

If you are here for the first time tonight you are joining us in the book of Job. When the economy is not doing well this study is well attended and when the economy is doing well the book of Job is not as appealing to some as it should be so thank you for being here tonight.

Turn with me to Job chapter 12...

Pray...

How many of you are familiar with the game of baseball and why their are starters and set up men and closers as pitchers...

Explain how this impacts hitters... Jobs friends are like batters who are facing the same pitchers after extra innings. They have seen all their pitches and the pitchers tired so the batters just start teeing off on him. There is nothing he can do. He feels hopeless. This is how Job feels as he is under a barrage of attacks from his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar.

Job's three friends are relentless in their accusing Job of hypocrisy of having secret sin declaring to him by what they see in his life as the reason he is now being judged

The book of Proverbs says, Proverbs 15:28, **“The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.”**

Jobs friends with every move of their lips are demonstrating why they are lousy friends.

This section of the book of Job teaches us how not to respond to people in pain.

Once we become angry in a conversation, even truth, its impossible to produce the righteousness of God. God doesn't use fleshy means to accomplish His will.

Once a person is offended they shut down or rise up. Thats what we find here in Chapter 12.

Job 12

Job's 3 Friends have accused him of secret sin as to why he is suffering.

In chapter 11 Zophar has finished his rebuke. His words were cutting, to think a friend says to you, “**you deserve worse than what has happened to you**” after you have suffered the loss of everything.

Job won't make a false confession just to appease his friends. We see this all the time. People “cop a plea” to get a lesser sentence. Job isn't buying it. And the longer he claims his innocence the more angry they become.

There is an important lesson being taught here. It's not just what we say but how we say it.

James 1:20, “**for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.**”

This is a great reminder of how not to treat people.

1 Then Job answered and said:

2 "No doubt you are the people, And wisdom will die with you!"

Job is rebuking their smugness and he's being sarcastic as he does. He's saying you guys think you are so smart. When you die all the wisdom known to man will die too!

3 But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Indeed, who does not know such things as these?

Job reminds his friends he is as smart as they are. I know this truth you are speaking of. The justice of God and the sovereignty of God is common knowledge Job is saying.

4 "I am one mocked by his friends, Who

called on God, and He answered him, The just and blameless who is ridiculed.

Job reminds his friends that God does in fact allow evil people to prosper and the righteous to suffer.

Job agrees generally speaking God blesses the righteous and generally God punish or curse the wicked. But none of this has to do with Job. Job uses himself here to prove his point. I'm innocent and I am being ridiculed.

5 A lamp is despised in the thought of one who is at ease; It is made ready for those whose feet slip.

It has been well said, **“that when life is good, we don't have many questions but when life is bad, we don't have many answers.”**

6 The tents of robbers prosper, And those who provoke God are secure-- In what God

provides by His hand.

Job says look around... sinners are prospering everywhere.

See Psalm 73...

Psalm 73:5-12 (NKJV)

5 They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men.

6 Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment.

7 Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish.

8 They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full cup are drained by them.

11 And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

12 Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches.

Sinners prospering is all around us. We have drug dealers, Drug smuggling, sex trafficking. The pornography industry. It's all around us and its prosperous.

Psalm 73:16-17

**16 When I thought how to understand this,
It was too painful for me--**

**17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their end.**

**7 "But now ask the beasts, and they will
teach you; And the birds of the air, and they
will tell you;**

Remember that Zophar had said Job was dumber than a donkey. Now Job responds by suggesting his friends talk to creation... You have to love the imagery here. Job says the birds are smarter than his three friends.

Jon Courson writes in his commentary on Job, "If you throw a potato chip on the sand, the

seagulls don't say to each other, "You first." No, they fight for that chip as if their lives depended on it. "It's a jungle out there and the strongest one wins. Where's the justice in that?" Job asks."

8 Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you; And the fish of the sea will explain to you.

"Check out the fish," Job continues. "Who is the strongest? The shark." In other words, Job is saying that, contrary to his friends' assertion, it's not always the good guy who wins.

