



## "REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

### JOB: LESSON 10

This week we pick up our story in chapter 24, continuing with Job's reply to Eliphaz. Remember that Job keeps trying to disprove their point that God always punishes the wicked and blesses the righteous; Job is suffering, therefore, God is punishing him. Job could see injustices happening all over the world. People being stolen from, lied to, murdered, abused, and brutalized. The "wicked" were getting away with many things while the righteous continued to suffer. Not only did this come against the basic premise of his friends, it appeared that God was indifferent to the wicked. The argument and examples that Job uses in this chapter raise the same questions that people have all over the world today, including you and me. This world is not fair, and it drives us crazy. In this chapter, Job describes one of the most dramatic plights of the poor in all of Scripture. It truly is both heart breaking and perplexing.

#### First Day

1. Read Job 24:1-25. What facts do you find? Any repeated thoughts, words, or phrases?
2. In your own words, what question does Job have in verse 1?
3. There are two categories of people that Job talks about in this chapter, the wicked and the "victims." List some of the phrases that would describe each.
  - A. Wicked:

**B. Victims:****4. According to Job, is this a world where justice rules?**

This all seems to be very puzzling to Job. He doesn't understand why God seems to be so indifferent to the wicked. They seem to get away with everything because we don't see their punishment. I don't believe he's doubting God's justice, I just don't think he understands it. So if God is allowing the wicked to prosper, that proves that Job isn't being punished for his sins.

**5. In verses 1-4, what are the wicked doing to the people?**

Verse 2 tells us that the wicked were removing their "landmarks." These can also be called boundary stones and were used to separate plots of land from their neighbors (Deuteronomy 19:14; Proverbs 22:28, 23:10). In Deut. 27:17, God had promised to curse those who moved them and stole property, but He hadn't. They were also stealing the livestock from the widows and orphans, leaving them helpless and destitute.

**6. Describe the "plight of the poor" from verses 5-11.****7. In verses 12-17, Job describes even more injustices. List some of the things he mentions. What is the significance of the mention of light and darkness?**

8. Are you puzzled by anything in our world? Is injustice still present in our culture or other parts of the world?

Verses 18-25 are pretty confusing. I read so many "theories" on what this section means that I'm more confused than when I started. Wiersbe's explanation was the simplest and clearest, so I'm offering his theory to you. He said, "This passage may be seen as a description, telling what will happen to the wicked; or it may be interpreted as a denunciation, a curse on the wicked. I think it refers to Job's personal curse on the wicked, who seem to escape judgment."

9. How does Job conclude his argument in verse 25? (In your own words!)
10. Write your thoughts on this chapter. How did it make you feel? What questions did it raise? How would you answer someone that questions God's injustice because of what they see in the world?

This chapter wrenches our heart and forces us to look outside of ourselves. People are still starving in the world, living and freezing outside because they have no home. Children are still being taken for debt bondage and exploited sexually. Men and women are forced to work but will never see a penny they earn. Murder, sexual sin, and thievery runs rampant. How do we reconcile this? What do we do with it? I'm not sure I have the answer to that, but I, along with Wiersbe, say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Jesus Christ promised to return, judge the wicked, and establish His righteous kingdom. Until He comes, we are forced to live with the reality of evil in this fallen world.

In a book called, Terrify No More by Gary Haugen, he describes a rescue that IJM (International Justice Mission) was making on a brothel in Cambodia. They were renting and selling girls as young as 7 and 8 for sex, and IJM agents were posing as "Johns" to get information so they could come back and rescue the

girls and bust the brothel owners and pimps. Haugen was describing the darkness and repulsiveness of their work and the fear that accompanies it. When asked about the danger of doing what they do, he wrote, "Our investigators march into these dark, ominous settings because they believe they are called by God to be that defense. Some Christians are uncomfortable with the idea that God has been in a dark, repulsive brothel, that He could possibly be a witness to all the evil acts that take place there. Our investigators are not only comfortable with the idea; it's a truth they count on. They have to draw upon the resources of God who is already in that place and is familiar with it. He's already aware, sadly, of every horrible thing that happens in there. So you call upon His promises that He'll be with you. You're not going in there alone, someplace that He can't lead you. He's been in there for years, and He'll be there long after we're gone. You're simply not going in there alone. We believe we're there because He has orchestrated it. It's completely His operation. We remember His promises to be present, to be faithful, and His Words that we should be full of courage because of that."

11. Any thoughts on the paragraph above?

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways, and how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand? Job 26:14

### Second Day

**Work on your verse. Don't you love the phrase, "edges of His ways"?**

The next section is the shortest chapter in the book. Bildad's reply only covers 6 verses. Some believe that perhaps Job simply cut him off, while others believe that some of the text was moved or lost. Maybe Bildad just ran out of steam so to speak. We will be looking at this chapter simply as "Bildad's reply."

