

JOB

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Job chapter 10 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Last week we saw Bildad blast Job for his sin and that is the reason he is going through all this difficulty and it is the reason his children have died, their own sin! Not a very good friend.

Then, as we moved into chapter 9 we saw Job argue his case before God and his big complaint is that there is no mediator between God and man and thus, how can he present his case before God. He knows that he is not perfect, there are none who are but he feels he does not deserve what is happening to him. As we move into chapter 10 this evening we will see Job crying out to God, asking God, “Why are you doing this to me?” And thus, with that said let’s begin reading in Job chapter 10 starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

JOB 10**VERSES 1-7**

1. I guess you can say that Job is speaking from his heart and whatever comes out, comes out. He is not going to hold anything back. And Job is basically saying to God, “Look, make your case before me. Place your cards on the table and let me see what you have on me! Let me see why all these things have come upon my life!”

Job is also saying to God, “Hey look, are you happy now? If I am the work of your hands then why in the world are you treating me like this?” As we are going to see, he had the wrong perspective of things and God will correct him. But God is going to wait until Job goes as far as he can go and then He will step in and correct Job.

2. Now the problem for Job was that he had a distorted view of God. He could not understand how or why God would do this to him when he was a good person. You see, the thinking was that only bad things happen to bad people. That same distorted view of God was seen in the life of Asaph in Psalm 73. You see, Asaph saw the wicked prosper and yet he was struggling. He saw the death of the wicked being easy, being painless. The wicked seemed to live the good life and yet for him, it was hard, things were difficult. They would parade around and boast of their wickedness and it got so bad for Asaph that he said in Psalm 73:2-3, **“But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”**

It was very difficult for Asaph and his faith was on the rocks, he almost stumbled, he almost fell. What got him back on track? The thing that helped him get the right perspective of things was when he went in to the sanctuary of God; when he was fellowshiping with God, for it was then that God gave him a new perspective of the situation. In Psalm 73:17 we see what transpired, what changed his view of things, **“Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.”**

Job had the same problem. He saw himself as good, and that he is the work of God's hands, and yet it seems that God despised him and loved the wicked. Wrong perspective - God loves us all for Romans 5:8 says, "**But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**" Not everyone appropriates that into their lives, but Christ died for us all, when we all were sinners!

The only solution for us is to get back to the Word of God and let God give to us the correct perspective of the situation. God does nothing to destroy us but to draw us closer to Him and in the end, this is the worst it will get for us and for the unsaved, this is the best it gets. You see, we go through life with God leading us down the path He has for us and He is the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd, may we not forget that!

3. Spurgeon gives to us several reasons why the righteous suffer, the saved go through difficult times. He wrote,

- It may be that God is contending with you to show you His power to uphold you.
- It may be that God is contending with you to develop your graces.
- It may be that God is contending with you because you have some secret sin that is doing you great damage.
- It may be that God is contending with you because He wants you to enter the fellowship of His sufferings.
- It may be that God is contending with you to humble you.

You see, God is working in us and yes, it may be to correct us but it also may be to build us up in the faith. God does this because He loves us not because He hates us, may we not forget that!

4. What about the sinner, the unsaved person, why does God allow them to go through some of these difficult times. Once again Spurgeon gives us several possible reasons for this. He wrote,

- It may be that God is contending with you because you are not yet thoroughly awakened to your lost condition.
- It may be that God is contending with you in order to test your earnestness.
- It may be that God is contending with you because you are harboring one sin that you will not turn over to Him.
- It may be that God is contending with you because you do not yet thoroughly understand the plan of salvation.

And I guess the bottom line is this for saints and sinners. Yes, for Job all this came upon him not because of his sin but it is true that God does work with saints and sinners to deal with our sin. For the saved, to get them back on track. For the sinner, to draw them to Jesus! Spurgeon said this, “Trials often discover sins - sins we should never have found out if it had not been for them. We know that the houses in Russia are very greatly infested with rats and mice. Perhaps a stranger would scarcely notice them at first, but the time when you discover them is when the house is on fire; then they pour out in multitudes. And so doth God sometimes burn up our comforts to make our hidden sins run out; and then he enables us to knock them on the head and get rid of them.”

