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## Lessons from the Book of Job

By Ken Raggio

### **Job Offers Sacrifices To Sanctify His Children**

The book of Job was probably written by Moses before the book of Genesis, making it the oldest book in the Bible. It tells the trials of Job, "perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil." The first specific behavior mentioned of Job was that he made intercession for his children every day. Therefore, the first godly behavior ever identified in the Bible was INTERCESSION for children!

Job 1:5 "Job ...rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings ...for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts."

### **The Devil**

George Barna's 2006 survey showed that 68% of Catholics, 45% of Evangelicals, and 55% of Americans deny Satan's existence. But don't kid yourself. Unless you are prepared to burn your Bible, you'd better believe there is a devil. The Bible mentions "the devil" 61 times, "devils" 55 times, and "Satan" 55 times. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan."

Job 1:7 - "And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

### **God Will Let Satan Take Everything You Have**

Satan ("the adversary") stood before God, after walking to and fro in the earth. God asked, "Have you considered my servant Job? that there is none like him in the earth, ...perfect, ...upright, ...fears God, ...hates evil?" Satan snapped, "He does not serve you without reasons." He contended that Job would curse God to His face without His protection and benefits. God let Satan take everything from Job to prove him wrong.

Job 1:12 - "The LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand."

### **God Knew Job Would Not Curse Him**

Satan had a license to kill. He killed Job's cattlemen, his shepherds, his camel tenders. He stole his oxen, asses, and camels, and killed his sheep. He killed Job's seven sons and three daughters.

Job 1:20-22 - "Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

### **God Will Let Satan Afflict Your Body**

Did God answer Satan's prayer? He came before the LORD again. He had been to and fro in the earth. Again, God said, "Have you considered my servant Job?" But this time, Satan said, "Put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." Again, God knew Job would not curse Him.

Job 2:6,7 - "The LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth ...and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown."

### **Job Denounces His Wife's Evil Counsel**

Satan threw everything he could against Job. All his possessions and family were gone. Only his wife survived. Then boils erupted from his head to his toes. He sat in ashes and scraped himself with a potsherd. His wife said, "Do you still have your integrity? Curse God, and die." But real saints never stop trusting God.

Job 2:10 - "He said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

### **Sometimes, Friends Cannot Help**

Job was experiencing such a horrible tragedy, his three friends made an appointment to come and mourn with him and comfort him. But when they saw him, his boils had so disfigured him, they did not even recognize him. They rent their clothes, threw dust on their heads, and wept loudly. Then, silence. When God is trying you, you may have to face things alone, even among friends.

Job 2:13 - "They sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great."

## **When The Prophetic Purpose Is Hidden**

Poor Job. He was so low and his trial so agonizing that he cursed the day he was born. He wished he had been stillborn. He felt his birth had been untimely. He yearned for the quietness of death. But Job could not possibly understand that over 3,000 years later, his name would be a household word in every nation on earth, and his incorrigible confidence in God would become one of the greatest inspirational stories of all time.

Job 3:23 - "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?"

## **Satan Used Job's Friends**

Job was a son of Issachar and grandson of Jacob (Genesis 46:13). He lived in the days of Joseph, his young uncle. Joseph suffered in Egypt. Job suffered in the land of Uz. Job had three friends who came to comfort him - Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. Both Joseph and Job were tormented by family and friends. Remember, Satan designs your trial to destroy you. He will even use your friends against you.

Job 4:1,8 - "Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said, ...Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."

## **What Kind Of Friend Tells You Not To Pray?**

Job's "friend," Eliphaz, believed Job's problems were simple to explain. Job was reaping what he sowed. Job was evil, and God was punishing him for it. His analysis was wearisome. Be careful not to get lost in Eliphaz' criticisms. He was dead wrong. It is lethal to mix wisdom with foolish conjecture. He even went so far as to suggest that Job need not pray any more, because nobody would hear him. What a lie.

Job 5:1 - "Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?"

