

Job 42 - Job Repents and is Restored; Job's Friends are Restored; Job Doubly Blessed; Conclusions & Lessons Learned

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Job 42

(e) Job 's reply (42:1-6)

(i) Job acknowledges that God knows things that he does not know
(42:1-3)

1 Then Job answered the LORD and said,

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1 Job replied to the LORD:

1 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

2 "I know that You can *do* all things, And that no plan is impossible for You.

2 "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.

- 2 "I know that you can do anything and nothing that you plan is impossible.
 2 I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.
- 3 'Who is this who conceals advice without knowledge?' Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I do not know.
 3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know."
 3 You asked, 'Who is this that darkens counsel without knowledge?' Well now, I have talked about what I don't understand— awesome things beyond me that I don't know.
 3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?

(ii) Job invites God's instruction (42:4-5)

- 4 'Please listen, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.'
 4 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.'
 4 Listen now, and I will speak for myself; I'll interrogate you and then inform me.
 4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will question [demand of] thee, and declare thou unto me.
- 5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You;
 5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You;
 5 I've heard you with my ears; and now I've seen you with my eyes.'
 5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

(iii) Job 's repentance (42:6)

- 6 Therefore I retract, And I repent, *sitting* on dust and ashes."
 6 Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."
 6 As a result, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."
 6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.
- He admits that he is ignorant and does not know enough to challenge the wisdom of the Almighty. I speak without knowing what I am talking about.
 - He admits that he is arrogant. Something within me has been proud, lifted up, self-righteous, confident that I was right. I have been wrong all along. I despise myself.
 - Job has finally given up trying to defend and justify himself, so God begins to heal him and to pour into his life blessing he never dreamed of.
 - This is the whole story of Scripture: "Blessed are the poor in spirit [those who are bankrupt in themselves] for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - God will now begin to heal a life that repents before Him and will fill it with blessing and honor and glory and power. Nothing can compare with the glory and joy of discovering a

relationship with God Himself.

- That is what we will see in this closing section of the Book of Job. Here he is, confessing his sin and discovering the gift of forgiveness.

III. Epilogue (Job 42:7-17)

(1) Job mediates the sacrifices for his three counselors (42:7-9)

7 It came about after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is trustworthy, as My servant Job *has*."

7 It came about after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job *has*."

7 After these words had been spoken by the LORD to Job, the LORD spoke to Eliphaz from Teman: "My anger is burning against you along with your two friends, since you haven't spoken correctly about me, as did my servant Job."

7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job *hath*."

- This must have been a stunning shock to Eliphaz and his two friends!

- They must have been confident that they had been defending the righteousness of God, zealous of His honor, upholding His sovereignty among men, and scathing in their denunciation of human pride and evil.

- Now, to hear that they are being charged by God Himself with defaming Him! This must have been a blow to their pride.

What was it that offended God so? They had formulated a theory of suffering in which God was nothing but an arbitrator of justice, a great cosmic judge who visited punishment upon those who did wrong, without exception and instantly.

He rewarded those who did right with prosperity and blessing, also instantly. A judge little concerned with compassion, love, mercy, and patience. Their view of God was very distant and distorted from reality. Many Christians are like this. They see God as stern and harsh. Job's three friends said nothing about His mercy, His compassion, His patience, His willingness to reach out to men and yearning for them to repent.

God sends the rain upon the just and the unjust alike. His blessings are not withheld from those who are wrong and rebellious. "The goodness of God is designed to lead to repentance" (Rom 2:4).

The "ash-heap trio" charged Job with hypocrisy, and outright wickedness, without any basis in fact whatsoever. They charged this man— whom God Himself said was upright in

his conduct—with some deep and terrible sin in his heart. In doing so, they represented themselves as being agents of God. God takes offense at that because in doing so they were actually doing the devil's work. The devil is "the accuser of the brethren." They unwittingly had become his instruments to torment Job.

