they may be, God has a reason. You see, for Job the battle was not with the outward condition of his body but the inward condition of his heart. He is mad at God and questioning God why this is happening and God wants him to look up and trust in Him! It truly was a spiritual battle that God wanted to test the faith of Job and Satan wanted to tempt Job to sin! That is true even today; the tests that God brings into our lives Satan will use to tempt us to sin. Same event but God wants us to grow and Satan wants to destroy us!

2. Not only was Job trying to endure the physical and emotional pain, but even when he went to sleep he was having nightmares that terrified him. Maybe some of them were the result of Eliphaz's spiritual encounter and the harshness of the rebuke he was getting from his friends. Maybe his fever was causing him to have hallucinations. Whatever the case, he couldn't sleep and that takes its toll on a person!

And because of all this we see Job saying that he did not want to live forever. And really, who would in the condition that he was in? But even in the bodies you have now, would you like to live in them forever? I don't think too many of you would say yes to that question. That would not be a blessing for we groan in these bodies of flesh that have been affected by sin, and are subject to all kinds of diseases. We await the new bodies that the Lord has for our spirit and soul to dwell in when we go to be with Him!

Yes Job wanted death but he is not talking about suicide here. Please understand that. Strangling may refer to the symptoms of his disease, such as coughing or choking; that he wishes God would use to kill him.

3. Now let me take a minute and talk about life. We are told in I Timothy 6:19, **“storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”** The Greek word that is used for **“life”** is ZOE, and this Greek Word speaks of the principle of life in the spirit and the soul, a fullness of life.

There is another Greek word used for **“life”** and that is BIOS. We see this word used in II Timothy 2:4 as Paul tells us, **“No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.”**



This Greek word is different than ZOE in that it speaks of the physical life, while ZOE speaks of the highest blessedness that God has bestowed upon us. Now that eternal life does not begin when these physical bodies die and God gives us new bodies, but it begins at the moment we accept Christ into our life. That is when God gives to us that fullness of life, that joy everlasting. And this will continue on, past the death of these physical bodies, but it begins as Christ comes into our life. As Psalm 16:11 says, **“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”**

Today we see people focus on the BIOS, on the physical life. And there is nothing wrong with taking care of your body but how many millions and probably billions of dollars are spent each year to keep these physical bodies looking pretty. And let’s face it, eventually, you can’t tuck and pull any more! We are all going back to the dust of the earth and thus, our focus needs to be on the ZOE or that fullness of life that Jesus gives to us!

#### VERSES 17-21

1. These statements here, **“What is man, that You should exalt him, That You should set Your heart on him, That You should visit him every morning, And test him every moment?”** (Job 7:17-18), have a counterpart in Psalm 8. Listen to what David said and then I will show you what I mean. David wrote, **“What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.”**

Psalm 8:4-5.

You see, when you compare these two statements you see that Job presents his case in a negative way, “Why in the world are you even bothering with me God? I am nothing!” But in Psalm 8 it is in a positive light, “God, you are so magnificent, and yet You are so concerned with even man!” What I want you to notice is both men went through very difficult times and yet, each had a very different perspective of God. May we not lose sight that God is in control and even though we might not know why things are happening this way in our life, we can trust in Him knowing that Almighty God loves us and cares for us and He will see us through these times of testing’s, these trials!

2. Now, since Job has lost the perspective of God he has come to the conclusion that every step he takes God is right there ready to strike out at him. He doesn’t even get a chance to swallow the saliva in his mouth before God does something else to him. God is not out to knock you down, but to build you up. But Job, like us, can develop this wrong perspective of God. Job is even wondering why he is the target of God, “Hey, is there a bull’s eye painted on my back that God keeps shooting at me?” Adversity can lead to a warped concept of God, and we see that happening with Job.

