



## REFLECT

1. Just for fun, did you love or hate Shakespeare in high school literature class?
2. Describe a time that you recently responded, “That’s not fair!”

## ENCOUNTER

Most of the book of Job (chapters 3-41 to be exact) is written in poetry. Though longer and sometimes more confusing than simple stories, poetry it’s better suited than simple narrative to express our hearts and convey wisdom. Poetry gives us eyes to see life differently than prose.

Zophar, Job’s third and most blunt friend, takes the stage in Job 11. His message is that life is always fair, so Job is clearly suffering justly. Job 12-14, where Job answers Zophar’s charges, is a supreme example of Hebrew poetry. Read Job 12 and 13 and reflect on both the poetry and message of those chapters. What poetic phrases caught your attention?

3. For starters, what other books of the Bible contain poetry?
4. How does Job describe his friends?
5. How does Job describe his relationship to God?
6. How would you summarize Job’s plea in this chapter?

## TRANSFORM

7. Has anyone ever come to you with bad theology about the fairness of God and suffering? What did they say?
8. As you look back, how can you see the goodness and justice of God even in situations where God wasn’t fair?

## PRAYER REQUESTS

*Pain and loss are bitter providences. Who has lived long in this world of woe without weeping, sometimes until the head throbs and there are no more tears to lubricate the convulsing of our amputated love? But O, the folly of trying to lighten the ship of suffering by throwing God’s governance overboard. The very thing the tilting ship needs in the storm is the ballast of God’s good sovereignty, not the unburdening of deep and precious truth. What makes the crush of calamity sufferable is not that God shares our shock, but that his bitter providences are laden with the bounty of love.*

~ John Piper, *The Misery of Job and the Mercy of God* ~