- Eliphaz the Eloquent: Based on his own observation and experience, "Job suffers because he has sinned."
- Bildad the Brutal: Rests on tradition, "Job is a hypocrite."
- Zophar the Zealous: Rests on assumptions of orthodox dogma, "Job is a wicked man."

Throughout we never have seen any recognition that Job had said anything right. However, twice in this account God says that Job said what was right about Him.

1. The moment that God showed him the sin deeply embedded in his heart, he immediately repented. No hesitation, no argument, no self defense.
2. Job was always true to the facts as he saw them. He did not see them very clearly, and there are things about himself and about God's rule in the universe he never understood, but he was always honest about what he could see. No distorting or twisting of facts to fit an inadequate theology.
3. He took his problem to God, even though God was his problem. His three friends never pray for Job.
4. When Job does repent, he declares without reservation that God is truly God, that He is holy and wise and just and good, even when he seems to be otherwise. Ultimately that is the highest expression of faith: we do not trust our human observation as to what is reality. We do not assume we have all the facts by which we can judge and condemn God.

8 Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so as not to do with you *as your foolishness deserves*, because you have not spoken of Me what is trustworthy, as My servant Job *has*."

8 Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you *according to your folly*, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job *has*."

8 So take seven bulls and seven rams and bring them to my servant Job. And bring a whole burnt offering for yourselves and my servant Job will pray for you. I'll encourage him by not responding as your disgraceful folly deserves, since you didn't speak about me correctly as did my servant Job.

8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him

will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

- How humiliating. However, there is no resisting, no argument, no hesitation.

- Seven is the number of completeness. The bull is the picture of service, even unto death. The ram, of energy. Job is to pray for them (they had never prayed for Job!).

- Notice the insistence on intercessory prayer. No pardon without prayer on your behalf. Prayer is not a way to get God to do what we want. Prayer is the way God enlists us in what He is doing. Without prayer He will not do anything. Without Him, we can't. Without us, He won't. James reminds us, "You have not because ye ask not." How impoverished our lives are, and the lives of our friends and family, because we underpray. Here also is a beautiful picture of forgiveness. Job probably prayed: "O Lord, here are these three friends of mine. They have been stubborn, hardheaded, foolish, ignorant—just like I was. You forgave me and now I ask you to forgive them as well" (Cf. Eph 4:32; Col 3:13).

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, *and* Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job.

9 So Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuah, and Zophar from Naamath did precisely as the LORD had spoken to them, because the LORD showed favor to Job.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

(2) Job's restoration (42:10-17)

(A) Twofold restoration (42:10)

10 The LORD also restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased double all that Job had.

10 The LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold.

10 The LORD restored Job's prosperity after he prayed for his friends. The LORD doubled everything that Job had once possessed.

10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

Lam 3:31-33 - For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

- God does not willingly afflict or grieve the sons of men. He will do it because He loves us and we need it

(B) Consolation by friends (42:11)

11 Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and all who had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they sympathized with him and comforted him for all the adversities that the LORD had brought on him. And each one gave him a piece of money, and each a ring of gold.

11 Then all his brothers and all his sisters and all who had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversities that the LORD had brought on him. And each one gave him one piece of money, and each a ring of gold.

11 Then all his brothers and sisters and all those who knew him before arrived. They ate food with him in his house, mourned for him, and consoled him for all the trouble that the LORD had brought and placed on him. Some gave him gold bullion and some brought gold earrings.

11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

(C) Livestock (42:12)

12 The LORD blessed the latter *days* of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand female donkeys.

12 The LORD blessed the latter *days* of Job more than his beginning; and he had 14,000 sheep and 6,000 camels and 1,000 yoke of oxen and 1,000 female donkeys.

12 The LORD blessed Job during the latter part of his life more than the former, since he owned 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 teams of oxen and 1,000 female donkeys.

12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had...

42:12

14,000 sheep
6,000 camels
1,000 yoke of oxen,
1,000 she asses.