## **What Does Your Arguing Reprove?**

I do not know how Job kept his sanity after listening to Eliphaz harangue. His reply certainly indicated that Eliphaz had done no good for him. Job bemoaned his situation again, and begged God, "that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off! Then should I yet have comfort." Then he scathed his friend.

Job 6:14,15,25 - "To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend; ...My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, ...How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?"

## **The Appointment**

Job's skin was broken and loathsome. His flesh was "clothed with worms and clods of dust." His friend smothered him with criticism. He wanted to die. "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? ...as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work." Yes. It is appointed unto man once to die, and afterward the judgment.

Job 7:11,16 - "I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. ...I loathe it; I would not live away."

## **Prayers Of The Righteous Can Be Hindered**

Job's friend, Bildad, asserted his misguided opinion. To paraphrase, he said, "If your kids had not sinned, they would not be dead." "If your heart was pure, your prayers would be answered." WRONG. Paul spoke of a great open door for ministry, "but there are many adversaries." This is not the Garden of Eden. The thief steals, kills and destroys indiscriminately. Consequently, righteous men often suffer great losses.

Job 8:5,6 - "If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty; If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee."

## **The Daysman**

Job responded to Bildad by arguing that God is Sovereign, and does as He pleases. But cynicism was in his voice. Job could not understand why God allowed him to suffer. He felt powerless to persuade God to change his circumstance. He yearned for a "daysman" - an intercessor between him and God. Job would have rejoiced to meet our daysman - Jesus Christ.

Job 9:32 - "He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both."

## **The Unadvisable Propensity For Self-Pity**

We act too much like Job. We get weary of life. We want to know why things do not go better than they do. We are tempted to complain that God is not giving us a fair treatment. But we must learn from Job's mistakes. Job said a lot of things that should not have been said, and God eventually rebuked him for them. Self-pity will get you into a lot of trouble. Practice keeping your mouth shut.

Job 10:1 - "I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul."

## **Zophar Prods Job To Repent**

Finally, Zophar articulated his opinion. He accused Job of lying and mocking God. "Oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee." He said that Job deserved more punishment than he was getting. He called Job to stretch out his hands to God and put iniquity far away from him. Like so many people, Zophar could easily see sin in his friend's life, but could not see his own disgusting self-righteousness. Who are you judging?

Job 11:15,16 - "For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; ...thou shalt forget thy misery."

## **The Hand Of The LORD Hath Wrought This**

Although Job was sick and tormented, he sparred with his "friends." They relentlessly accused him of wrongdoing. Job sarcastically retorted, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you" He declared that God rules all creatures - men and beasts, and is supremely wise, making great and powerful men look like fools. Job argued that God does many things that are contradictory to human understanding.

Job 12:9 - "Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?"

### **He Increaseth The Nations, And Destroyeth Them**

If you remember that the book of Job is the most ancient of all scriptures, then Job, who lived in primitive times, was quite prophetic in these statements. His insights were exceedingly far reaching - all the way to our generation. As great nations fall, and evil men rule, remember that God is in control.

Job 12:18,19, 21,23 - "He looseth the bond of kings, ...He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. ...He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty. ...He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again."

### **Though He Slay Me, Yet Will I Trust In Him**

Job fired back at Zophar. Let me paraphrase it in common words. "What you know, I know. I would speak to God. I would reason with Him. But not you. You are liars - incompetent doctors. I wish you would just shut up. You grossly misrepresent God. He will reprove you. Why aren't you afraid of Him? Just be quiet and leave me alone." At last, he declared his unflinching intention to trust God, no matter how difficult his trial.

Job 13:15,16 - "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: ...He also shall be my salvation."

### **Hope of a Tree**

I once saw a pecan tree that had been blown down by a storm many years earlier. After the storm, it was cut off, leaving a huge stump lying sideways along the ground. Over the next twenty years, another massive tree sprouted out of the side of that stump and became a very fruitful pecan tree again. God can do the same thing with you or me.

