

JOB

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Job chapter 14 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Now keep in mind that Job has listened to three of his friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar speak of why Job was going through all these troubles. They felt that Job was hiding some sin in his life and if he would repent and get right with God, then he would be blessed.

Now that would be fine if that was the reason Job was going through all these things, but that was not the reason, God tells us that in Job chapters 1 and 2. God is testing the faith of Job and this is not a chastening by God. And Job has had it now, he has listened to what his friends have said and now he just pours out his heart before God and slams the counsel that his friends have given to him. In fact, Job spends 3 chapters speaking of how he feels here, chapter's 12 through 14. With that said, let's begin reading in Job chapter 14, starting in verse 1 as Job continues speaking, and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

JOB 14**VERSES 1-2**

1. You can feel the pain that Job is going through here. Job makes that point, and rightly so, that man's life is short. And think about this, even if he lived to be 1,000 years old, when you compare that to eternity, it is nothing! And not only is his life short, but it is full of trouble and think about that. Trouble seems to be the common denominator for mankind. Even Eliphaz said, "**Yet man is born to trouble, As the sparks fly upward.**" Job 5:7. This is true for the Christian and the non-Christian; there is trouble in this world. The only difference is that we have the Lord to cast all our cares upon and the unsaved don't!

2. Also, Job recognized that death is inevitable. Remember, the death rate is still one per person and we all will make it unless the Rapture happens first! And Job sees the finality of death, that it is like a shadow and when the sun goes down, that shadow is gone! In other words, there is no coming back. Do you think Job is depressed? You bet he is because as he looks at his life, the things that his friends are telling him, there is no hope, no comfort. He needs to get back to the Lord and look to Him to be the strength of his life because apart from the Lord, there truly is no hope!

VERSES 3-6

1. God knows the number of our days, and our prayer should be that we would use that time to the fullest. As Psalm 90:12 says, **“So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.”** I wonder how important some of the things we are doing will be when we get to heaven.
2. Now when you have lost the correct perspective of God, the wrong viewpoint of God, then you will come to the wrong conclusions and that is what we see here with Job. He now sees God as his adversary and is saying to God not to waste His time with him. In Job 13:25 we read, **“Will You frighten a leaf driven to and fro? And will You pursue dry stubble?”** Is God really our adversary? Does He get pleasure in punishing us? Folks, we need to understand that God is not our adversary, but Satan is. God get’s no pleasure in punishing us but He will chasten us to draw us back to Him when we have gone astray, not to destroy us but to restore us. That is how much He loves us. Remember what Paul said in Romans 8:31, **“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”** You see, God is for us just as He was for Job but Job did not see it that way and many times neither do we!

3. And Job makes his argument against God and is basically saying to the Lord, “Look, how can You demand purity from me when I am impure? I am not perfect so how in the world do You expect me to be?” Was Job right about what he was saying here? What do the Scriptures tell us? In Psalm 51:5 David said, **“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.”** Now when you go to see your friends newborn child, don’t say, “Oh what a cute little sinner he is!” That will not go over well even though it is true.

Also, in Isaiah 64:6 we are told, **“But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.”** Do you see that? How much of our righteousness is like filthy rags? We are told that *ALL* our righteousness, when compared to a holy and righteous God, is filthy!

What can we do about this problem of being born into sin through Adam? We must be born again! You see, it is a problem with our genes and thus, we are clothed in unrighteousness and we need to be clothed in His righteousness or we need to get some new jeans you might say and it is, in a sense, both genes and jeans! We see this in Isaiah 61:10 as we are told, **“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.”** God clothes us in His righteousness or as Paul put it 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.”** That is why we need a new change of jeans, so we can be clothed in His righteousness!

So yes, we are sinners and so was Job, but that is not why this was all coming upon him as we have seen.

4. And we see here that Job wants God to back off, to leave him alone because he only has a short time to live or so he thinks.

