****

|  |
| --- |
| **KINGDOM PATIENCE**  **PART TWO** |

Forty Daily Devotionals

From Job 22-42

(Based on the NKJV)

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction** |

As you read through the second half of the Book of Job, you will hear from Job’s friends Eliphaz and Bildad again. Then, you will meet another man, Elihu. As you continue to read this book, bear in mind that much of the advice that Job received from these well-meaning men was not at all helpful and often even hurtful. We will also hear from Job in these final chapters as he responds to the words of these friends in some lengthy dialogue. But, most importantly, we will hear from God beginning at chapter 38 and then listen in on some beautiful conversation between our righteous God and His suffering servant. The closing words to this book will encourage each of us to face our trials and troubles with great faith and **Kingdom Patience**!

|  |
| --- |
| **Daily Reading Schedule** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Date** |  | **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Date** |
| 1 | Job 22:1-14 | 7/26/18 |  | 21 | Job 33:15-28 | 8/15/18 |
| 2 | Job 22:15-30 | 7/27/18 |  | 22 | Job 33:29-34:9 | 8/16/18 |
| 3 | Job 23:1-12 | 7/28/18 |  | 23 | Job 34:10-24 | 8/17/18 |
| 4 | Job 23:13-24:8 | 7/29/18 |  | 24 | Job 34:25-37 | 8/18/18 |
| 5 | Job 24:9-21 | 7/30/18 |  | 25 | Job 35:1-16 | 8/19/18 |
| 6 | Job 24:22-25:6 | 7/31/18 |  | 26 | Job 36:1-14 | 8/20/18 |
| 7 | Job 26:1-14 | 8/1/18 |  | 27 | Job 36:15-30 | 8/21/18 |
| 8 | Job 27:1-13 | 8/2/18 |  | 28 | Job 36:31-37:11 | 8/22/18 |
| 9 | Job 27:14-23 | 8/3/18 |  | 29 | Job 37:12-24 | 8/23/18 |
| 10 | Job 28:1-14 | 8/4/18 |  | 30 | Job 38:1-15 | 8/24/18 |
| 11 | Job 28:15-28 | 8/5/18 |  | 31 | Job 38:16-30 | 8/25/18 |
| 12 | Job 29:1-13 | 8/6/18 |  | 32 | Job 38:31-39:4 | 8/26/18 |
| 13 | Job 29:14-25 | 8/7/18 |  | 33 | Job 39:5-18 | 8/27/18 |
| 14 | Job 30:1-15 | 8/8/18 |  | 34 | Job 39:19-40:2 | 8/28/18 |
| 15 | Job 30:16-31 | 8/9/18 |  | 35 | Job 40:3-18 | 8/29/18 |
| 16 | Job 31:1-15 | 8/10/18 |  | 36 | Job 40:19-41:8 | 8/30/18 |
| 17 | Job 31:16-30 | 8/11/18 |  | 37 | Job 41:9-23 | 8/31/18 |
| 18 | Job 31:31-32:5 | 8/12/18 |  | 38 | Job 41:24-42:4 | 9/1/18 |
| 19 | Job 32:6-20 | 8/13/18 |  | 39 | Job 42:5-10 | 9/2/18 |
| 20 | Job 32:21-33:14 | 8/14/18 |  | 40 | Job 42:11-17 | 9/3/18 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 1: Job 22:1-14** |

*“‘You have not given the weary water to drink, and…have withheld bread from the hungry.’” (Job 22:7)*