And as he focuses on this, yes, he will come to some wrong conclusions. This is kind of funny, maybe because it is not happening to me but I do love this point that Job makes, even though it is wrong. Job is telling God that when his life is over, when Job returns to the dust of the earth, then who in the world is God going to pick on then? He is telling God that He will be sorry when he is not around anymore for God will not have anyone to satisfy His perverse sort of pleasure. Truly a wrong perspective of God and God will use this trial, this testing to bring Job back to reality and to see God in light of who He really is and not these wrong ideas that Job has developed because of all he has gone through and is going through!

3. Spurgeon puts things into perspective on what God was doing in the life of Job for us as he wrote, “Job was not being punished; he was being honored. God was giving to him a name like that of the great ones of the earth. The Lord was lifting him up, promoting him, putting him into the front rank, making a great saint of him, causing him to become one of the fathers and patterns in the ancient Church of God. He was really doing for Job such extraordinarily good things that you or I, in looking back upon his whole history, might well say, ‘I would be quite content to take Job’s afflictions if I might also have Job’s grace, and Job’s place in the Church of God.’” Perspective is everything!

4. Now as we move into Job chapter 8 we see Bildad step in and give his perspective of the situation to his friend Job who is suffering so much.

**JOB 8**VERSES 1-7

1. First Eliphaz spoke and he was harsh but eloquent in his choice of words. Bildad, on the other hand, just blasts Job. You might call him Bildad the brutal! He sees everything as black and white and thus, “Job, you are only getting what you deserve!” In fact, Bildad slams Job by basically saying, “How dare you challenge the justice of God!” The reason Bildad said that was because he believed that Job had sinned and thus, all these things were taken away from him. Obviously that is wrong because we are told that Job was a blameless and upright man! But when someone sees things in black and white, he is always right, at least in his own eyes!

2. Imagine all this pain, all this suffering, all this hurt and here comes one of your friends who blast you because of your pleas of innocence. In fact, to Bildad they are nothing more than a bunch of hot air that is flowing out of the mouth of Job! He wants Job to stop lying and just confess his sins before God.

But he does not end there. Remember that all of Job's children were killed and Bildad slams Job's children by saying the only reason they were dead was because of some sin in their life! How that must have hurt Job, I can't even imagine!

3. And for Bildad, maybe he was the first of these health, wealth and prosperity teachers, that false doctrine! You see, Bildad calls for Job to confess his sins before God and then God will make you healthy, wealthy, He will prosper you. Doesn't that sound familiar? That is what many of the faith teachers preach from their pulpits, and it is bad theology. You see, Bildad was only speaking a half truth, and half truths are nothing more than lies. We again must understand that God does bless the just, and the unjust. And we must also fall back on the sovereignty of God. We must understand that He is in control and what happens in our lives is not to hurt us but to help us to grow, mature in the faith, to trust in Him more. And God will chasten His children for the wrong they are doing but not to destroy them but to restore them!

#### VERSES 8-10

1. Bildad is saying that their wisdom is not as great as those who were before them, for they are young and not as experienced. And Bildad, living around the time of Abraham, maybe a descendant of Shuah who was Abraham's son by Keturah (Genesis 24:1-2), which was only some 250 to 300 years after the flood, is telling Job to learn what the elders have spoke regarding the wrath of God and how He destroyed all the wicked by a flood, and now Job, because of your sin, you are being wiped out as if by a flood.

In other words, Bildad is basically telling Job that "If Job would only take the time to consider ancient tradition; he would find that God only does right. Sinners get just punishment, and good men are blessed with health and prosperity." (Smick).

Now is that true? It is not that black and white. Yes we are blessed as we walk with the Lord but does that mean nothing bad will ever happen to us? Absolutely not and we see that here with Job. And think about the past, was Abel righteous before God? Yes and yet Cain killed his brother Abel. It was not a punishment for Abel's sin that he died, but God allowed it.

2. Warren Wiersbe wrote, "To be sure, we can today learn from the past, but the past must be a rudder to guide us into the future and not an anchor to hold us back. The fact that something was said years ago is no guarantee that it is right. The past contains as much folly as wisdom." Can we learn from the past? You bet we can but we have to look at it with the right perspective.