1:3

and 7,000
and a 3,000
and a 500
500

(D) Family (42:13-15)

(a) Seven sons and three daughters (42:13)

13 He also had seven sons and three daughters.

13 He had seven sons and three daughters.

13 He also had seven sons and three daughters.

13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

- Why weren't these "doubled" also? They were: he hadn't really lost the previous ones!
They will be with him in heaven (Cf. 2 Sam 12:23).

(b) Daughters (42:14-15)

14 He named the first **Jemimah**, the second **Keziah**, and the third **Keren-happuch**.

14 He named the first Jemimah, and the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch.

14 He named the first daughter Jemima, the second Keziah, and the name of the third was Keren-happuch.

14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.

- "...Jemimah" - *Yemimah* - dove; peace

- "...Keziah" - *Qetsiy`ah*, *cassia* - a rare perfume (Cf. Ex 30:24; Ps 45:8; Ezek 27:19)

- "...Keren-happuch" - *Qeren Hap-puwk*, "Horn of adornment"

- Paul says that suffering has this effect on those who learn to take it as evidence of God's love: ...but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (Rom 5:3-4)

15 In all the land no women were found as beautiful as Job's daughters; and their father gave them inheritances among their brothers.

15 In all the land no women were found so fair as Job's daughters; and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers.

15 No one could find more beautiful women in the whole land than Job's daughters. Their father gave them their inheritance along with their brothers.

15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

(E) Longevity (42:16-17)

16 After this, Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons and his grandsons, four generations.

16 After this, Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons and his grandsons, four generations.

16 Job lived 140 years after this, and saw his children and grandchildren to the fourth generation.

16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

17 And Job died, an old man and full of days.
17 And Job died, an old man and full of days.
17 Then Job died at an old age, having lived a full life.
17 So Job died, being old and full of days. Job was probably about 70 when the book opened, so he is now a really old man. God has really blessed him.

The question this book puts before us is, "On what basis am I going to live my life? Will it be on the old basis of self-sufficiency and do-it-yourself goodness before God, trying my best to be pleasing to God, but never realizing the depths of evil with which I have to deal? Or will it be to accept that gift of God which is waiting for me every day, fresh from His hand: the gift of forgiveness, of righteousness, and of a relationship in which He is my dear father and I am His cherished, beloved son?"

If so, my life can also be characterized by peace, fragrance, and beauty as his was. And so can yours.

The Lessons from Job

The Book of Job is far too complex for a "once over lightly" treatment. To probe some of its deeper lessons, we really must review the entire account again.

As the oldest book of the Bible, Job was probably a contemporary of Abraham, although he did not live in the Promised Land; he lived in a land called Uz, of which we know relatively little. Yet his faith and insights reflects a heritage which had been handed down from Adam and Eve, through Noah and his sons. And it is surprisingly consistent with the greater revelation of Scripture as we find it in the Old and New Testaments.

One of the many lessons of this book is what we find in every book of the Bible: it strips away our illusions and presents life as it really is. [Nothing is more valuable than a valid perspective. One of the most painful—but essential—blessings is the stripping away of our delusions and erroneous presuppositions! That is why it is so important to let the Spirit of God set us straight by the Word of God, correcting our thinking and "renewing our minds" (Rom 12:2).]

The first surprise to confront us in the Book of Job is the behind-the-scenes peek at what prompted the entire drama. We discover that a larger cosmic drama is being played out behind our own frustrations, suddenly adverse circumstances, perverse people, and other troubles.

Life Is Not a Spectator Sport!

We begin to get a glimpse of the powerful team of evil which is also directed at us and we discover that we, too, are the focus of his attack. We are no longer sitting in the bleachers:

we, too, are in the middle of the game.

And we make a tragic mistake to see the situation only in terms of what is visible to us. We must never forget what we were shown in the first chapter as we face the problems in our own lives. We tend to presume that we deserve to have a good time and enjoy ourselves; that life yields to us what we have earned. But nothing could be further from the Christian position.

