

The Book of Job
Class Notes
Session 23

Job 42.7-9 The friends who thought they had all the answers are rebuked by God.

This part of the text, similar to the opening chapters of Job (*Chs. 1 and 2*), is written in prose.

It is a literary frame through which the story of Job reaches its climax. Commenting on God's response to Job's friends:

"God spoke to Eliphaz, probably the eldest of the three, and said He was angry with him and his two companions...They who had assumed a position of defending God were now on the defensive themselves...The words, *My servant Job*, spoken by God four times in 42:7–8, point up his restored position as a trusting and obedient servant of the Lord (cf. 1:8; 2:3). By insisting that suffering is always retributive, the three rhetoricians were limiting God's sovereign ability to use suffering for other purposes. As a result, they cruelly indicted innocent Job."¹

Theologically...The three friends limited God's sovereignty... God's power to use suffering for other purposes. This arrogance led to their cruel indictment of Job.

Even in the midst of His rebuke to Job's friends, God offers forgiveness and reconciliation to the friends through sacrifices.

"Job, in remarkable irony, becomes the mediator for his friends. He is appointed the priestly task of praying for them. In other words, Job returns to the duties of his spiritual leadership (1:5), acting as the patriarchs had prior to the establishment of a formal priesthood. Job can approach the Lord directly, knowing He will always do what is right and proper."²

(v.7): How did Job speak "what is right"? Even though he repeatedly challenged God. At times accusing Him of silent injustice... Job had now repented (42:6).

Job never cursed God as Satan had challenged and his wife encouraged. While Job "contended" with God...He never renounced Him!

In the long run God really did not forsake his "servant Job" This expression used four times in the preceding text!

Job 42.10-11 In the epilogue in Job, God restores to Job all that he has lost.

Job has suffered greatly, and yet, he did not "curse God and die.

The themes of reconciliation and restoration end the book of Job. However, some struggle with this ending.

We know that life does not always end "happily ever after" ...at least not this side of heaven! However...

This chapter assures us that, no matter what happens to us, *God always writes the last chapter*. Therefore, we

¹ Walvoord, et al. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*.

² *The Lutheran Study Bible* (Concordia)

don't have to be afraid. We can trust God to do what is right, no matter how painful our situation might be. But Job's greatest blessing was not the regaining of his health and wealth or the rebuilding of his family and circle of friends.

“(Job’s)...greatest blessing was *knowing God better and understanding His working in a deeper way*...No matter what God permits to come into our lives, He always has His “afterward.” He writes the last chapter—and that makes it worth it all.”³

Additionally...Job’s restoration is an act of grace...Not a reward for proper theology and faithfulness. Job’s prayers were not for himself...Job prayed for his friends...Here his renewed prosperity happens!

(v.11): Job’s family now come to offer what the friends should have... “Sympathy” and “Comfort” because of the “Evil” that he experienced... רָע (rā) ... “Bad.” It is the opposite of “Shalom.”

Job 42.12-17 In these final verses we see a theme of “Reversal” ... Comparing this description with *Job* 1.3...Job receives double.

(v.14): Job’s daughters names are given...the names of the sons are not.

(v.15): Job’s daughters received an inheritance...as did the brothers.

While Job hoped to die...He lived to an old age!

Job lived the length of life of the Patriarchs...Abraham...*Genesis* 25.8...Isaac...*Genesis* 35.29...David...*1Chronicles* 23.1.

The restoring of Job’s life demonstrated to the friends that God had restored him... Clearly—God was not bound by the “Retribution Principle.”

And...The Book of Job does not deny the general biblical principle that God blesses the righteous.

Rather...Job...as well as other Scriptures...reveal that the principle is not “invariable and airtight. God in His sovereignty can give—or hold back—blessings in accord with His purposes.” (R.L. Alden. *Job*)

“This book, probably the oldest in the Bible, deals with mankind’s most pressing problems: the question of suffering and man’s relationship with God. Job’s experience billboards the truth that man’s worship of God does not stem from a businesslike contract, whereby he earns material rewards from God....not a juridical arrangement in which He is obligated to reward man for every good act. Instead, man is to trust God, worship Him regardless of his circumstances, and rely on the perfections of His character even when God’s ways are not fully understood. Misfortune does not mean God has forsaken His own. It does mean He has plans that the sufferer may know nothing of.”⁴

³ W.W. Wiersbe. *Be Patient. The Book of Job*.

⁴ J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck Eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*.