VERSES 7-12

1. Again, we must remember that Job is not speaking out of revelation, but out of frustration. Job thinks in death there is peace, like sleep, for the just and the unjust. Now please understand that Job, because he has lost the perspective of God is coming to some wrong conclusions. Death is not the cessation of life but for those that come to the Lord, it is life with Him and those that don't it is a life separated from Him in Hell. And the reason I know that Job got this wrong is because in Job chapter 38 the Lord rebukes Job for his false ideas about death, about the afterlife! In Job 38:2 we are told, "**Who is this who darkens counsel By words without knowledge?**" And in Job 38:17 the Lord tells Job, "**Have the gates of death been revealed to you? Or have you seen the doors of the shadow of death?**"

2. I do not believe in soul sleep or annihilation or the cessation of life after death but I believe that the believers and unbelievers continue on. Those that know the Lord go to be with Him as I have said and those that don't go to Hell. For believers Paul tells us **“We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”** II Corinthians 5:8. You see, no soul sleep for the Christian, once we die in these physical bodies, we go to be with the Lord!

Also we are told in John 11:25-26 as Jesus is speaking to Martha, **“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’”** And that is why we as Christians have hope in death, we do not fret as the unsaved because we know that to be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord. Do you believe this? That is a question you have to answer and if you are troubled by it, see me after study and we will talk!

VERSES 13-17

1. What a great question, **“If a man dies, shall he live again?”** And Job does not answer this question here, but he does answer it in chapter 19, and we will cover that in more detail when we get to that section. But the answer is yes, death is not the cessation of life, but moving from a body of flesh to a spiritual body, both for the just and the unjust. For those in Christ, they will spend eternity with God. For those outside of Christ, they will be eternally separated from Him as I have said.

Now let me make a few points regarding this question because it will be a few weeks before we get to chapter 19. In the New Testament we clearly see that Jesus is the one who has given to us this everlasting life. You will find it in John 11:23-26 as Jesus speaks of resurrection life to Martha. You will find in I Corinthians 15:3-57 as Paul speaks of the transformation of these bodies of flesh into new bodies, spiritual bodies because these bodies of flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God! Paul in II Timothy 1:10 makes this point of resurrection life in Christ as he tells us, **“but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”** The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“[It is that purpose and grace] which He now has made known and has fully disclosed and made real [to us] through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who annulled death and made it of no effect and brought life and immortality (immunity from eternal death) to light through the Gospel.”** Never lose sight of that and never stop proclaiming it, the Gospel message is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes! (Romans 1:16).

2. Listen to what Morgan had to say regarding this, “It was a tremendous question: but let us remind ourselves that there is no answer to it, save that which came to men through Jesus Christ and His Gospel. As Paul said, it is He ‘Who brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel’ (2 Timothy 1:10). The question of Job was answered by Jesus, and that so completely as to leave no room for doubt.” Amen to that!

VERSES 18-22

1. Job sees God looking down upon man ready to bring pain and misery into his life.

Again, this is a very distorted picture of God for it is built upon circumstances and not upon the truth, which we have in His Word, the Bible. He illustrates his point from nature. That as mountains fall apart, as rocks are moved, as water wears down stones and torrents of water wash away the soil, so God takes away the hope of man!

Now that is wrong, that is not what God does. In fact it is just the opposite. God gives to us great hope and that hope is seen only in Him! Now apart from Christ there truly is no hope and Paul picks up on that in Ephesians 2:11-12, **“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh - who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands - that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”**

That can be very discouraging but God does not leave us hopeless. In Romans 15:4 Paul wrote, **“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”** Paul is telling us that we can have hope as we look at what the Old Testament saints went through and how God worked in their lives. That is the only way to have hope, in the Lord. Please don't miss the point, our hope is always in Christ and not some program or whatever!

Let's look at a few more Scriptures that show us our hope is in the Lord, in Jesus and not in this world or the things of this world! In Romans 15:3 Paul said, "**Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**" Also, in I Peter 1:13 we are told, "**Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**" And in I Peter 1:20-21 Peter tells us, "**He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.**"

You see, our faith and hope must be in God or it is empty faith and it is hopeless. Job missed out on this because he let the circumstances get the better of him and he saw God as one who was looking to crush him instead of build him up!

2. And so ends Round One of what will be a Three-Round Title fight. They have all come out fighting and Job got the last punch in. Next we will see Job's three friends begin all over again with their counsel, starting with Eliphaz in round two of this fight.

JOB 15**VERSES 1-6**

1. Here we see Eliphaz coming out and swinging at Job. Eliphaz is coming against Job's words of wisdom, saying that his words are empty; his words are nothing more than a lot of hot air. Eliphaz is coming down hard upon Job because he thought Job was guilty of sin and he is trying to justify his sin.