**9 Who among all these does not know That the hand of the LORD has done this,
10 In whose hand is the life of every living thing, And the breath of all mankind?**

Job says don't believe me, believe nature. It is the Lord who has created the world the way that it is.

11 Does not the ear test words And the mouth taste its food?

Things that go together. Ear hears, mouth tastes... Just as the mouth can determine whether food is bitter or sweet, Job is saying his ears can determine if his friends words are true or false.

12 Wisdom is with aged men, And with length of days, understanding.

Is Job referring to the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7:22? Or is just referring to the thought that aged people have a better understanding of life.

In verses 13 through 25 Job launches into an impressive performance reciting the Lord's sovereignty, wisdom, and strength, and how they often produce inexplicable and paradoxical results.

13 "With Him are wisdom and strength, He has counsel and understanding.

14 If He breaks a thing down, it cannot be rebuilt; If He imprisons a man, there can be no release.

15 If He withholds the waters, they dry up; If He sends them out, they overwhelm the earth.

16 With Him are strength and prudence. The deceived and the deceiver are His.

17 He leads counselors away plundered, And makes fools of the judges.

Sounds like the Ancient of Days Daniel speaks of to me.

18 He loosens the bonds of kings, And binds their waist with a belt.

19 He leads princes away plundered, And overthrows the mighty.

God can make a king become a slave if He so chooses.

**20 He deprives the trusted ones of speech,
And takes away the discernment of the
elders.**

**21 He pours contempt on princes, And
disarms the mighty.**

**22 He uncovers deep things out of
darkness, And brings the shadow of death
to light.**

**23 He makes nations great, and destroys
them; He enlarges nations, and guides
them.**

**24 He takes away the understanding of the
chiefs of the people of the earth, And makes
them wander in a pathless wilderness.**

**25 They grope in the dark without light, And
He makes them stagger like a drunken man.**

The bottom line is... Job is saying that the
leaders and governments of earth will ultimately
come and go, but God is the King of kings!
Because God is sovereign, He is in complete
and absolute control.

The point is, Kings come and go but God

remains the same. That's good news for you and me!

Job 13

Job continues his rebuttal of his friends' accusations.

1 "Behold, my eye has seen all this, My ear has heard and understood it.

2 What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you.

If Zophar thought he knew something of God's sovereignty then Job knows even more. Job knows even the just can be tried by God.

3 But I would speak to the Almighty, And I desire to reason with God.

Job doesn't want to hear his friends any more. He wants to hear from God.

Isaiah 1:8 says, "Come let us reason together"

James 1:5 reminds us, **“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”**

John Courson **“coming to the altar to be altared”**

4 But you forgers of lies, You are all worthless physicians.

He accuses them to be liars. My problems are not sin related.

They are worthless physician's. They are prescribing without diagnosing which is malpractice.

5 Oh, that you would be silent, And it would be your wisdom!

Job is saying, if you want to be wise, be silent.

Like the song... “You say it best when you say nothing at all.” Job is saying basically, “You display your foolishness when you speak.”

The book of Proverbs tells us, “even a fool is considered wise as long as he keeps his Peace.”

Do you remember the old saying, “it is better to be considered a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.”

6 Now hear my reasoning, And heed the pleadings of my lips.

He is trying to get them shut up and listen.

7 Will you speak wickedly for God, And talk deceitfully for Him?

Job rebukes his friends for speaking wrongly. **In attempting to defend God they are offending God.**

When someone is claiming, “God says” there is

some weight behind that. Job is like, are you not afraid of misrepresenting God?

8 Will you show partiality for Him? Will you contend for God?

Judging by outward appearances

**9 Will it be well when He searches you out?
Or can you mock Him as one mocks a man?
10 He will surely rebuke you If you secretly
show partiality.**

Job is asking his friends if they are willing to have God search them? Do they think they can fool God.

Job knows he is innocent and he is just waiting for God to vindicate him because he knows then his fiends will be proven to be false witnesses.