Let me explain it like this. For the evolutionist and the creationist, they both look at the same information. They look at the same rocks, the same fossils and-so-on. They are looking at the same information and yet they come up with different conclusions, why? Because the evolutionist is looking at these things apart from God while the creationist looks at these things in light of what God has shown him. Folk's, like it or not, that is the only way we can gain the right information by looking at the past in light of what God has said in His Word and not apart from it. If we will do that we will be moving in the right direction because we have the right information gained from a right starting point, God and His Word!

VERSES 11-18

1. Here we see Bildad paint a picture before Job from the natural world and then he tries to apply what happens in nature to Job. The papyrus grows in the marsh because of the water; it is the water that causes it to grow. Also, it is fragile in that it is the first to wither, before any other plant! Bildad is using cause and effect with nature and he applies it to the life of Job. In other words, “Job, your sin has brought this upon your life. Look at nature and see the cause and effect and that is what we now see in your own life!” That was wrong!

Bildad is telling Job that if he removes himself from God he will wither and die just as the papyrus without the marsh, the reed without water. And Bildad is calling Job a hypocrite, for if it were true, if Job was innocent, then all these things would not have come upon his life. Nice friend!

One writer put it like this in regards to what Bildad did. He wrote, “If you take an illustration from Nature and apply it to a man’s moral life or spiritual life, you will not be true to facts because the natural law does not work in the spiritual world. . . . God says, ‘And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten . . .’ that is not a natural law, and yet it is what happens in the spiritual world.” (Chambers).

Yes Bildad was right in what he said about nature but he was wrong in his application to the life of Job. We need to be careful as we share with people that we don’t speak out of the imagination of our own heart but from the heart of God. We need to be sensitive to God’s Spirit speaking to us and through us!

2. Bildad also spoke of reeds being like the hypocrite or one who makes a show of his faith and yet there is no real trust in God and he again applies this to Job as I have said. In regards to this Spurgeon used Bildad's illustration of the papyrus reed in Job 8:11-18 as a description of the hypocrite.

- Like the reed, hypocrites grow up quickly.
- Like the reed, hypocrites are hollow and without substance.
- Like the reed, hypocrites are easily bent.
- Like the reed, hypocrites can lower their head in false humility.
- Like the reed, hypocrites bear no fruit.

And his conclusion is this, "Long before the Lord comes to cut the hypocrite down, it often happens that he dries up for want of the mire on which he lives. The excitement, the encouragement, the example, the profit, the respectability, the prosperity, upon which he lived fail him, and he fails too." (Spurgeon)

3. For Bildad's conclusion he says that, "The wicked are not going to be able to stand, and if Job is wicked, a hypocrite, he too will not be able to stand." And now he will conclude what he has to say to Job.



VERSES 19-22

1. In other words, “If you get right, Job, if you confess your sin and stop claiming to be right, God can bless you again. You can have that joy and you can grow instead of being miserable and stunted!” You see, Bildad is calling for Job to plead his case before God and his reasoning is very simple. If Job is innocent, he has nothing to worry about. If Job is not innocent, then God will deal with him appropriately. But the call is for Job to go before God and plead his case. Bildad is calling for Job to confess his sin and to get right with God.

2. Now before we get to Job’s response to all of this let me make this point. What if Bildad was right, what if Job had sinned and all this was coming upon him for his sin? Yes, Job would need to get right with God but do you see what is missing in Bildad’s response to Job? It is mercy. What Bildad gave Job was justice, even though Job was innocent of any sin, Bildad thought he sinned and thus, this is what justice has for Job! But where is the mercy. In our own lives we don’t cry out for God’s justice but His mercy and thus, may we keep that in mind as we minister to others! In fact, in Exodus 25:22 we see that God will meet us, man, not on the basis of the Law, but at the mercy seat and I am so thankful for that because I fall far short and thus, I seek His mercy and not His justice in my life! And that is truly what Job needed to hear and was not getting from his two friends, Eliphaz and Bildad. Let’s see what Job has to say to Bildad in Job chapter 9.