We are not here to have a good time. God gives us some good times, but every one of them comes as a gift of His love and grace! They are never something we really deserve. We are here to fight against the powers of darkness (Eph 6:10-12). We are here to be engaged in continual combat with powerful forces seeking to control human history. That continually frustrates our attempts to plan our careers, our lives, our retirement...That is why God has taught us what is really going on behind the scenes right at the very beginning of this book.

Something Deeper

The primary lesson of Job is what the book reveals about the nature of human evil.

As we have gone through the many discourses of Job's "friends" we see them view wicked people in terms of murderers, thieves, rapists, fornicators, cruel tyrants, etc.—unjust, wretched people. "These" are the wicked, as Job's counselors see them.

But as we begin to understand more clearly, the things they point out as wicked are really only the fruit of something deeper in human nature: they emerge from a deep-seated root of pride that expresses itself as independence, self-sufficiency: "I can run my own life; I've got what it takes; I don't need help from anybody."

Jesus summarized it this way: For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies... (Matt 15:19).

All evil comes from the root of pride (Is 14:12-16), which is evil in its purest form. What we also learn from this book is that pride is expressed, not only in terms of murder, thievery, and robbery, but also—as we have seen in Job's three friends—as bigotry; pompousness; self-righteous legalism; critical judgmental attitudes; condemnation of others; harsh, sarcastic words and vengeful, vindictive actions against someone else. Human evil is not confined to the criminals of the land: it is present in every heart, without exception (Jer 17:9). Pride is the root of all sin and it can express itself in many various ways.

The Nature of Faith

Job thought he was exercising faith when he obeyed God and did what was right, when it was clearly in his best interests to do so. Many people today think they are exercising great faith when they simply believe God is there; when they live their lives day by day with the recognition that God is watching and is present in their affairs. They do right because they

know that if they do not they will get into trouble. This is, of course, a form of faith, but it is a weak faith. They live at a level of serving God only when it is in their best interests to do so.

This is the very accusation that Satan hurled at God when Job was discussed. "Job only serves you because you take care of him. Remove your hand of blessing and he'll curse you to your face" (Cf. Job 1:9-11). Many are like that: the moment blessing ceases, or difficulty or trial comes along, they want to quit. (The lack of a persistent, enduring witness by visible leaders is among the greatest discouragements among the Body.)

The kind of faith that makes the world sit up and take notice is revealed as we serve God when it is difficult to do so—when serving Him is the hardest thing we can do. This is what the Book of Job is all about. Remember Gethsemane. "Not my will, but thine be done." This is what we see in Job. Though he trembles, though he falters, though he fails, the last thing he does is cling in helplessness to God. Job ultimately becomes an example of faith.

Great faith is exercised when we feel we are being the least faithful! When we are so weak that we cannot do anything but cling. In that moment all heaven is looking and rejoicing at the greatness of our faith.

The Nature of Fallen Man

All this reveals the true nature of fallen man: man, in the flesh, appears at his best in the person of Job. As the book opens we have a beautiful picture of a highly respected and greatly honored man: a sincere, moral, devoted, selfless, godly man who spends his time doing good deeds, helping many people, obviously intent upon doing what God wants. A deserving man. Many are like that, who are not even Christian, and yet live on those terms.

But this book is designed to strip away outward appearances and show Job as he really is. He finally came to see himself as self-deceived. He imagined he had the resources in himself to handle life and its problems. We too imagine we have the power to stand and be true to what we believe. We are boastful, like Peter, who said to Jesus, "I will never deny you. I will lay down my life for you." He meant every word of it. Yet, when the hour of temptation came, he folded.

This book reveals that Job, too, discovered he was a lover of status and prestige. He longed for "the good old days" as they were stripped away from him. When all that was stripped away he was querulous, angry, and upset because he had been denied what he thought was his right. We discover that Job's self-vindication and self-justification makes God look less than He is. This is the terrible evil of that attitude. It robs God of His glory. Paul reminds us, "No flesh shall glory in His presence" (1 Cor 1:29). [Every sin, every error, derives from a false view of the character of God.]