Job 14:7 - "...there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease."

### **The Hope That Is In God's Grace**

Job deserves some credit for discerning the hope that is in God's grace. He said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble, ...Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." That sounds like Paul, who said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Job knew his only hope was to give his sins to God.

Job 14:17 - "My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity."

### **Eliphaz Accuses Job Of Prayerlessness and Evil Talk**

Eliphaz launched another round of attacks on Job, accusing him of unprofitable talk, no-good speeches, uttering iniquity, and speaking with a crafty tongue. "Your mouth condemns you. Your lips testify against you." He contradicted himself, insisting that no man is clean or righteous, yet only wicked suffer and oppressors die young, indicting Job. He said his elders

were older and wiser than Job's elders. He accused Job of not fearing God or praying. Why should any saint or sinner have to listen to such unbridled character assassination?

Job 15:4 - "Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God."

### **Pure Prayer**

Unless you live isolated in a cave, somebody will eventually accuse you of impure motives. Job's friends stared at his suffering for seven days before commenting, but when they started talking, they were vicious. In times like those, only you and God knows the whole truth. Job knew his own heart. "My prayer is pure," he said. It doesn't matter what other people think about you or your prayer life. You and God know the truth. Pray on.

Job 16:17 - "Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure."

### **He Hath Made Me A Proverb**

This might be the most prophetic verse in the entire book of Job, buried under all the incessant talking. Job said, "He hath made me also a byword of the people," (17:6). A byword is a common saying or a proverb. 3500 years ago, Job perceived that his life was a divinely-orchestrated proverb. Who has not heard of the patience of Job? Our hard trials will be much easier to bear if we believe, as Job, that God is orchestrating something of value to HIM during our difficulties.

Job 17:8 - "Upright men shall be astonished at this."

### **Bildad Erroneously Predicts Job's Demise**

Bildad disdained every word Job spoke, railing on him mercilessly. "How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak." Bildad hammered Job with predictions that God would soon kill him. But Bildad was wrong. Job lived 140 years longer and raised another family. Ignore self-appointed prophets.

Job 18:5,6,18,19 - "The light of the wicked shall be put out, ...his candle shall be put out with him. He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world. He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people."

### **Struggling With Unanswered Prayer**

Job pleaded with his friends to stop attacking him. He was overwhelmed, and struggling to make sense of his trials. He rehearsed all the prayers he had prayed, and all the efforts he had made to correct his mistakes and persuade God to deliver him from his plight. Sooner or later, we all get the feeling that God does not care or is not listening. But God IS listening. Just hold on a little longer, and you will see.

Job 19:7 - "Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment."

### **Prayer Notes**

I keep extensive notes that help me pray effectively. I use notes for preaching, for teaching, even notes for writing. Why not pray with notes? I have hundreds of people on my prayer list, and without notes I am sure I would forget to pray for many people or things that are very important to me.

But that is not all. Writing reinforces my faith and determination to have the things I ask. Writing reminds me to believe!

Job 19:23 - "Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!"

### **Job Speaks Of Life After Death And Coming Redeemer**

Here is evidence in the oldest book of the Bible that Job believed in life after death. He expected to see God and prophesied that his redeemer would appear on the earth in the latter days - a clear reference to the coming of Jesus Christ.

Job 19:25-27 - "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

### **The Wicked Condemn The Righteous**

Even after Job begged for mercy, Zophar resumed his verbal assault. Job's friends were viciously determined to prove that Job was a dirty rotten sinner and would never escape the wrath of God. This is an amazing state of mind for men who had never seen or heard of a Bible, never heard a preacher, seen a tabernacle, or had any organized religion. That sounds like multitudes of godless people in our day who viciously condemn righteous men.

Job 20:29 - "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God."