It will take a long time for God to justify Job. It won't be until chapter 42.

God is not slow as some count slow...

**11 Will not His excellence make you afraid,
And the dread of Him fall upon you?**

Where is your fear of God?

**12 Your platitudes are proverbs of ashes,
Your defenses are defenses of clay.**

Job says all your little pithy moral statements are overused... its just religious cliché to say "all suffering is a result of wickedness"

Your defense is an easily broken argument.

**13 "Hold your peace with me, and let me speak,
Then let come on me what may!"**

Job says don't interrupt me...I'm going to say what I want to say and live with the consequences.

**14 Why do I take my flesh in my teeth, And
put my life in my hands?**

An image of an animal being attacked and having to drop it's prey to defend itself. Job is talking about his need to defend himself. He's saying why would I want God to defend me if I was guilty. Job is convinced in his innocence.

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

Job has lots of "why" questions but his faith is firm.

Its one thing to trust God for healing and even more to trust Him in sickness.

Jesus told Paul, **"My grace is sufficient for you for My strength is made perfect in weakness."**

For the immature the crisis of faith is trusting in the power of God. Job doesn't doubt the power of God. His crisis is in why God won't use His power and strength to defend Job right now. Job is merely confused about his

circumstances.

Damian Kyle brought out a great point from John 6, Jesus has fed the 5,000 with 5 loaves and two fish. The crowds are growing but their hearts are not right. Jesus is just a meal ticket. He lays out some hard words. The crowds start to thin out. The disciples are watching all this happen. Jesus turns to the disciples, “will you to walk away?” Peter says, “we don’t have an option of ever being satisfied by anyone else. Where would we go for you hold the words of everlasting life.”

From Peter’s words Peter had to have already thought about what Jesus said. He had already considered it.

16 He also shall be my salvation, For a hypocrite could not come before Him.

17 Listen carefully to my speech, And to my declaration with your ears.

18 See now, I have prepared my case, I know that I shall be vindicated.

Job is confident though Job doesn't understand the "why" of what's going on in his life but he trusts the day will come that God is going to prove him innocent one day.

19 Who is he who will contend with me? If now I hold my tongue, I perish.

Job refuses to be pushed around or shouted down by his friends. He is not giving in to his friends accusations even though they are ganging up on him. Basically he's saying "if I don't defend myself who will?"

20 "Only two things do not do to me, Then I will not hide myself from You:

Job is speaking to God here and he puts some conditions on his court preceding he is asking for.

21 Withdraw Your hand far from me, And let not the dread of You make me afraid.

Job's condition for his court preceding.

1. Bring an end of my suffering.
2. I'm already nervous about our meeting. Don't make me afraid of what you might do to me.

22 Then call, and I will answer; Or let me speak, then You respond to me.

23 How many are my iniquities and sins? Make me know my transgression and my sin.

Job is asking how much he has sinned and does it deserve such misery?

24 Why do You hide Your face, And regard me as Your enemy?

Look at what Job's friends have planted in his brain. None of this is true but if you hear it long enough, you start to believe it.

Job is pleading to God, Am I your enemy?

25 Will You frighten a leaf driven to and fro?

And will You pursue dry stubble?

I'm dried up... am I worth the effort?

**26 For You write bitter things against me,
And make me inherit the iniquities of my
youth.**

Job thinks all that has happened in his life is because of something he may have done in his childhood, something he must have forgot to confess. Job knows currently he has not sinned so God must be going way back...

What does 1 John 1:9 mean to you? **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”**

27 You put my feet in the stocks, And watch closely all my paths. You set a limit for the soles of my feet.

Job pictures God like a prison guard who is

closely watching an inmate.

28 "Man decays like a rotten thing, Like a garment that is moth-eaten.

Job is saying life is hard enough without all that he is going through... he can't go forward with life as he is a prisoner of his past.

Jesus came to set the captives free!

You are declared righteous before God, justified by the blood of Jesus!

Job 14

Job 14:1-22 (NKJV)

1 "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.