The key, of course, is that God loves us so much that He wants what is best for our lives and if you don't know Him please understand that He loves you so much that He will do everything possible to draw you to Him!

VERSES 8-12

1. Job understood that God created him and all of mankind from the dust of the earth and that we have not evolved from apes or monkeys! God is the creator and the preserver of life and Job understood that but it was also very confusing to him. How can the creator God, the one who preserves and sustains life, now abandon him? At least that is what he thought.

2. Job understands that man is frail; in fact his own life is very frail as God has created him out of the dust of the earth. God, like a master potter, has formed Job, and He has formed us, but these bodies of flesh will return to the dust of the earth. It is as Psalm 103:14 says, **“For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”** But for Job, he sees God make him on the potter’s wheel and then smash him down once again.

In saying that may we not miss the big picture that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. When you look at these bodies of flesh, made from the dust of the earth, what an awesome creation we are. These bodies are so amazing and yet, they are frail and apart from God, we would be absolutely nothing. We exist and we consist because God is holding our lives together as well as this universe.

VERSES 13-17

1. Here is the problem for Job. He understood that God knew all the causes and answers to Job's condition and yet, God did not tell Job why all this was happening to him. And for Job, he sees himself trapped. No matter what he does before God it won't be good enough and he will be judged. If Job is good, God will judge him, if he is wicked, God is right there ready to judge him. And for Job, he saw no escape from this affliction that had come upon his life. Clarke makes these comments regarding this, "I am as if attacked by successive troops; one company being wearied, another succeeds to the attack, so that I am harassed by continual warfare." Not a great picture of God or a correct one!

Notice that as Job's focus of God is messed up, he becomes more emotionally distraught and he gets more confused about God and His character. How can we counter those difficulties? Paul tells us in Philippians 4:6-7, "**Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**" You see, God will guard your emotions and your thoughts, helping you to keep a proper perspective of the situation; all He asks is that you bring your requests to Him. And you may never understand the how's and whys of God but you will understand His great love for you!

2. As you read this and then you read in James 5:11 of this man Job, which says, **“Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord - that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”** it seems to contradict what we are reading in Job! How can the Lord speak of the perseverance of Job when he is acting like this? He is not very patient so how can this be? Remember that the Lord is working in Job and we are told that the end of all this was what the Lord desired, it is what the Lord intended! You see, the Lord was teaching him lessons, making him patient, teaching him to preserve, to trust in the Lord, God was doing this and He was using these difficult times as a trial in his life to test his faith and Satan was going to use these things to tempt him to sin. So as you are going through trials, testing’s in your life, know that there is **“the end intended by the Lord”** Also understand that through it all, as difficult as it may be, **“the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”**

VERSES 18-22

1. Now please understand that Job is not suicidal here, he is not talking about suicide. What Job is saying is that if God is only going to torture him, bring all this upon him, then why in the world was he even allowed to be born! And Job has truly reached the end of his ropes you might say, he can’t take it any more. So he cries out to God, asking God to leave him alone, to give him a break and let him try to enjoy the short time he has left. Notice now that God is the enemy towards Job.

2. Now it is easy to come against Job and speak of his lack of faith, but understand we know the end of the story. How many of you, going through tough times can just trust the Lord no matter how difficult it can be? And keep in mind that you don't know the end of the situation. You see, when you have that perspective you can understand why Job reacted like he did. Job is just overwhelmed in this trial because he doesn't understand why this is happening to him or how or if it will end.

Now here's the thing as we put this into perspective for our lives. We need to understand that as we go through difficult times we won't always know why. Because of that you have to fall back on what you know of God. Not only that He is all powerful, but that He is a God of love. He is a God of goodness and He wants what is best for our life.