**JOB 9****VERSES 1-13**

1. Job is telling Bildad that his words are empty. Even if he were able to go before God, he couldn't win. And please understand that Job is not speaking of the way of salvation here but he is basically saying that it is truly hopeless to prove his innocence before a great and awesome God. And how true that is, and when God does speak to Job, Job has no answers for God; all he could do is listen to what God was saying!

And think about it in regards to our salvation, can we stand before God and claim our innocence before Him? Absolutely not, all we can do is claim the blood of Christ that has cleansed us from all our sins!

2. Job is just speaking of the omnipotence of God, how He is in control of everything. And the problem is that God is Spirit, and because of that, how can I plead my case before Him? That is what Job is talking about. This is the dilemma he is in right now.

3. Now here's the thing. Many today love to fight against God and they do this by rejecting Him. But the reality is, you can't fight against God and win! Remember what we are told in Isaiah 45:9, "**Woe to him who strives with his Maker! . . .**"

When people wrestle with God, try to fight against God, they are having a problem with too much self. They think they can fight against their maker. Jacob tried to do this and it was only when he was crippled that “self” was broken and he surrendered to God. And think about it this way, if you could wrestle with God and win, you still would lose. God knows what is best for you and we only want His will done in our life and not our own will. If our will were done, if we always got what we asked for, we would be in trouble because we don’t always know what is best for our life and how our actions will impact others.

Think about a child, do you let them get their way? Do you give them everything they want? Do you let them do whatever they want? Of course you don’t and if you did, like it or not, I believe you are abusing that child and setting them up for trouble as they get older. God does the same with us, He gives to us what is best and we may not always understand it like a child, but we have to learn to trust in Him. God has a perfect plan and ours isn’t! And so, having God’s will, praying for God’s will to be done in your life is not a cop-out as some faith teachers would have you believe. It is what is necessary for our life, “Lord, thy will be done!” should be our prayer!

4. Now let’s put this into perspective for a minute. Should we question God, wonder if what He is doing is right? Well, questioning God is like Peter saying to Jesus, “**Not so Lord!**” It is a challenge and not just a searching. He is God and we are not!

Now, in saying that God is all powerful and all knowing and He is in control may not bring us much comfort if that is all we knew about Him. The reason I can say that is simple. You see, we can look at those wicked leaders of the past, like Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Saddam Hussein and others who had a lot of power, they were dictators and they used their power for evil.

Thus, if God is not as good as we think He is, then having all that power is scary. We must take His omnipotence and couple it with His great love for us, knowing that He is looking out for us. We need to understand that He has our best interests in mind. As Jesus said in John 3:16, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”** Once you understand God’s great love for you, then you can trust Him no matter what you are going through. You see, we need to fall back on what we know of God when we go through tough times or we will come to the wrong conclusions about God if we don’t!

5. One more point that I would like to bring up before we move on here and that is something that Mason wrote regarding how what Job says here connects us to Jesus. Let me show you what I mean.

- We read that God **treads on the waves of the sea**; Jesus walks on the water.
- We read that God **made the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades**, and a star was made to announce the birth of Jesus.
- We read that God **does great things past finding out, yes wonders without number** and Jesus did uncountable miracles and **great things**.
- We read that God **moves past, and I do not perceive Him**, and Jesus could pass through an angry crowd as if He were invisible (John 8:59).

- We read that no one can say to God, “**What are You doing?**” and in the life of Jesus it would come to pass that no one dared ask Him any more questions (Mark 12:34).
- We read that **God will not withdraw His anger**, so we are not surprised that sometimes Jesus showed anger.
- We read it is said of God, **the allies of the proud lie prostrate beneath him**, and so also evil spirits fell prostrate at the feet of Jesus (Mark 3:11).

He concludes by saying, “What wonderful irony there is in seeing Job set out to describe the immortal and invisible God, and in the process paint a stunningly accurate portrayal of the earthly Jesus!” (Mason). May we look to Jesus for all our needs in life for He is the giver and sustainer of life!