### **Job Says Wicked Often Prosper, Righteous Suffer**

Job turned their argument back on his "friends." "Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on." Job argued that wicked men often flourish in their lifetimes. They are safe. They know no punishment. They prosper. They celebrate. They think they have no need of God. But temporal prosperity is no proof that it will go well on the Day of Judgment. Job's argument was meant to counter their assertions that his suffering was proof he was wicked.

Job 21:34 - "How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?"

### **Satan Accuses You To Discount Your Prayers**

Eliphaz refused to stop accusing Job of sin. He heaped a long list of sins on him - refusing to feed the hungry, taking clothes from the naked, sending widows away empty, and other outrageous charges. He arrogantly told Job "acquaint now thyself with Him, and ...return to the Almighty," as if Job did not even know God. God was already hearing Job, but Satan wanted him to believe otherwise.

Job 22:27,28 - "Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, ...Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee."

### **The Left Hand Of God - "Where He Doth Work"**

God's right hand is often mentioned in scriptures. It is "glorious in power." "From his right hand went a fiery law." "At thy right hand are pleasures

forever more." "Thy right hand upholdeth me," and many more. But God also works on His left hand, where there are trials and testings, but mighty and divine nevertheless.

Job 23:8 - "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."

### **I Shall Come Forth As Gold**

Job did not hide his confusion about what God was doing in his life. He yearned to stand face to face with God and "know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me." But despite Job's profound frustration, he remained convinced that God was still working something for his eternal good. God really does see the end from the beginning. It is our job to trust Him.

Job 23:10 - "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

### **Exalted For A While, But Gone And Brought Low**

In chapter 24, Job enumerated so many human felonies. They remove landmarks. Steal flocks and feed. Plunder the fatherless and widows. Raid farmers' fields. Are heartless toward the homeless. Kidnap newborns. Cruel to the barren. Steal food from the poor. Murder. Commit adulteries. The Contemporary English Version of the Bible renders Job's conclusion thus:

Job 24:23-25 - "God may let them feel secure, but they are never out of his sight. Great for a while; gone forever! Sinners are mowed down like weeds, then they wither and die. If I haven't spoken the truth, then prove me wrong."

### **Bildad Reveals His Fatalism**

What kind of statement is this? "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" It is fatalism. Hopelessness. If Bildad's statement was true, it would be impossible to be saved. Avoid that attitude at all costs. God is righteous, and man is wicked, BUT God is also merciful.

Job 25:2 - "Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?"

### **What Good Are You Doing?**

Job wanted to know of his friends, "How hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arm that hath no strength?" Who do you think you are talking to? What spirit is this you are manifesting? All are good questions. Sometimes you just have to stop the critic in his tracks. It is easy to blather on with endless criticisms of others, but the real question is, "What good are you doing?"

Job 26:3 - "How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?"

### **The Prayers Of A Hypocrite Are Vain**

After being relentlessly bombarded by merciless accusations, Job waged

verbal war for his integrity. "As God liveth...", he promised to speak righteousness and avoid all reproach, to de-legitimize the countless accusations hurled at him. Job condemned hypocrisy.

Job 27:8-10,22 - "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God? ...For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand."

### **Wisdom Is Hidden In God. Find It.**

Job contemplated wisdom. Here is what he said. Silver has its place. Gold has its place. Iron has its place. Brass has its place. Darkness has its place. The flood has its place. "But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?" "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof." Wisdom is hidden in God. Find it.

Job 28:28 - "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

### **Job Remembered His "Glory" Days**

Job yearned for "the good old days," when God's candle shined on him, when his children were with him, when people greeted him kindly in the streets, and great men showed him honor. He remembered when he spent his days doing good deeds for the poor, the fatherless, the widows and others. In the midst of a great trial, it is easy to think that God is not with you. But He is.

Job 29:2,5 - "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; ...When the Almighty was yet with me."

### **Job Turns Bitter, Accuses God**

Job's mourning turned to bitterness. "Young people now insult me, although their fathers would have been a disgrace to my sheep dogs. ...Those worthless nobodies make up jokes and songs to disgrace me. They are hateful and keep their distance, even while spitting in my direction. ...God has destroyed me, and so they don't care what they do." "God has shrunk my skin, choking me to death. ..."God has turned brutal." You will live to regret statements like that. Just don't go there. Bite your tongue.