God was teaching Job, as He teaches us, to walk by faith and not by sight, so that our faith, like Job's faith, can grow. It is not always easy, but it is necessary. Listen to what Paul said to the church in Thessalonica on how their faith was growing. He said in II Thessalonians 1:3-5, **“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer.”**

Our faith grows through difficult times, trials that come upon our lives and not on the mountain top. That is where we learn to trust in the Lord, in the valley and even though we don't understand all of it, we walk by faith and follow our Shepherd!

3. Now as Job concludes his words, as we move into chapter 11, his third friend, Zophar begins to speak and argue against Job's claims of innocence before God. So let's see what this friend has to say to encourage his friend Job.

JOB 11

VERSES 1-6

1. As we will see, Zophar does not speak a lot, only here and in Job 20 but when he speaks he does so very harshly towards Job and almost in a sarcastic way. As we see here Zophar is telling Job that even with all the words that Job has spoken, he is not going to be able to justify himself.

And Zophar feels that the words of Job were empty and that the things that have come upon Job's life shows that Job is not "**pure,**" that his eyes are not "**clean**" before God. Zophar does not believe Job for one minute. In fact, he is calling to God to show Job all the evil that is in him, that secret sin that has brought this upon his life. And just to let Job know how spiritual he is, he tells Job that God has spoken to him and has shown him that Job has only received half of what he deserved. If God would give him all that he deserved, it would be twice as bad for Job, if you could even imagine!

Now that is partly true, none of us get what we deserve. You see, we deserve death, all of us, but God has given us eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ. God is gracious and God is merciful for He has given us heaven when we deserve hell! But at this point in Job's life, he did not need a sermon but compassion, which he was not getting from his friends.

2. One more point before we move on and that is this. When we look at life from our own perspective, from this side of heaven, things often look a mess. But, as God sees things from a heavenly perspective, the complete picture, He sees it as it really is! God has painted a beautiful picture of our lives, how we have lived and grown in Him and I think we will clearly see that when we do get to heaven.

VERSES 7-12

1. Now here in verse 7 I think The King James Version better translates this verse. It says, "**Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?**" The answer to that question may surprise you. No we can't find God by our searching because He is not lost, we are! And God is the Good Shepherd who goes looking for His sheep. Jesus said in John 6:44, "**No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him . . .**" God is the initiator and we are only responding to what He has begun. God is not discovered through our intelligence but He is spiritually discerned. Paul said in I Corinthians 2:14, "**But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**"

2. We also need to understand that there is no way we can fully understand an infinite God with our finite minds. As the Lord said in Isaiah 55:8-9, **“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’”**

Now in knowing that, understand that you are going to have things occur in your life that you are not fully going to understand, you can't intellectually understand what God is doing and why He is doing it. That is when you have to walk by faith and not by sight, trusting that God knows what is best for your life. We are going to see that God will never answer Job's how's and whys, but He is trying to stretch Job's faith, getting Job to trust in God even though Job may not fully understand why all this is happening.

3. Now Zophar really let's Job have it here. Maybe Zophar could not take it any longer, listening to what Job had to say and he just spews out all these unkind words to him. And here's the thing. God knows those that are deceitful and those who are honest, you can't fool Him. And, like I have said, because of Job's claims of innocence, Zophar is calling him a nitwit, a person whose head has been hallowed out. Job is just plain stupid for what he has said. And if Job continues down this path of faulty reasoning, deceiving himself, he will never be wise. Well, I should not say that Job will never be wise according to Zophar. You see, Zophar says that he will obtain wisdom when a man is born from a wild donkey! I think he is being a little sarcastic.