#### VERSES 14-20

1. We can easily fall into the same trap that Job found himself in at this point in his life. You see, Job is allowing his circumstances to cloud his picture of God. He doesn't stand a chance with God; he can't even catch his breath. And now Job says that God has filled him with bitterness, which was totally wrong. God tries to fill us with faith using these adversities to help our faith grow. If we refuse to grow and allow these trials to make us **better**, then they will make us **bitter!**

What tends to happen as we become more and more bitter is that we push ourselves away from God, and our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We spiral farther and farther away in our walk. And as we move away we develop a more clouded picture of God. Job was doing just that, seeing God as someone who is just waiting to pounce on anyone who does wrong. Before, when everything was going well, he prayed to God, trusted in God but now things have changed. He feels that God is distant; He is impersonal and is only interested in seeking out judgment upon him.

God is not like that, not at all! In fact in Ezekiel 18:23, 32 we read these words from the heart of God. He said, **“Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord GOD, ‘and not that he should turn from his ways and live? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,’ says the Lord GOD. ‘Therefore turn and live!’”**

That is the heart of God and that does not change because God does not change. He desires us to come to know Him and then, once we do, He will use the events that happen in our lives to help us to grow. That is the perspective to have no matter what you are going through right now!

2. Now Job is not claiming that he was without sin because, if he did, his own mouth would condemn him. But Job also knew that there was no sin that should cause all these calamities to come upon his life. And here is what Job was thinking. “If I was standing before a holy and righteous God, how in the world can I win? I can’t win, no matter how innocent I may be.” That was Job’s thinking. He was frustrated and discouraged and, obviously his friends were not helping him one bit with the advice they were giving to him!

3. Paul the apostle struggled with doing good. You see, it seemed that when he tried, he did those things that he did not want to do. Paul said in Romans 7:18, **“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.”**

But Paul did find the answer to his problem, for in Romans 8:1 Paul said, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”** You see, the answer is only found in Jesus, He alone can help us by His Spirit to do those things that are pleasing to God. It is not by the will of the flesh, but submission to the Holy Spirit that this is accomplished. And please understand that Paul is not speaking of a works salvation, that by doing good he was saved. He is speaking of being saved and desiring to live a life that is pleasing to God, out of love and not the Law, and he recognized that he could not accomplish that by his own strength. He could only do that by surrendering his will to the will of God, by submitting his life to the Holy Spirit’s control!

4. Now here's the thing. We do not stand before God in our righteousness because our righteousness is like filthy rags before a holy and righteous God. And if we do come clothed in our own righteousness, we will be cast from the presence of the Lord. You see, the only way to be clothed in the righteousness of God is by coming to Jesus and as we do it is our unrighteousness that is taken away by Him and it is the righteousness of Christ that comes into our lives. Thus, we can now stand before God; we can come before His holy presence because Jesus is the door to the Father! It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 5:21, **“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”**

Spurgeon spoke of this, how man sees himself and the reality of how God looks upon sinful man. He wrote, “Years ago, there was, a old man, in Wiltshire, who according to his own statement, was a hundred and three years of age, he had never neglected his parish church, he had brought up eleven children, and had no help from the parish, and he expected that, by-and-by, he should go home to God, for ‘he had never done anything wrong in his life that he knowed about.’ ‘But,’ said someone to him, ‘you are a sinner, you know.’ ‘I know I ain’t,’ he said. ‘Well, but God says that you are.’ And what, think you, did that old man reply? He said, ‘God may say what he likes, but I know I ain’t.’ So, you see, he even contradicted God himself, and is not that a great sin for anybody to commit?”



You see, are you going to believe God or what others say or what you feel? Job tells us that if we try to justify ourselves, our own mouths will condemn us. But Paul tells us in Romans 8:31-39, **“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Yes, if we try to justify ourselves we will fail, our own mouth will condemn us! But if God justifies us, then there is absolutely no one who can condemn us! I will let the Lord justify me through Jesus, I am secure in that and I am very insecure if I try to justify myself! I will trust the Lord!