Job 30:31 - "My only songs are sorrow and sadness." [CEV]

### **Self-Justification Turns To Pride, Then Self-Deception**

Job tried too hard to justify himself. He talked about his good morals - ("I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"). He spoke of his good deeds and defended his integrity. He boasted that he never sinned with a woman, never treated his servants badly, always helped the needy, spurned the love of riches, and never gloated in the sufferings his enemies. But Job finally overstepped the boundaries of self-justification.

Job 31:37 - "I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him."

### **Elihu**

A new character suddenly entered the story of Job. Elihu had not been mentioned previously. He appeared, delivered a major speech, then disappeared, never to be mentioned again in the Bible. His name meant, "My God is Jehovah." Some think Elihu was a type of Christ, but God followed his speech with, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"

Job 32:2 - "Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu, ...against Job..., because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job."

### **Elihu Refutes Job And His Friends**

The three friends of Job finally stopped talking, "because he was righteous in his own eyes." When Elihu opened his mouth to speak, he was angry. The theology of all four was flawed; fixed upon the erroneous belief that only good comes to the righteous, and only evil comes to the wicked. The three insisted Job was being punished for sins, while Job argued that this was not punishment, because he was only righteous. Neither side was right. Elihu argued another perspective.

Job 32:17 - "I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion."

### **There Is A Spirit In Man**

A fourth dimension. Something beyond height, width or depth. Something wiser than the human brain. The spirit dimension. Here is a controversial subject. Modern science says there is no spirit. But all the Bible, all of the Judeo-Christian belief system, is based on this most fundamental truth. There is a spirit in man.

Job 32:7-9 - "I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment."

### **Chastisement Comes To Save You In The End**

Elihu said, "The spirit within me constraineth me. ...I am according to thy wish in God's stead. ...I have heard the voice of thy words saying, I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me. ...he counteth me for his enemy." But Elihu argued that God has numerous valid reasons for chastising a man.

Job 33:16 - "He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing."

### **Chastisement Should Lead To Effective Prayer**

Elihu posited that when God chastises a man, the angel of the LORD is there to minister to him if he responds properly. The angel will deliver him from falling, and that man's prayers will become effective again, he will become contrite and repentant, and joy will soon return.

Job 33:23 - "If there be a messenger with him, ...to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit. ...He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy."

## **Elihu Skillfully Indicts Job And Demands Repentance**

Elihu debated against Job's self-righteous plea, demanding that God does no wrong to any man, including Job. All men eventually get what they deserve. God cannot deal unrighteously, nor put more on him than is right, but He will break a man or destroy him if necessary. Job must admit His chastening and beg forgiveness of all wrongdoing.

Job 34:36 - "My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of his answers for wicked men. For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God."

## **Elihu Convicts Job Of Being Proud And Evil**

Elihu hammered Job for a truthful answer, "Is your righteousness more than God's?" He pressed Job to confess whether he believed he needed cleansing from sin. He said that people ordinarily cry out to God when they are sorely oppressed, but forget God after He has helped them. Then they become proud and evil, and God refuses to answer them. That is your state, Job. You have become proud and evil.

Job 35:14 - "Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, ...he hath visited in his anger; ...Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge."

## **Do Not Let God's Punishment Embitter You**

Elihu exhorted, "If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword. ...But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: ...They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean." Elihu concluded that Job was recipient of God's wrath because of his hypocrisy. He warned him not to be further embittered because God had punished him.

Job 36:18 - "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

## **Men Cannot Know All God's Majesty. Be Humbled.**

Elihu made his closing argument just before God took over the conversation. Elihu depicted the greatness of God in heaven and earth - thunder, lightning, snow, rain, whirlwinds, north winds, frost and ice. "He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy." His point? God is too majestic to predict. Admit your failings and surrender to Him.