And because of Job trying to defend himself, justify himself before his friends, we see that Eliphaz comes to the wrong conclusion. In his mind Job must then be guilty or he would not be acting like he is. Sometimes it doesn't matter what you say to people, their mind is made-up. Thus, the best thing to do is give it over to the Lord and let Him defend you and handle the situation. Eliphaz and Job's other friends had made up their minds and they were confident in what they were saying to Job, but they were wrong as God will condemn them for their empty words and not for Job's words! Let's face it; we can be sincerely wrong just like Eliphaz. That is why we need to pray and seek God before we respond, before we act!

VERSES 7-13

1. This guy shows Job no mercy at all. We now see Eliphaz attacks Job's credentials, asking Job if he was the oldest and wisest man around! And it would seem from these verses that Job's friends were older than he was and thus, they considered themselves as being wiser than Job. They thought that they knew more than Job did. This of course was not true! He wanted to know if the counsel that Job had was from God and obviously they did not see it that way. This was truly a slam against Job. The reason I say that is because they saw Job in rebellion against God, thus, his words were empty, and came from a heart that was trying to hide something, a heart that was far away from God.

2. And keep in mind that Eliphaz is not happy with Job for coming against all three of them and the words they were speaking to Job. In fact, we are told in Job 13:4-5, **“But you forgers of lies, You are all worthless physicians. Oh, that you would be silent, And it would be your wisdom!”** In other words, “You are not helping me at all and if you want to show your wisdom, then just stop talking. Because the more you are talking the more foolish you sound!”

3. Now we need to keep in mind the timeframe here. The flood took place some 250 to 300 years prior to this time in Job, which means some of the people who were directly related to Noah's sons were still around. Thus, the lessons they learned from the aged is that sin equals punishment, just as God has poured out His wrath and wiped out all those who sinned with a flood. The tradition and wisdom of the ancients is what they held on to, but in this case, they were wrong. That was the problem, they thought they knew what was going on and they did not!

4. As they looked at Job and listened to what he was saying they came to the conclusion that Job was a man who made himself very righteous, but was really entertaining sin! In fact, he was not just entertaining sin but he was winking at it. And Eliphaz hit Job hard saying that God's Word is condemning him and why doesn't he listen to what God was saying! The problem was that they were not speaking for God. And thus, their words were empty and condemning, and if they did not come from God then they came from the imagination of their own hearts and in reality, these words came from Satan if they did not come from God!

And think about where condemnation is coming from? It is not the Lord; we are already condemned apart from Him. But in Christ, there is no condemnation. Now some may say that this was before Jesus and that is true. But keep in mind that they were not justified by works in the Old Testament, but by faith in the coming Messiah. And thus, Job is not condemned by God, which means his friends were not speaking for God but for the Devil as I have said!

VERSES 14-16

1. This is true; man can not be righteous before a holy God on his own merits. Paul said in Romans 3:23, “**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**” Eliphaz also speaks of the “**saints**” and here I believe it is a reference to the angels that fell with Lucifer. You see, one-third of the angels rebelled against God. Also, the heavens are polluted by sin because Satan still has access to heaven. He will not be cast out until the half-way mark of the Seven Year Tribulation Period. And in the end God will create a new heaven and new earth, the eternal state that will be pure.

And Eliphaz’s point is that man is even worse and can’t be trusted. Now I don’t think Eliphaz was speaking of himself in that group, for he was not suffering and thus he must be righteous, but when you look at what Job was going through - he was pointing his finger right at him and making Job guilty before God. Is what he was saying true? Yes in the broad scheme of things. But the reality was, there was no love in what he was saying, no grace, no mercy, everything was black and white for him but not as God was seeing things.

VERSES 17-26

1. Here is where a lot of Christians get themselves into trouble. They start making doctrine by their own experiences, which may be contrary to the Word of God. We can see it with the health, wealth and prosperity Gospel. We can see it with the holy laughter. All these people begin to laugh uncontrollably during a service, and then they go to the Word to try and prove that their experience is legitimate. And what ends up happening is that they will pull a text out of context to justify their experience. For instance, with holy laughter, they will say that, “**the joy of the Lord is our strength.**” Nehemiah 8:10. That says nothing about laughter, but a joy that is found in your heart that is based upon the Word of God. Happiness, on the other hand, is a state of mind that is based upon outward circumstances.