VERSES 21-24

1. For Job, it didn't seem to matter if you were good or evil, because God destroys both equally. In fact, it seems that Job sees God getting some kind of perverse pleasure in destroying people, especially the innocent. What is happening outwardly in our lives can give us a warped perspective of God, like Job was developing. That is why we are told in II Corinthians 5:7, "**For we walk by faith, not by sight.**" You see, God is working inwardly, building up the inner man.

Remember what Paul said in Ephesians 3:14-19, "**For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**"

God is deepening our faith, showing us more and more of His love and care for us, and He is doing it through various trials. Thus, don't look at the outward circumstances to draw your picture of God, look at His Word and see what He is doing in your life.

2. Spurgeon again comments on this as he wrote, “As one is startled by a shriek, or saddened by a groan, so these sharp utterances of Job astonish us at first, and then awake our pity. . . . Physical sufferings had produced a strain on Job’s mind, and he sought relief by expressing his anguish. Like some solitary prisoner in the gloomy keep of an old castle, he carves on the walls pictures of the abject despondencies which haunt him. His afflictions are aggravated by vain efforts to alleviate them: he wounds his hand with the rough hammer and nail with which he is engraving his griefs. Of such tortures many of us have had a taste.”

We have all been there, in those difficult trials, maybe not to the extent of Job, but we have been there. And I think Tozer nails it as he wrote, “The most important thing about you is what comes into your mind when you think of God.” Absolutely and if you have a wrong idea about God it will affect the way you live out your faith! Because of the situations that Job was going through, he had a misrepresentation of God and God will clear that up by the time this book closes as you will see over the next several weeks!

Yes, Job clearly knows the greatness of God, His power, but He is struggling with the goodness of God. He is struggling because he sees the innocent suffer, including himself, which he can’t understand and his friends are not helping one bit as we have seen and I have said! These are important lessons for us to learn as we go through difficult times. God is teaching us, showing us these things so we may grow and apply them to our lives!

VERSES 25-31

1. Job saw his life spinning out of control. And notice Job's conclusion here. If he is going to be punished, even though he is innocent, and even if he was guilty and repented before God, then why should he repent in the first place? Job saw himself in a helpless situation and the reason he did is because he lost the concept of who God is. He saw there being no use in living or even doing good.

VERSES 32-35

1. As we have seen, Job felt that there was a great distance between him and God. He also felt unjustly treated by God. And now notice the problem for Job. How can he go into heaven, to go before God, to God's court, and plead his case? He is a man and there is no one that can bridge that gap, no mediator. A sad state for Job, and yet for us, Paul tells us in I Timothy 2:5, "**For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.**"

And in Hebrews 7:25 we read, "**Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.**" There is no one else that can bridge that gap, no priest, no man, not even Mary, only Jesus Christ who, being God, made Himself flesh to die for our sins in order to bring us to God. That is what I Peter 3:18 tells us, "**For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.**"

Here's the thing. A mediator is there to end a dispute. The dispute between God and man is that man has sinned and his sin has separated him from God and justice demands death. But here comes our Mediator, Jesus Christ and says to the Father, "There is no more debt due, I have paid it in full!" And guess what? The case is closed; we are set free in Christ! What a wonderful God we serve!

2. As this chapter closes Job sees God as a cruel task master with His rod of discipline ready to strike anyone at His will, and Job is terrified of Him. Notice, as Job's picture of God gets more clouded, it is going to be harder for him to truly love God - for how can you love a cruel task master? But our God is not a cruel taskmaster, He is a loving God who took upon His own body the sins of this world and the judgment of the Father so that we can be set free. I think the cross shows us how much He loves us and was willing to die to set us free from the sin that had us in bondage! Let's close with that wonderful thought of our Lord and His great love for us in spite of all our failures and sins!

As we are told in Isaiah 9:6, "**For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**" That is the correct perspective of God to have! He is our everlasting Father who loves us more than we will ever know!