And keep in mind that these are his friends and they are not very kind, compassionate towards Job and all he is going through. Bradley summarizes what Zophar was saying to Job. He wrote, “Wherever there is suffering, there is sin, real and tangible sin, proportioned to that suffering. God governs the world by rewards and punishments, and those rewards and punishments are distributed here below with an unerring justice. It follows therefore that this Job, this seeming Saint, is really a man full of heinous sin.” That is what he thought and he was totally wrong because in Job chapters 1 and 2 we see that God said Job was blameless, upright, a man who fears God and hates evil. So all these words that Job’s friends were speaking are empty, they are not true in regards to what was happening to Job!

VERSES 13-19

1. Again, understanding Zophar’s theology that the wicked get punished and the righteous get blessed, Zophar is calling for Job to get right with God, for if he did the sun would shine upon his life once again, a smile would return to his face, and he would be protected from his enemies just as a moat protects those living within the city walls. He is telling Job that all these tragedies would come to an end if he only would get right with God. But again, Job was innocent, that is not why this was coming upon his life!

2. Now in regards to verse 16 which says, **“Because you would forget your misery, And remember it as waters that have passed away.”** Spurgeon makes these remarks. He wrote, “We seem to lie all broken in pieces, with our thoughts like a case of knives cutting into our spirit; and we say to ourselves, ‘We never shall forget this terrible experience.’ And yet, by-and-by, God turns towards us the palm of his hand, and we see that it is full of mercy, we are restored to health, or uplifted from depression of spirit, and we wonder that we ever made so much of our former suffering or depression.” He goes on to say, “We remember it no more, except as a thing that has passed and gone, to be recollected with gratitude that we have been delivered from it, but not to be remembered so as to leave any scar upon our spirit, or to cause us any painful reflection whatsoever. ‘Thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away.’” That truly is our God. We confess our sins not for salvation if we have already come to Christ, but for fellowship and they are remembered no more by God and we should cast them away or we will become discouraged and depressed!

VERSE 20

1. Zophar is telling Job that if he does not turn away from his wicked sin, his obvious sinful life, then the only hope he has is death! Nice friend! And as passionate and sure of himself as Zophar was, he was totally wrong. It is as Bradley wrote in regards to all three of Job's friends and what they had to say, "They misapplied the most precious truths and the most edifying of doctrines; turned wholesome food to poison; pressed upon their friend those half-truths, which are sometimes the worst of untruths." That is the reality of what was taking place here, they were speaking out of their own hearts and not the counsel of God!

2. So as Zophar concludes his attack upon Job we have seen all three of Job's friends give their advice to Job. Now Job is going to step in and this is one of the longest discourses in the book, some 3 chapters, second only to the 6 chapters later on by Job, chapters 26-31. I think Job had enough and he is going to blast them for being miserable counselors!

JOB 12VERSES 1-3

1. As we have seen, Job's three friends were acting like prosecuting attorneys to show Job that he is a guilty sinner. Now Job steps in as his own defense attorney and his going to respond to what they are saying against him.

2. I get the impression that Job has had it with these guys. He is saying to them that when they die so to will die all the wisdom in the world. Job is being just a little sarcastic here. But also understand where Job's friends were coming from. They were trying to figure out the ways of God with their finite minds and they came to the conclusion that sin equals punishment and obedience equals blessing. But that is only partially true, and yet it allows them to package their theology very neatly, even though they are wrong.

3. They also were coming off as "Mr. know-it-all's" when the reality of this situation was that they did not know what they were talking about. Clarke picked up on this and wrote, "All your boasted wisdom consists only in *strings of proverbs* which are in every person's mouth, and are no proof of wisdom and experience in them that use them." In other words, they were not as smart as they thought they were!

4. I think as people grow in the Lord they find out two important facts, how sinful we really are compared to a holy and righteous God, and how little we really know compared to our omniscient or all-knowing God. Only a fool thinks he is better than he is or smarter than he is. And so Job, as his own defense attorney, lashes out at their pride as he tells them that he understands just as much as they do, that he has not heard anything earth-shattering from their speeches.