***“Strike Three!”***

Eliphaz speaks for the third and final time. I call this “Strike Three” because it is the third time that this friend has attacked Job with accusations and the third time that he “strikes out” in his attempt to get Job to admit to some deep, dark sin that has led him to this pitiful place in life. Job simply refuses to acknowledge something that is not true. Eliphaz begins by implying that man is of no use or benefit to God. He questions why Job is clinging so tenaciously to his testimony of righteousness, asking if Job’s righteousness is any benefit to God. I count seven questions with which Job is bombarded in the first five verses of this speech, with the last two implying that Job’s sins and iniquities are great and longstanding in the eyes of God. In verses 6-9, Eliphaz accuses Job of some bad things that he did and some good things that he left undone (see especially verse 6). These verses remind us of some of the things that Jesus considered to be important in his teaching ministry. Because of these sins, Eliphaz believes that snares and darkness are hounding Job and that Job has nowhere to go but down. In verses 12-14, Eliphaz states that he believes that God keeps His distance from men like Job and that when Job continually denies his sin, he is speaking as if God cannot see or know the wickedness of man’s heart.

**Prayer Emphasis: Imagine** how many times the sick and afflicted have tried their best to explain their physical condition to those who have visited with them. **Respect** the privacy of every individual’s personal circumstances by avoiding the typical questions and allowing them to share what they want you to know.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 2: Job 22:15-30** |

*“‘Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you.’” (Job 22:21)*

***A Severe Accusation***

Since his name is mentioned first in Job 2:11 and he speaks first in Job 4:2, it appears that Eliphaz might have been the leader among Job’s friends. Since three is a number closely associated with “witness” or “testimony” in the Scriptures, the fact that there are three who have spoken against Job thus far may be an indication that what they are saying is the witness or testimony of all of Job’s acquaintances. It is possible that Eliphaz is now comparing Job’s sinfulness to that of the generation just before the flood. Look again at the first words that this man spoke to Job (4:1-6) and note how polite and positive he was in his introductory remarks to his friend. He has moved a very long way from his first opinion and has now joined forces with Bildad and Zophar in his insistence that Job is a very sinful man who is being severely punished by God. By asking Job to “acquaint” (v. 21) himself with God and be at peace with Him, Eliphaz is showing his complete and total ignorance of Job’s true standing and reputation in heaven. In verses 23-26, this “friend” implies that Job has put too much confidence in his riches and not enough confidence in God. He then lists all the different ways that God will “bless” Job if this suffering servant will only get his heart right with Him! Notice the big “if” in verse 23. “If” Job would return to God, he would be “built up.” It sounds to me like Eliphaz might have been one of the first “name it and claim it” preachers!

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to judge or condemn anyone. **Remember** that judgment belongs to God alone. However, if you do judge, **remember** that the kind of judgment that you show others is exactly the kind of judgment that could possibly be shown to you.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 3: Job 23:1-12** |

*“‘Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come to His seat!’” (Job 23:3)*

***Job Tries Again!***

Chapters 23 and 24 contain Job’s seventh response to his friends’ accusations. In this response, we find the fourth of five times that Job spoke of his bitterness (here and in 3:20, 7:11, 10:1, and 27:2). I like the translation of the latter part of verse 2 as it reads in the KJV. That version records Job as saying, “My stroke is heavier than my groaning.” Job was saying that he believed that his expressions of grief and anguish were not equal to the pain he was suffering. He tries, again, to convince his friends that he believes that he is innocent of their charges of being unfaithful to God and unrighteous in his actions. He knows that if only he could get an audience with God, he could present his case before Him and that God would strengthen him and declare him innocent. Verse 8 indicates that Job does not feel as if he has been able to find the opportunity to speak with God directly. But, Job says, God knows me, and He knows the way that I live and the path that I walk! Job believes that when all his trials are over, he will come forth as gold. He says again that he has followed God as closely as he could and that he has not departed from God’s commands. He knows that he has valued his spiritual food (God’s Word) over his physical food. In this, Job is telling Eliphaz that his accusations that Job’s priorities are not in order are absolutely false!