1. Read Job 25:1-6. In your own words, summarize what Bildad is saying.

2. What is lacking in this speech that was present in his previous words?
3. Is Bildad's view of God's power correct in verses 1-3?
4. What about His view on man's righteousness?
5. What's wrong with Bildad's argument?

Bildad argued that it was futile to argue or reason with God because He is incomprehensible and His ways are inscrutable.

6. Read Job 26:1-14. List the facts you find in this chapter. Any reoccurring words, thoughts, or phrases?
7. Job begins with an outburst against Bildad, completely rejecting his words in verses 2-4. What does he say?

Job's words seem to be full of anger and sarcasm. His speech is quite interesting, resembling some of the words of his friends. Bildad talked about the power of God, so that's where Job begins. He seems to leave behind the discussion of the fate of the wicked and the sufferings of the just. Bildad seems to be ignorant of God and His ways, so Job attempts to give him some instruction!

8. How does Job describe God's power in creation in verses 5-14? List all the "elements" he mentions.

Job sees God in everything, even in death. He uses three different names for the place of the dead: the waters, Sheol, and destruction (Revelation 9:11). God not only knows what's going on in the world of the dead, but what's happening in the world of the living.

9. According to Job, does God "control" everything? What verses support this?

10. We can get lost when thinking about the enormity of His wonder and power, but then what does verse 14 say about it?

"Although what we can see and hear of God in His world is but a fragment of all that He is, it is not to be demeaned because our minds are so small." (Francis Andersen) What we can see is only the edge, or the fringe, of who He is. This verse almost makes me shudder at the thought of the true magnificence of God.

11. Meditate on the thought of only seeing the "edges of His ways." How does that make you feel? Think of a time when you were captivated by His wonder. That was nothing compared to all that He is. Write your thoughts.

12. How can knowing that truth help you in a situation you face today?

### Third Day

**Study your verse. This is a great one to memorize and hide in your heart!**

1. Read Job 27:1-23. Job continues to instruct and warn his friends. What's the main point, or points, of this chapter? Any repeated words or phrases?

This is a very interesting chapter. Bildad talked about God's justice, so Job tackles the issue as well. It's important to remember that the issue between Job and his friends is not about whether or not God is just, but how the justice of God is seen to work out in particular events, specifically in Job's experiences. Andersen wrote, "The friends think they know the answer, and they have offered it to Job. Job knows that they are wrong, not in affirming the justice of God, but in applying it to himself. But since he does not know how the justice of God is being fulfilled in his case, he is neither able to refute the friends nor able to satisfy his own mind." Job is confused, no doubt. But he still never doubts that God isn't just.

In the beginning of this chapter, Job uses legal words again as if he is on trial. Using a powerful oath, he hands his case over to God. But Job does something really interesting. He swears "by the life of God" to sway God to hear his case. He swears by the God "who has denied him justice" (vs 2) and has "made his life bitter." He isn't shaking his fist at God, but he stakes everything on a justice beyond this injustice. It's up to God to make things right. He is in control. How God would do this, I don't think Job has any idea, but he has faith that He would.

2. Does Job still claim to be innocent? What verses tell us that?  
What "declarations" does he make?

3. In verses 7-10, Job appears to curse the wicked, a common practice of the day, asking God to judge his enemies. What does he say?

In the East, there is strict punishment for false accusers. Often the penalty for persecuting an innocent person wrongly was the punishment attached to the crime wrongly charged. Sadly, Job's friends had become his "enemies."

4. All through his speeches, who does Job attribute his suffering to, God or satan?

5. In verses 14-23, Job describes God's judgment on the wicked. List some of the "judgments" to come.

Job used some of his friends' own words against them! He stole some of the very imagery they used to deliberately remind them that they should watch themselves or the punishments they ascribed to others would be applied to them instead. It's kind of like saying, "What goes around comes around." Proverbs 11:8 says it like this: "The righteous is delivered from trouble, but the wicked takes his place."

Job has a very "lofty" impression of God, both of Who He is and what He can do. His friends try to put God in a box, so to speak, so they can figure out everything about Him. Swindoll calls it trying to make God "manageable."

6. Have you, or do you, ever try to make God "manageable"? What does that mean?
7. Job knew that he couldn't control God, even if he wanted to. Do you believe that? If so, how does that affect how you live? How "should" it?