VERSES 4-6

1. Here was the problem for the friends of Job. You see, it was very hard for these guys to be compassionate towards Job when things were going well in their own life. They were making themselves out as righteous, for they were blessed. And they were making Job unrighteous for he was cursed. Those who came to comfort him were only mocking him. But Job was calling for these guys to have some compassion on him, for what if this was happening to them? That is an interesting point that is often missed as we try to comfort others. That compassion, that mercy, that love that God has for us we desire when we go through tough times! May we not forget that!

2. Now I like what Job does here, I like his argument against their counsel. You see, for Job's three friends, they had their pat theological answers to why this was happening to Job. But Job calls for them to apply that to the real world and see if it still holds water. And he shows them that it doesn't, for the robbers are still prospering, the unrighteous seem to live in comfort, they seem to be blessed. God is merciful. Job is turning on the bright lights upon his friends so that they are not only uncomfortable, but that they would see their error. The light would go on you might say!

VERSES 7-12

1. Job is saying that creation itself is crying out that there is a God who created all of this. Every creature knows this except man who has taken God out of the picture and points to some primordial slime pool where life evolved from non-life! Creation itself shows us that there is a designer, a creator, a God!

And Job's point here is that when you look at nature it is not always the good guy or the good creature that wins. Do a little experiment if you don't believe me. Go to the lake and bring some bread with you. Divide the bread into small pieces and throw them in the air. Guess what, you will find hundreds of sea gulls or I guess I should say lake gulls trying to get at the bread. Now do these gulls say, "No, you go first?" Absolutely not, they fight over the bread and it is not always the good one, if there is a good sea gull, which gets the bread!

And that is Job's point. Even nature speaks of this and you have missed the point. You have come to the wrong conclusion!

2. Now verse 10 speaks of every breath, our entire life is in the hands of God. In fact, every breath we take is a gift of God. Paul tells us this very thing in Acts 17:28, "**for in Him we live and move and have our being . . .**" God controls our very lives.

Remember the story of the fall of Babylon. Belshazzar, King of Babylon has this drunken party and brought out the drinking vessels that were used in the Temple to praise and worship the God of Israel, and they began to worship their gods with them. And during this party God wrote on the wall "**. . . 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.'**"

And Belshazzar had no idea what it meant but he knew he was in trouble. In fact, he was so scarred that The King James Version of the Bible says that his knees smote together, his knees were knocking against each other. And the king's grandmother tells him that there is one who is from God that can tell you what this writing means as he interpreted dreams in the days of Nebuchadnezzar.

And as they brought Daniel before the king, he told him that he and his kingdom had been weighed in the balances of God and have come up short. You and your kingdom will be destroyed this very night. And Daniel's rebuke against Belshazzar went like this, "**But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.**" Daniel 5:22-23. Yes every breath you take is a gift of God! May we not forget that fact and be thankful to our God for the life He has given to us! God raises up and He can bring down, He is God!

3. Now in verses 11-12 it speaks of "**aged men**" and the idea is that they can have more wisdom than younger people because they have experienced life. It does not mean that they are smarter and it is true, they are not always that wise. But true wisdom comes from the Lord and that is what we need to keep in mind. It is not that we are so wise, but He is and has given us wisdom as we obey His Spirit! And I guess once you realize how much you don't know it should give you more compassion towards others.

VERSES 13-25

1. In this section we see Job rebuke his friends by telling them, “Make no mistake about it. I do know God and I do know how great He is. And in saying that, leave me alone; don’t criticize me on that one!” And Job shows this by telling them and us, that God is sovereign over nature, over nations, over the lives of men, He is in control! You can’t escape His control! He knows what you are going to do before you do it. And the bottom line is this, Job tells us that the leaders and governments of earth come and go, but God is King of kings. Thus, He is in complete and absolute control. Thus, in knowing the God I serve, I can rest in that because I know that He loves me more than I will ever know. Now, if I didn’t know that or if that wasn’t true, then I would be terrified not knowing what He might do to me!