Jobs thoughts, life is hard then you die!

2 He comes forth like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not

continue.

No such thing as an ugly baby...

3 And do You open Your eyes on such a one, And bring me to judgment with Yourself?

4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!

Job understands that there is none righteous, no not one. Job understands that all men are sinners. He is just wondering how God could demand purity from one who knows he is impure. Psalm 51 reminds us we were conceived in sin.

5 Since his days are determined, The number of his months is with You; You have appointed his limits, so that he cannot pass.

6 Look away from him that he may rest, Till like a hired man he finishes his day.

Job says God, just look away so I can die...

7 "For there is hope for a tree, If it is cut down, that it will sprout again, And that its tender shoots will not cease.

Job says a tree has more hope than he does.

**8 Though its root may grow old in the earth,
And its stump may die in the ground,
9 Yet at the scent of water it will bud And
bring forth branches like a plant.**

Ever had a tree cut down come back? Some trees are like weeds.

**10 But man dies and is laid away; Indeed he
breathes his last And where is he?**

Man leaves a dead body behind with no life...

**11 As water disappears from the sea, And a
river becomes parched and dries up,
12 So man lies down and does not rise. Till
the heavens are no more, They will not
awake Nor be roused from their sleep.**

Job is comparing death to the evaporation process.

13 "Oh, that You would hide me in the grave, That You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, That You would appoint me a set time, and remember me!

Job is thinking is there some way God could let Job die and then bring me back to life while you vindicate me.

Job predates the law, and the New Testament. He has no knowledge of what we know... He couldn't know what you and I know. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

When a believer died in the Old Testament he didn't go immediately to heaven because his sin had not yet been paid for. So, according to the teaching of Jesus in Luke 16, he would go to the place of death that was divided into two compartments: the bad side where there was torment and flame, and the good side,

Abraham's bosom, or paradise. In Ephesians 4:8 and 9, Paul writes that before Jesus ascended to heaven, He descended to the lower parts of the earth, Abraham's bosom, and led captivity captive. That is, He took those who were in the "holding tank" of paradise and took them to heaven. "Remember me," Job cried. "Remember me when You come into Your kingdom," the thief on the cross said to Jesus (Luke 23:42). Job's prayer would be answered eventually. The thief's prayer would be answered immediately because of the finished work of the Cross.

14 If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, Till my change comes.

15 You shall call, and I will answer You; You shall desire the work of Your hands.

Job expresses some hope! All the days of my life I will wait!

When you feel hopeless the goal is to focus on heaven!

John 14:1-4

1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."

16 For now You number my steps, But do not watch over my sin.

Isn't it more common than not when you are going through a trial you begin to doubt.

17 My transgression is sealed up in a bag, And You cover my iniquity.

Job is right, his sins were collected in a bag but only to be cast into the sea of God's forgetfulness, the deepest place imaginable.

"As far as the east is from the west, that's how far your sins are from me," the Lord would declare (Psalm 103:12).

"Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more," the Lord declares (see Hebrews 10:17).

**18 "But as a mountain falls and crumbles away, And as a rock is moved from its place;
19 As water wears away stones, And as torrents wash away the soil of the earth; So You destroy the hope of man.**

Job is using poetic language to deal with the suddenness of death.

Job is despairing, "Lord you destroy the hope of man just like you destroyed the rocks and mountains!"

20 You prevail forever against him, and he passes on; You change his countenance and send him away.

Death changes our countenance... as we age our faces wrinkle, when we die they are gone...

21 His sons come to honor, and he does not know it; They are brought low, and he does not perceive it.

22 But his flesh will be in pain over it, And his soul will mourn over it."

This is the end of the first series of discussions between Job and his three friends. There are two more

Like a batter in baseball game Eliphaz steps up to the plate for the second time.

We know now what Job is suffering through is not because of his sin but because of his righteousness.

Job 15

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

2 "Should a wise man answer with empty knowledge, And fill himself with the east wind?

We are back to Job being called full of hot air. Wind from the desert. Eliphaz again says Job is just a wind bag.