The Emerging Church does it a little differently but they come up with their own doctrine and then twist the Scriptures to say what they want them to say. They do a lot of embellishing and exaggerating to make their point but it goes against what the Scriptures are teaching.

We need to be careful not to make God’s Word say what we want it to say, but what God wants it to say. Listen to what David has to say in Psalm 119:161-163 regarding the Word of God. We read, “**Princes persecute me without a cause, But my heart stands in awe of Your word. I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure. I hate and abhor lying, But I love Your law.**”

Chambers put it like this as he wrote, “When once the sledge-hammer of tradition is brought to bear there is nothing more to say. . . . The Pharisees adopted this method with Jesus. . . . The ‘Eliphaz’ method has hindered more souls in developing the life with God than almost any other thing.” May the Word of God and the Spirit of God guide us in all things that we do and say!

2. Now as Eliphaz falls back on the words of the wise he then blasts this poor man Job. You see, Job was in pain, and Eliphaz is saying that only the wicked are in that condition. Is that true? Absolutely that is not true. Sometimes the wicked prosper, their life is good. But Job’s friends did not see it that way. You see, they saw it like this. Job was wealthy and prosperous and yet all of that was taken away from Job because of his sin just as happens to the wicked.

And Eliphaz did not give up. He felt that just as the wicked rebel and try to fight against God and are punished, are put down, Job also has met the same fate. How sad to be in such pain and then have your friends come against you. Again Chambers tells us regarding what is going on here, “If Eliphaz had been wise he would have seen what Job was getting at – ‘Job is facing something I do not see; I don’t understand his problem, but I will treat him with respect’. Instead of that he said, ‘According to my traditional belief, you are a hypocrite, Job’.”

VERSES 27-35

1. The wealthy usually looked very healthy, many times plump, for they were able to enjoy much more food than the common person. Thus, Job may have been a bit on the heavy side before this trial began, but now he is only skin and bones. And even though the unrighteous may look good on the outside for a time, the life of the wicked is miserable. He lives in houses that should be condemned. He is poor. He will not prosper. His own words will be his ruin. Again, is that true? No it is not true for that is not always the case. It was the struggle of Asaph in Psalm 73 as he saw the prosperity, the easy life for the wicked and how his life was hard, it was difficult even though he was pure before God. And Asaph almost slipped, he almost stumbled over this and it was not until he went into the house of the Lord that he saw the end of the wicked and his perspective was corrected.

Yes, in this life sometimes the wicked, the unrighteous do prosper and the godly do suffer but understand the end of each and you will have a correct perspective of the situation. They felt because of all the trouble that Job had come upon he must be a sinner and he refuses to get right with God and thus, it is even worse for him. But that is not true as we have said.

Clarke puts it like this, “Poor Job! What a fight of affliction had he to contend with! His *body* wasted and tortured with sore *disease*, his *mind* harassed by *Satan*; and his *heart* wrung with the unkindness, and false accusations of his *friends*. No wonder he was greatly agitated, often distracted, and sometimes even thrown off his guard. However, all his enemies were chained; and beyond that chain they could not go. God was his unseen Protector, and did not suffer his faithful servant to be greatly moved.” As we go through difficult times may we too remember that no matter what happens God is our Protector and we shall not be moved!

2. Now as we move into chapter 16 we will see how Job feels about these words spoken by Eliphaz.

JOB 16

VERSES 1-5

1. As Job opens up here he blasts them for their insensitivity to his condition, he lets them have it and calls them “**miserable comforters.**” It is hard to argue that point because their words were basically useless because they were not based in truth. And Job tells them that their words are not so special or earth shattering, everyone knows what they have said and yet, it does not apply to Job because it was not his sin that was bringing this upon him.

2. Also, Job wants them to realize what they were doing. “Imagine if you were in the same condition that I am in now. Would you want me to respond in the same manner?”

That was a great point that Job was making here. And to shake your head at someone was like saying that their words were empty and Job tells them “How would you like it if you cried out in pain, speaking of your innocence, and all I did was shake my head in disbelief?” You see, not much comfort, not much encouragement in their words. Job wants them to understand what they were doing and maybe get them to show some compassion towards him.