**Prayer Emphasis:** As you read Job’s comments, **remember** that Job is expressing this kind of confidence in his walk with God during the darkest days of his life. **Ask** God to give you that kind of faith and trust – even in the face of pain and suffering.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 4: Job 23:13-24:8** |

*“‘For He performs what is appointed for me…’” (Job 23:14)*

***Divine Appointments***

Job continues his response to Eliphaz and states that he does not expect to change God’s mind! In the NKJV, the first part of verse 14 finds Job saying, “He performs what is appointed for me.” Job is aware, even now, that God’s plan is far better than any plan that he could ever imagine for himself, and he is committed to accepting God’s plan even if there is more suffering for him to bear. Chapter 24 begins with Job stating that God alone can set the day and time for any man’s judgment. He then begins to list the many ways that men had been known to sin against God and their fellow man. He mentions the sin of deceitful land transactions where the proper boundaries are moved in order to obtain land illegally. He speaks of men who would steal other people’s livestock and “foreclose” on a poor widow’s ox if she were not able to meet her pledge (payments). He speaks of his fellow man’s lack of concern for the poor and needy and the pitiful situations in which the poor find themselves because of their selfish actions. The closer Job comes to death, the closer he is coming to being with God. And, the closer he seems to come to making that transition, the more he begins to sound like Jesus! As I read this portion of Job’s response to Eliphaz and his partners, I could not help but imagine Jesus as He stooped to write in the sand when the accusing Jewish leaders brought that adulterous woman to Him to be judged. It almost sounds as if Job is saying, “If there are any among you without sin, then go ahead and be the one to cast the first stone at me.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Avoid** pride in its various forms but seek to avoid spiritual pride above all. Be willing to **restore** repentant believers when they fail. Treat them as you would want to be treated in that situation.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 5: Job 24:9-21** |

*“‘For he…does no good for the widow.’” (Job 24:21)*

***The List Goes On***

Job continues to “write in the sand” as he speaks of the various ways men sin against God and their neighbor. He speaks of sins against the fatherless and forcing the poor to pledge their few assets (even their children and the clothes on their backs) as collateral for personal loans and then take it, leaving them in destitution. The poor and their children are forced to work in the fields and vineyards of the rich. In other words, Job spoke of people who did nothing to *help* anyone and seemingly everything to *hurt* them. Job clearly states that to sin against one’s fellow man is to sin against God. He starts sounding like Jesus again when he speaks of how these murderers, adulterers, and “legal” thieves wait to carry out their evil works in the dark of night. In other words, they “loved darkness…because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). All along, Job’s friends have implied that only the righteous prosper and only the wicked suffer. Job wants his friends to understand what he has already learned from God, that being that no one escapes the judgment of God. Job knows that the righteous sometimes face great trials of faith in this life and that all men, righteous or wicked, will someday stand naked before God. Once more, Job draws their attention (and ours) to the needs of widows and how our treatment of them will be important to us when we stand before God ourselves.

**Prayer Emphasis: Seek** out those widows among us who could really use some help from the church family. **Spend** time with them and **get to know** their needs. **Ask** someone to **go** with you to **do some act of kindness** for one of these very special people.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 6: Job 24:22-25:6** |

*“‘…His eyes are on their ways.’” (Job 24:23b)*

***“Time Will Tell”***

Job closes with an image that anyone living in his time could understand. He speaks of men as being like crops standing in the fields, heavy laden with grain. For a little while they flourish only to eventually wither and “dry out” (24:24). As such, Job wanted his friends to understand that, eventually, the rich are brought low just as the poor and no matter how bountiful their lives may be in the present, they will all stand before a God whose “eyes are on their ways” and not their wealth! In other words, Job is saying that an abundance of material goods will not be sufficient evidence to God that someone has truly lived a righteous life. Job then challenges his friends to prove what he has just said to be untrue. Bildad decided to take a stab at responding to Job’s speech. This will be the last speech from any of Job’s three friends, and it is the shortest speech of all. It is as if Bildad has little that he can say in response to his wise friend, and Eliphaz and Zophar have been rendered speechless altogether. Notice that Job is growing stronger as a result of his contemplating God and His actions while his friends, and their arguments, have grown fewer, shorter and weaker. Bildad has nothing new to offer here. He does take on a very spiritual tone in this last speech. He concludes by removing his focus from Job directly to speaking of the sinful nature of all men, concluding that sinful men are all like “maggots” (25:6) when compared to Almighty God!