2. In regards to what Job has said here, the power of God, David Guzik makes these comments,

- He showed God’s power over material things (**If He breaks a thing down, it cannot be rebuilt**). “He alone can *create*, and he alone can *destroy*. Nothing can be annihilated but by the same Power that created it. This is a most remarkable fact. No power, skill, or cunning of man can annihilate the smallest particle of matter. Man, by chemical agency, may change its *form*; but to reduce it to *nothing* belongs to God alone.” (Clarke)
- He showed God’s power over men (**If He imprisons a man**).
- He showed God’s power over minds (**The deceived and the deceiver are His**).
- He showed God’s power over the wise (**He leads counselors away plundered, and makes fools of the judges**).
- He showed God’s power over rulers (**He loosens the bonds of kings . . . He leads princes away plundered**).

- He showed God's power over the eloquent (**He deprives the trusted ones of speech**).
- He showed God's power over the darkness (**brings the shadow of death to light**).
- He showed God's power over the nations (**He makes nations great, and destroys them**).

- David Guzik

May we never lose sight of the power of God and that He controls all things. Nothing happens without His knowledge and everything is working together to fulfill His ultimate plan, not only the Kingdom Age but the new heavens and the new earth, the eternal state that will take place after the Kingdom Age!

JOB 13

VERSES 1-12

1. You can hear the frustration in Job's words. Job has had it with their worthless counsel and does not want to hear their empty words any longer. He only wants to hear from God, and he calls these so-called friends, "**worthless physicians!**" In other words, they can't help anyone.

And Job is so upset with them that he just wants them to shut up, to be quiet. I guess it is true, it is better to keep silent and have people think that you are a fool, than to speak and prove their case! Job is calling for them to be silent, not to speak - that would be their best counsel!

2. Many today say they are speaking for God or representing God and yet what they say and do go contrary to what God's Word has said. And Job is rebuking these friends for doing this very thing. In other words, if you are going to speak for God you better be sure this is what God is saying!

And yes, Job's friends were speaking for God, and yet their counsel was wrong. You see, they jumped to the wrong conclusions because they did not have all the information they needed. Now just because they did not have all the information, they were still responsible for what they did know and how they used that information. God is going to rebuke them at the end of this book for speaking lies in His name. That is clear to me that they were not speaking for God. And we will see that God will reprove them for their false counsel and their empty words, for they were totally meaningless, they were of no help, and most importantly, they were not of God.

3. Now please don't come to the wrong conclusion that because of this we are not to confront someone in sin. That is not at all what God is saying here. If you see someone in sin it must be dealt with. But Job's friends didn't see any sin; they just assumed that Job had sinned because of what was happening in his life. And thus, they came to the wrong conclusion that it was some secret sin that has brought this upon Job.

The thing we are not to do is judge person's heart, their motives. We are to judge their actions, what they do if it is of God or not. It is as Jesus said in John 7:24, "**Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.**" We are to judge according to the Word of God!

VERSES 13-19

1. We are not sure but it seems that maybe Job's friends tried to interrupt Job and Job wants to get his words in and then whatever happens happens. They can speak when he is done. And make no mistake about it, Job is still in his cave of despair, living in self pity, but then, out of nowhere, he makes this statement that is solid. He says, "**Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. . . .**"

Even though Job has no idea why this is happening to him, and as unfair as it seems, he is going to trust in God with his life. He can't figure this out, but he is learning to trust God more, his faith is growing. Now things don't always work out as we plan them, but as Paul said in Romans 8:28, "**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**" We may not always see, we may not always feel but we can always know that things are working together for good because we love God and He loves us. That is where we rest and because of that we can say like Job, "**Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. . . .**"

Another reason Job felt this way is because he saw God as his salvation. He not only knew that God loved him but will also be his salvation. It is as Psalm 62:2 tells us, "**He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.**" Now here's the thing. We will not be moved if our feet are placed upon the Rock, Jesus Christ. But if we place our feet upon the shifting sand of this world, look out, you will be moved, you will be shaken. He is our salvation and thus, nothing should be able to move us from the course that He has for us!