3. And in verse 5 you see the heart of what should be in every believer. As miserable of a condition Job was in and as broken hearted as he was at the way his friends were treating him, Job tells them that if they were in a similar situation he would comfort them instead of condemn them. He would try to encourage them instead of discourage them. I don't know about you, but I would want to get these guys some cement shoes and send them swimming I would be so mad. But that is the flesh and not the Spirit and I know that as we go through things God gives to us the grace we need to handle it. Remember what Paul said as he was writing to the Thessalonians in I Thessalonians 5:14-15, “**Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.**”

Paul is telling us here that the church, believers are to exhort or encourage someone who is not walking as they should walk to get right, to come alongside them and encourage them to move forward. Not to crush them or put them down, but to lift them up. First he speaks of warning them who are unruly which was used of a soldier who was out of rank and it came to mean anyone who did not perform his duty or follow through with what he was responsible for! If you are not serving in the body of Christ you are cheating your brothers and sisters in the Lord of the gift that God has given to you. If you are serving and you are just getting by, doing the least you can do, not moving the ministry forward that is also wrong!

Then there are those who need comfort for they are afraid, maybe because of persecution, maybe afraid to get involved in a ministry, whatever. Some may be sick physically or sick in sin and they need to be lifted up, helped along. Also, we are to be patient with some? No, we are to be patient with all as God has been so patient with each of us!

Now if someone does something wrong to you, treats you unfairly, what are you to do? Give them a right hook to the jaw? No, you are to love them, forgive them! You see, retaliation is not what God has called us to do, even though we may enjoy it or think we are getting back at the person!

Paul put it this way in Romans 12:17-21, **“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

You see, we are not of the darkness, but of the light! Jesus put it this way in Luke 17:3-4, **“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”** And I love how the apostles responded to what Jesus said, they replied, **“...‘Increase our faith.’”** Luke 17:5. “That is a tough one Lord, forgiving like that, increase our faith!” May we ask the Lord for help also in that area!

The bottom line is this. May we think good of people and not evil. We have become jaded in this country; we don’t trust anyone and we tend to think the worse of people. I try not to, and yes, I have been burned many times over the years, but I would rather error on the side of grace, I would rather think good of people and not evil! And that is all Job is asking from his friends, not to think evil of him but good and to help him in his time of need, to lift him up and not crush him!

VERSES 6-14

1. Job is not finding any comfort in his own words or in the words of his friends. He sees himself being eaten alive, wasting away to nothing and still his friends are coming against him, and God continues to play havoc on his life. In fact Lawson puts it like this in regards to how Job saw God. He wrote, “He sees himself as the object of God’s wrath. He pictures God as a savage beast, hunting him down, and tearing him apart limb from limb. Our suffering can give us a distorted view of God, can’t it?” How true that is, when we go through difficult times we tend to lose our perspective of things and come to the wrong conclusion about God. We seem to think He doesn’t love us or has forsaken us but that is not true. The Bible tells us that God loves us unconditionally and that He will never forsake us. May we not forget that and remember that God has only good for us no matter how difficult it may be!

2. Another reason Job see’s God as his enemy is that Job is walking by sight, by the experiences he is going through, and not by faith. Faith rests in the promises of God, and the character of God, but that can be easily swayed by life’s experiences, as is the case with Job. But we, like Job, must rest in the declaration that Job made in Job 13:15

“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.”

3. I am not sure I need to ask this question, but I will anyway. Do we as Christians go through difficult times? Of course we go through difficult times! Like Job, in all the struggles, the difficulties, the persecutions we face, we are becoming like Jesus. Paul, in Philippians 3:10 put it like this, **“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”** I have no problem with knowing His *POWER* but the *FELLOWSHIP* of His *SUFFERINGS*; I would rather skip that one!

Keep in mind that Paul has done the worldly thing in trying to get to God and it has not worked. And he wants to know Christ more intimately and as he does, he also knows there will be suffering. Paul put it this way in Romans 8:17, **“and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”** And The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“And if we are [His] children, then we are [His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His inheritance with Him]; only we must share His suffering if we are to share His glory.”**

You see, our suffering in this life is just as our Lord suffered and it is out of that suffering that we will receive a future glorification! It is just part of being His Son and before the glory comes the cross, the suffering. And when you think about it, there can be no loss of our salvation between our justification and our glorification because there can never be justification without glorification. Let me explain it this way, if justification is the beginning of our salvation and glorification is the completion, then what God has begun He will complete, He will finish it in us. That means even the middle part or our sanctification! What a comfort to know and apply that to our lives!

