



Further Study

One of my basic functions as a Pastor is to preach and teach the congregation in such a way as to prepare their hearts and minds to completely trust and rely upon God at all times in their life, in the good times and bad, to keep them from coming to a place of frustration when they don't understand God's dealings and end up cursing God rather than blessing Him. Proper preaching certainly has the power to do that. Many times, we witness people who do not end as well as they started. How sad it is when a person comes to an end their life by cursing Him and forsaking Him.

According to Job 1, we are introduced to a man named Job who was described as being "blameless" and "upright, and one who feared God and turned away from evil" (see Job 1:2-3). According to the account in Scripture, Job lost everything he ever had in just one afternoon, including his seven sons and three daughters. To add insult to injury, his wealth has now vanished. To begin with, Job seemed to be handling this time of severe testing as well as he possibly could. Initially, he had said, "the Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord". But when the time of testing did not lighten during the next several months, Job began to question God about why the testing was lasting longer than he had expected. As a result, Job begins to complain.

Notice several of Job's complaints to the Lord (Job 13:23-24; 23:3-4; 24:1). Believe it or not, this perfect and upright man found himself saying certain things about God that he would later regret.

JOB'S THREE FRIENDS:

Job had three friends that certainly did not help his situation at all. They were Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. Rather than seeing God's hand in the entire situation, they responded by declaring that Job must have some secret hidden sin in his life and that God was probably judging him for it. When you read the entire account of what they said to Job, it is easy to recognize that all three of them were preaching some very bad theology to Job during this testing.

JOB'S OTHER FRIEND:

Fortunately, Job had another friend by the name of Elihu. When Elihu speaks, the first thing he does is to rebuke Job's other three friends for their lack of spiritual discernment. The record of all the important remarks of Elihu is recorded in Job 32-37. You will be greatly helped by reading his words to Job

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF THE TESTING:

As we examine the account of Job's testing, I believe there are two main purposes for the testing in Job's life.

1. The first purpose was to openly demonstrate to the host of heaven and Satan himself that Job indeed cherished and valued the worth and the glory of God more than he cherished anything else on the earth, including his wealth, family, and personal health.

2. The second purpose was to rid Job of his pride and self-righteousness that became apparent during the trial. We must remember that when the Scripture declared Job to be "perfect", the word literally means "blameless". Job had to deal with the sin of pride like all of us.

GOD QUESTIONS JOB:

After Elihu has spoken to Job and after he has listened to Job's complaining and questioning of God's will and sovereignty for his life, God decides to ask Job some questions of His own beginning in Job 38. It is obvious that God has now had enough of Job's questioning Him. It is time for God to question Job concerning his complaints. The questioning breaks naturally into three distinct categories:

1. The World Below: Earth - Job 38:4-7
 - Sea - Job 38:8-11
 - Sunrise - Job 38:12-15
 - Land and Sea - Job 38:16-18

2. The World Above: Light - Job 38:19-21
 - Snow and Hail - Job 38:22-30
 - Galaxies - Job 38:31-33
 - Rain - Job 38:34-38

3. Animal Life: Lions and Birds - Job 38:39-41
 - Birth of animals - Job 39:1-4
 - Oxen - Job 39:13-18
 - War Horse - Job 39:19-25
 - Hawk - Job 39:26-30

Why would God spend so much time and give so much detail to Job concerning all these things? Although the reason is simple, it is very profound in nature and one that all of us should remember when we are tempted to murmur and complain to God about anything. God is reminding Job that concerning all of the things mentioned in chapters 38 and 39, Job is completely and totally ignorant. God said that not only did he create all these things, He also controls all of them. It was as if God were saying to Job, "Don't you think that if I can do all these things, I can take care of your life? Who do you think you are to question me"?

GOD DEMANDS AN ANSWER FROM JOB

Read Job 40:1-14

Job is slowly beginning to get the message.

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION

When Job finally came to his senses and realized that God was completely capable of directing his life, the book of Job concludes by God restoring to him twice as much as he had originally. For that to happen, Job had to completely submit himself to three basic things that turned his life around:

1. He totally submitted to God's sovereignty over his life (Job 42:1-2).
2. He totally submitted to God's greater knowledge and wisdom over his life (Job 42:3).
3. He totally submitted to talking less about God and listening more to God (Job 42:4-6).

His submission to God can be summed up by his willingness to repent of all he had said and done.

GEORGE MUELLER OF BRISTOL

George Mueller's wife, Mary, died of rheumatic fever on February 6, 1870, after they had been married for 39 years and 4 months. The following is a portion of what George Mueller said at the funeral: "I miss her in numerous ways, and shall miss her yet more and more. But as a child of God, and as a servant of Jesus Christ, I bow! I am satisfied with the will of my heavenly father. I seek by perfect submission to His holy will to glorify Him. I kiss continually the hand that has thus afflicted me".

Remember this powerful statement the next time we are prone to ask - Why Me? Why Now? Why This?