2. Now let's put this into perspective for us by looking at what C. S. Lewis wrote. Writing fictionally in the voice of a senior demon instructing a junior demon in his popular book *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis stated – and this is from a demon's perspective – this dynamic trial in the life of the believer: “He wants them to learn to walk and must therefore take away His hand; and if only the will to walk is really there He is pleased even with their stumbles. Do not be deceived, Wormwood. Our cause is never more in danger than when a human, no longer desiring, but still intending, to do our Enemy's will, looks round upon a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys.” May we have that kind of determination that no matter what comes our way, we will obey the Lord!

VERSES 20-27

1. In Job 7:16 Job said, “**I loathe my life; I would not live forever. Let me alone, For my days are but a breath.**” There he was crying out for God to leave him alone, that he just can't take anymore. But that was spoken out of the anguish his heart felt and the reality of the matter is that Job did not want God to withdraw Himself from him. And I think hidden in all of that is the reality that Job knew that God was sustaining him even though he felt that God had abandoned him at times, he knew that the only way he could get through this was with the help of God. I think many times we may feel like Job but we also understand we could not get through the situation we are in apart from God, we need Him, He does not need us!

2. Regarding this idea of “... a leaf driven to and fro” Spurgeon says this, “It is a common figure he uses, that of a leaf driven to and fro. Strong gusts of wind, it may be in the autumn when the leaves hang but lightly upon the trees, send them falling in showers around us; quite helpless to stay their own course, fluttering in the air to and fro, like winged birds that cannot steer themselves, but are guided by every fitful blast that blows upon them, at last they sink into the mire, to be trodden down and forgotten. To them Job likens himself - a helpless, hopeless, worthless, weak, despised, perishing thing.”

But again, Job has the wrong perspective of the situation. God is not just pushing him around, doing things for nothing but He is moving Job to help him to grow, to strengthen his faith and not to destroy him. But many times as we are going through tough times, when we don't see the light at the end of the tunnel in a sense, we may feel and respond like Job. The only solution is to get back it fellowship with God, walk in the light as He is in the light and the darkness of the situation will not overtake you!

3. Obviously Job does not think he is blameless but if he did do something wrong, he is unsure what that was. So Job wants God to show him his error and he is logically going back to his youth, when he did make mistakes, he did error. And it seems that Job is thinking that God is getting back at him for something done back then. Understand this; God brings us through trials to stretch our faith and not to get back at us. But as we go through difficult times, we tend to look back and blame our present situation on what we have done in the past, and that is not always the case, as we see with Job.

VERSE 28

1. Job is letting us know how he feels, what he thinks about the life he now has. And Job feels that he is just rotting away. He cannot see any point to his suffering at all. What about you this evening as we close our study? Are you going through some very difficult times? Do you feel that you can't move on with your life like Job was lamenting. Do you feel held back, that you can't move forward because you are like a prisoner in this punishment and you are in great despair?

If you are feeling that way you need to come before the Lord and give it to Him. You need to learn to trust in Him. You need to understand that He loves you more than you will ever know. You need to understand that God has a plan for your life as difficult as things may be right now. And if you are in sin, then repent and get right with God. Learn the lesson and don't go back and do the same sin again. If you are not in sin and you are going through tough times, learn the lessons that God is showing you through this. Use this time to be in His Word, to be in fellowship, to be in prayer, to be around other Christians because He will see you through!

Let me close with these thoughts from Clarke, who wrote, "I have no dependence but God; I trust him alone. Should he even destroy my life by this affliction, yet will I hope that when he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold." May we never forget that!