One author wrote, "Job assumes two roles. The author presents him as a truly righteous man whose commitment to God is total, yet who can still struggle with God to the point of rage over the mystery of God's ways. Job does not know what the reader knows -- that God honors him by testing him, thus expressing His total confidence in Job. But Job must remain ignorant of this for it to be genuine. For the intended message of the book, the raging Job is just as important as the patient Job. In his suffering Job served God supremely, not as a stoic, but as a feeling man who had come to terms with the mystery of the divine." (Smick)

8. Write your thoughts on the above paragraph. Do you feel honored by God's testings in your life? Have you ever thought of it like that?

We'll end here with some more food for thought: "Left to ourselves we tend immediately to reduce God to manageable terms. We want to get Him where we can use Him, or at least know where He is when we need Him. We want a God we can in some measure control. We need the feeling of security that comes from knowing what God is like, and what He is like is, of course, a composite of all the religious pictures we have seen, all the best people we have known or heard about, and all the sublime ideas we have entertained." (A.W.Tozer) HmMMM

#### **Fourth Day**

##### **Work on your verse.**

In this chapter, Job uses a lot of imagery to explain how hard it is for us to discern the wisdom of God. In *Shepherd's Notes* it says, "Chapter 28 is an interlude in the form of a poem about wisdom. It teaches that humans will expend enormous effort to attain riches but will not do the same to attain wisdom, but even if they did seek it, true wisdom is beyond them. The deepest wisdom is the fear of God, wherein one trusts Him rather than one's own ability to comprehend life." Hope this little explanation makes it easier to grasp what this chapter is saying. Job's friends had some knowledge under their belt, but they sure lacked wisdom.

1. Read Job 28:1-28. In verses 1-11, Job talks about the activity of mining for precious minerals and stones. What are some of the things miners seek, according to these verses?
  
2. How does he describe the work of the miner?

3. Miners work hard to find their treasure, digging deeper and deeper until they strike it rich. Where do you think Job is going with this comparison?
  
4. God's Word is like a mine, filled with all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We must put forth much effort to discover the riches of His Word. What does this mean? How do we practically do this?
  
5. How much effort are you willing to expend to discover deep truths about God?

Although we must expend energy, we can't find His wisdom in our own strength. It's a spiritual quality and gift that comes from the Holy Spirit.

6. What question does Job ask in verse 12?
  
7. How does Job answer his own question in verses 13-22? Where "can't" it be found? How does Proverbs 3:15 relate to this?

It would all seem pretty depressing if Job left it here. Wisdom is not to be found, bought, inherited, or earned. Where is it then? Job brings us back to our hope in verse 23.

8. Read 28:23-28. Where can we find wisdom? Summarize these verses in your own words.

Job understood that *God* was sovereign, and that if He had created the world, making rain follow the law and creating paths for thunderbolts, He could control the circumstances in Job's life. The key to wisdom is understanding how much greater *God's* wisdom and power is than ours. And this Job understood.

9. Job gives the "bottom line" of wisdom in verse 28. What two things are characteristic of authentic wisdom?

It used to bother me that I couldn't understand everything about *God*. I, like many others, liked my "manageable" *God*. It helped me rationalize and categorize things in my life. Over the years I have come to appreciate the ability to know *God*, while knowing that He isn't completely knowable. After studying Job, I really like how despite all his confusion, Job's faith doesn't waver, even if *God* acts completely contrary to what appears to be who He is. *God* really is who He says He is. He is definitely unique.

10. From this chapter, what specifically applies to your own life?

### Fifth Day

**Write out your verse from memory**

Before we end, let's take a look at a few more verses about wisdom, shall we?

1. What do these verses say about wisdom:
  - a. Proverbs 2:6-7
  - b. Proverbs 9:10
  - c. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

I'd like to end with some "nuggets of wisdom" from Charles Swindoll because he's so smart! ☺ He said that Job's words in chapters 27 and 28 lead us to make five conclusions about committing to the things that matter most in life. Let's see how we're doing!

1. *Thinking God's thoughts is our highest goal.* Tozer wrote, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."

**A. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about God?**

2. *Walking in integrity is the only way to live.* Job wouldn't admit to something he didn't do, nor would he curse God and die. His declaration in 27:4 reveals his character.

**B. Are you holding fast to your integrity in all that you do?**

3. *Realizing that wrong will not ultimately triumph brings us a sense of justice.* Everything in this life is fleeting and temporary. Godly people realize that material goods offer only temporary relief and pleasure. The just will receive rewards in eternity.

**C. Do you trust God, even when you see injustices daily around the world?**

4. *Seeking wisdom through human effort is a waste of time.* We can't have Biblical wisdom unless we have a relationship with God. Education, money, or being mentored by the best will not bring us the wisdom available through the Holy Spirit.

**D. Where do you go to find wisdom?**

5. *Cultivating a healthy and holy fear of the Lord gives us wisdom and understanding.* The world doesn't emphasize fearing the Lord, but the Bible does!

**E. Do you fear God, or do you fear man?**