Job 37:23 - "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice. Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart."

## **Time To Talk, But Nothing To Say**

Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu verbally assaulted Job during their nasty war of words. Suddenly, God spoke out of a whirlwind, indicting those who "darken counsel by words without knowledge." They were speechless. God then demanded that Job answer a giant list of rhetorical questions. "Where were you when I created the earth, ...when morning stars sang, ...angels shouted, ...when the ocean was set in place," ...and many more enigmas. Sometimes, speaking only exposes your foolishness. Just be quiet. Listen

and learn from God.

Job 38:4 - "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?"

### **God Quickly Humbles Job**

God's questions to Job were obviously intended to diffuse his arrogance. God asked him to explain so many things like the earth, stars and constellations, clouds, ocean waves, sunrises, death, light, darkness, snow, hail, battle and war, lightning and thunder, rain and drought, lions and ravens, wild goats and hinds, the wild ass and unicorn, peacocks, horses and grasshoppers, hawks and eagles. Job could only have been stupefied. Nobody but God knows all.

Job 39:13,19 - "Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? ...Hast thou given the horse strength?"

### **Finding Fault In God Is Grave Folly**

From the beginning, Satan's ambition was to provoke Job to curse God. Job never did curse God, but he lodged several complaints and foolish accusations against Him. So God confronted Job with two of His most impressive creations - Behemoth and Leviathan - largest beast and fish on earth. If God rules these beasts which are a terror to men, how dare any man speak evil of God! If you have a question, ask God. But insulting your Creator can be very dangerous!

Job 40:8 - "Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?"

### **God's Purpose Must Not Be Resisted**

God delivered a heart-stopping monologue to Job. Leviathan was His object lesson to demonstrate that no man should resist the irresistible divine purpose. If the great creatures are too terrifying for a man to defy, then surely you cannot oppose God successfully. No good can come of resisting or rebelling against the purpose of God in your life. Learn from Job. Stop resisting. Just surrender to God's will.

Job 41:10-11 - "None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me? ...whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine."

### **Job Repents In Dust And Ashes**

After forty-two chapters of incessant talking, bickering and arguments, God interrupted Job and his friends with a more-than-dramatic monologue. Job was instantly and completely subdued. Job answered the LORD, "I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. ...Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Immediately, God rebuked Job's friends, demanding that they offer sacrifices for their sins, and present themselves to Job.

Job 42:8 - "And my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly."

### **God Turns The Captivity Of Job**

Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar had no choice but to humble themselves in the face of God's explicit anger. They prepared their sacrifice offerings and went to meet Job. Then Job prayed for his friends. God quickly began a complete

renewal of all His blessings on Job. We should be impressed at how quickly God is ready to forgive a man and move him forward into a complete restoration.

Job 42:10 - "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."

### **Storms Never Last**

This must surely be one of life's biggest lessons. Job's trial began when God licensed Satan to test him. But by the time Job's trial was over, Satan was out of the picture. That is the secret. Satan's license eventually expires. Enemies are pawns in the greater will of God. Your task is to endure. Sooner or later, the trial must end, and you will wear the victor's crown. Press on.

Job 42:12,17 - "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: ...So Job died, being old and full of days."

### **Job's Divine Destiny**

In times of tragedy, it is difficult to see beyond the moment. Every stage of Job's trial must have seemed devastating. The loss of his cattle, death of his children, betrayal of his wife, agony of disease, torment of his friends, his humiliating self-defense, and finally facing God's harsh displeasure. But Job came forth as pure gold. God always knew he would.

James 5:11 - "We count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

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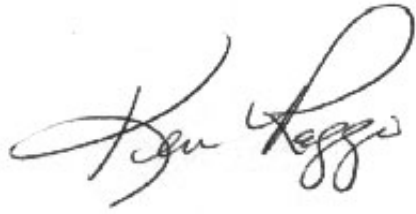
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