The Cause(s) of Suffering

One (of the several) great themes of this book is the reason for suffering in the Christian life. None of us protest when we are told that suffering is sent by God to punish wrongdoers. We view that as appropriate. (We have some we would like to add to His list.) That satisfies our sense of justice—except when we happen to be on the receiving end: then it is manifestly unfair.

We can even handle it when the Bible teaches that suffering is sent to awaken us when we tend to go astray. "Pain is God's megaphone to rouse a deaf world," quips our friend, C.S. Lewis. But that is not all that the Book of Job teaches us about suffering; there is something far greater than that.

The book reveals something that should have been obvious to us from the Gospels: the fact that Jesus suffered. He did not suffer because He was a wrongdoer. He did not suffer because He needed to have His attention captured by God. Yet His life was filled with suffering from beginning to end: rejection, misunderstanding, disappointment, cruelty, harsh words, unjust treatment—all the way through. As the OT also emphasized, He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Is 53:3).

Why did He suffer? He suffered because suffering is also a way of allowing God to demonstrate that Satan is a liar and a cheat. Satan's premise, that was the underlying challenge in this book: that men serve God only because God blesses them. "If you remove the blessing, men will curse God to His face." Man does not see any intrinsic value in God Himself. Only man's self-interest makes him serve.

Far too many believers have confirmed that God-demeaning perspective of Satan. Suffering is sent to prove that Satan is wrong: God will be served even when He does not bless any longer: because He is God, and He is worthy of the praise, and the honor, and the service of mankind. That is why Jesus suffered. He suffered as a demonstration to all mankind that God was still God and was worthy no matter what happened.

Job teaches us that suffering is a means by which evil is answered and God is vindicated. It leads to a high and holy and glorious privilege to be granted to some of us to uphold the glory of God in the midst of the accusations of the devil in this world.

Some of us suffer because we eminently deserve it. Sometimes it comes to awaken us. But sometimes it is granted to us as a high and holy privilege to be part of what Paul calls sharing the sufferings of Christ, "filling up that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the church (Col 1:24)."

But There's More

The Book of Job also teaches us, through the symbolism of the two great beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan, how God handles evil. The world, the flesh, as well as the devil.

But the greatest theme of all: the revealing of the character of God Himself. Many see God as a cold, impersonal Being, distant from us, uncaring; often ruthless and vindictive, powerful, but without compassion. "The God of the Old Testament," in contrast to that of the New Testament.

But this book teaches us that God is always exactly the same: compassionately aware of our problems, deeply concerned about us, carefully controlling everything that touches us; patient, forgiving, and ultimately responsible for everything that happens.

The Book of Job opens with three main characters: God, Satan, and Job. It closes with Satan faded into the background, completely disappeared. Job is kneeling as God declares, "OK, Job, I'm responsible. Any questions?" And as Job begins to glimpse that God is working out His vast, cosmic purposes, he has no questions to ask whatsoever.

"The End of the Lord"

The final view of God in this book is of a Being of incredible wisdom and power that is weaving a tapestry far beyond the dreams and imaginations of mere man; and that He is working out magnificent purposes of infinite joy that He will give to us if we wait for His ends to be fully accomplished. The book alludes to a time when "the sons of God shouted with joy" at the creation of the world.

But the NT looks to the time when "the sons of God will be revealed" (Rom 8:19), and all creation will shout in a greater glory than was ever hailed at creation. It will be a new creation and how "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom 8:18). There is no higher honor than these:

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you (Matt 5:11-12).

We need to see life as God sees it. Never again in all eternity will we ever again have the privilege of bearing suffering for His name's sake in the day of reproach. What an honor if it be extended to any of us! In His Name, indeed!