3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk, Or by speeches with which he can do no good?

Eliphaz is basically saying that he is not offering any comfort to Job because Job has declared his innocence.

4 Yes, you cast off fear, And restrain prayer before God.

He accuse Job of not fearing God.

5 For your iniquity teaches your mouth, And you choose the tongue of the crafty.

Only a wicked person would say the things you are saying.

6 Your own mouth condemns you, and not I; Yes, your own lips testify against you.

Eliphaz is saying, its not my fault... Its your own words...Eliphaz is turning up the heat on Job because he believes he needs to defend Gods character against Job.

Eliphaz like many believe bad things don't happen to God's people. How untrue!

7 "Are you the first man who was born? Or were you made before the hills?"

Were you born before Adam?

8 Have you heard the counsel of God? Do you limit wisdom to yourself?

9 What do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that is not in us?

10 Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, Much older than your father.

We are older and wiser than you Job. We are called to honor the godly grey haired not just because someone is old.

11 Are the consolations of God too small for you, And the word spoken gently with you?

Job, are the comforts of God not enough for you Eliphaz wants to know from Job. He is asking Job, **“you don’t appreciate the comfort we have provided you?”**

12 Why does your heart carry you away, And what do your eyes wink at,

13 That you turn your spirit against God, And let such words go out of your mouth?

Tell me, what’s the secret sin you are hiding,

what is it you said that's gotten you into all this trouble. Eliphaz is asking.

**14 "What is man, that he could be pure?
And he who is born of a woman, that he
could be righteous?"**

You claim to be righteous Job but can any man really make that claim?

**15 If God puts no trust in His saints, And
the heavens are not pure in His sight,
16 How much less man, who is abominable
and filthy, Who drinks iniquity like water!**

Job never said he or man in general is sinless. They are answering questions that never were asked.

When the issues are no longer debatable the attack has to become personal.

**17 "I will tell you, hear me; What I have seen
I will declare,
18 What wise men have told, Not hiding**

**anything received from their fathers,
19 To whom alone the land was given, And
no alien passed among them:**

Eliphaz says I'm going to tell you what all the old and wise men have said. We don't test truth against an older person. Nothing is true just because its been around for a long time.

There is a religion that claims to be Christian

We test all things against the Word of God.

**20 The wicked man writhes with pain all his
days, And the number of years is hidden
from the oppressor.**

He is describing Job...

**21 Dreadful sounds are in his ears; In
prosperity the destroyer comes upon him.
22 He does not believe that he will return
from darkness, For a sword is waiting for
him.**

**23 He wanders about for bread, saying,
'Where is it?' He knows that a day of
darkness is ready at his hand.**

He thinks he is going to die, living in poverty...

**24 Trouble and anguish make him afraid;
They overpower him, like a king ready for
battle.**

**25 For he stretches out his hand against
God, And acts defiantly against the
Almighty,**

**26 Running stubbornly against Him With his
strong, embossed shield.**

A description of the wicked that Eliphaz says
might as well as be describing Job.

**27 "Though he has covered his face with
his fatness, And made his waist heavy with
fat,**

Being fat in agrisociety is a difficult

28 He dwells in desolate cities, In houses

which no one inhabits, Which are destined to become ruins.

29 He will not be rich, Nor will his wealth continue, Nor will his possessions overspread the earth.

30 He will not depart from darkness; The flame will dry out his branches, And by the breath of His mouth he will go away.

Die prematurely...

31 Let him not trust in futile things, deceiving himself, For futility will be his reward.

32 It will be accomplished before his time, And his branch will not be green.

33 He will shake off his unripe grape like a vine, And cast off his blossom like an olive tree.

34 For the company of hypocrites will be barren, And fire will consume the tents of bribery.

35 They conceive trouble and bring forth futility; Their womb prepares deceit."

Eliphaz is saying your life is come to ruin... you had it all and lost it all... Its not only your sin but your sin caused your kids their lives too.

Chapter 16 begins Job's response to Eliphaz