This means, Job, in this whole ordeal you're going through, you're being like Jesus. I know you're struggling, questioning, and wondering, but you're becoming like Jesus in the process of this difficulty. You're going through what He would go through. He's entrusted you with the fellowship of suffering and the Lord has done the same with us!

4. Job is very down, very low and he is saying that God has given him to his wicked friends, and they are continually coming against him. Not only that but as a lion or tiger goes after its prey, and it tries to grab it by the neck to choke the life out of it, to kill it, Job sees God doing this with his own life. In fact, Job sees his life as nothing more than God's target practice producing these horrible circumstances. What a distorted picture of God Job has and God will correct Job down the road beginning in chapter 38!

VERSES 15-17

1. The problem here for Job is that he doesn't understand why this is happening to him and he feels that he does not deserve all of this because he is innocent. Let me say this, we may never fully understand why things happen to us but God is not asking us to understand it. All He wants us to do is be able to trust in Him. For Job, he simply could not reconcile his previous righteous and pious life with his present desolation.

2. Bradley made these comments, “There is one thing that he will not let go – the testimony of his conscience, that he has lived as the friend of God, not as his enemy. He is certain that he does not belong to the class whose sins and punishment his friends have set before him for a warning. To this certainty he clings as to a plank in the devouring waves. Deep is his anguish, but he is conscience-free.” Job is trying to put this all together and because of all the anguish he is going through, he is coming up with a wrong picture of God!

VERSES 18-22

1. Again Job sees his life coming to an end and wants to sit down and talk with God face-to-face. Maybe then all this would come to an end? And he sees God in heaven and God knows that he is innocent of what his friends are trying to convict him of. That did not change the difficulty he was facing but he knew he had an advocate in heaven.

It is as Morgan wrote, “In the midst of all this travail of soul, his faith triumphed over his doubt. He believed that God knew the truth about him, and would be his witness. . . . This is another instance of the light breaking forth, if only for a moment, from his deepest life.”

I like that because we also have an advocate in heaven. John tells us in I John 2:1-2, **“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”**

Yes, God requires perfection from us but the reality is, we are not perfect in a practical sense, we do sin. And because we have been adopted into the family of God by faith in Jesus Christ, we are perfect in a positional sense. As the Father looks upon us the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed us from all our sins, we are as white as snow! And when we do sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, a defense attorney, Jesus Christ! The Greek word for **“advocate”** is PARAKLETOS, which means “one who speaks . . . in our defense.”

Now when I think of a defense attorney I see someone who manipulates the truth to get his client freedom. But if Jesus did that, He would not be righteous. Then how does Jesus defend us, how does He refute the accusations that Satan brings against us? (Revelation 12:10). It is because our advocate has become our propitiation or atonement for our sins.

You see, God became sin for us; He paid in full the penalty for our sins, enduring the wrath of God that was due us! Thus, Jesus does not defend us by manipulating the evidence because we are guilty before God. What He does do is say that our penalty was paid in full by Him, and He can show the scars to prove it, case closed! What is interesting to me is when they were translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, back around 250 B. C., the Greek word they used for Mercy Seat is the same Greek word that John uses for propitiation, HILASMOS!

In other words, on the Day of Atonement, when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies and poured out the blood upon the Mercy Seat to atone for the sins of the nation and now Jesus has become our Mercy Seat and it is His blood that was shed to atone completely for our sins! In fact, Paul tells us in Hebrews 7:25, **“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.”**

In regards to this word **“propitiation,”** Alford tells us: “The word implies that Christ has, as our sin-offering, reconciled God and us by nothing else but by His voluntary death as a sacrifice: has by this averted God’s wrath from us.” It is as Peter said, **“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.”** I Peter 3:18. You see, sin is no longer a barrier between God and man, if you receive Jesus as your propitiation for your sins! Yes, sin can hinder our fellowship with God, but our salvation is secure in Him!

2. Next time we will see Job finish up and then Bildad come in and crush Job some more.

3. As I close this evening let me leave you with these words to meditate upon. Corrie ten Boom said, "You'll never know the Lord is all you need until the Lord is all you have." How true that really is. You see, as long as there are people around us whom we can turn to or lean on, we'll do that. So sometimes the Lord takes away those props so that we might learn to lean on Him and in so doing discover more than our best friends could ever provide. That is how much God loves us, may we not forget that because His love is unconditional and He will never forsake us and I am so thankful for that. What a gracious and merciful God we serve, may we never forget that!