**Prayer Emphasis: Stand** firm in your faith in God’s Word. **Speak** the Word to others. **Remind** yourself that nothing/no one can stand against the power of the Word of God!

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 7: Job 26:1-14** |

*“‘By His Spirit He adorned the heavens…’” (Job 26:13a)*

***Job’s Longest Speech***

Chapters 26–31 contain the longest speech in the book – and it comes from Job. Not only is it the *longest* word, but as far as Job and his three friends are concerned, it is the *last* word. It seems that Job, while growing weaker in the flesh, is growing stronger in the Spirit. Again, we see another wonderful New Testament truth being revealed in this Old Testament life. Kingdom Patience understands the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit and expects it to be nothing less than what the Bible calls it – warfare! Although the others might have been listening, this response is made to Bildad alone. The Hebrew words used here for “you” and “your” are singular and not plural. It seems that Eliphaz and Zophar have dropped out of the fight leaving Bildad alone to deal with the man who loved God and hated evil. Even a weak and broken vessel remains powerful in the hand of God if it is filled with God’s Spirit! While Bildad’s last speech only seems to exalt and praise God, Job’s final speech to his three friends teems with exaltation and praise for the Almighty One! I will allow Job’s words to speak for him here and will not attempt to add one thing to them. Even though Job closes this chapter asking if there is anyone who can truly understand the power of God, I think that it is evident that Job has a pretty good understanding of God and all that He is to and for His children.

**Prayer Emphasis: Exalt** God throughout your day. Take in the beauty of His creation and **praise** Him for His magnificent handiwork. **Brag** on God to someone today!

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 8: Job 27:1-13** |

*“‘I will teach you about the hand of God…’” (Job 27:11a)*

***Job’s Not Finished Yet***

In more ways than one, Job is not finished yet. It is as if he grows stronger as he continues to express the magnificence of God to his now silent friends. This conversation about God, life, and human experience began with Job – continued through three cycles of speeches – and is now about to end with Job’s longest speech. It may appear that Job had only a little time left to live, but he has a lot left to say. In verses 2-6, he reconfirms his innocence. While by no means implying that he is without sin, he is adamant in his belief that his trials have not come upon him because God was punishing him for some wickedness on his part. He holds fast to his faith that he stands righteous before God. Every believer should understand that it is not due to our own goodness that we can stand before God as holy and righteous. We, like Job, should come to the place where our hearts no longer condemn us before God (v. 6b). When God sees us through the veil of Christ’s blood, He sees us as clean, holy, and righteous. Job declares that the person who relies on his own righteousness has no such hope. In verse 5, the Hebrew word for “you” is once again plural – meaning that Job is once again speaking to all three of his friends. Read again the words of verse 11: “I will teach you about the hand of God.” Job was saying that even though he might appear as a totally broken and dying man, God had much to teach them through his experiences.

**Prayer Emphasis: Allow** God to use your life as an object lesson to your friends, family, and associates. **Trust** and **praise** Him in all things. **Speak** *of* and *for* Him at your every opportunity. **Believe** that God loves you and always acts with your best interest in mind.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 9: Job 27:14-23** |

*“‘The rich man will lie down, but not be gathered up; he opens his eyes, and he is no more.’” (Job 27:19)*

***The Eighth Speech***

Have I mentioned to you that this longest speech of Job’s is his eighth speech? I have mentioned before that in the Bible, 8 is a number associated with new beginning. Job has been through many trials and tribulations, but it seems that dealing with the judgmental attitudes of his friends may have been his biggest challenge thus far. However, Job refused to accept their faulty theology and held strong to the truth of God that had served him so well thus far in his life. As a result, we see Job experiencing a “new beginning” right here before our eyes. The more he talks about God, the stronger he gets. Job is now more confident than ever that his trust has never been in riches but in the LORD God Almighty! Job never once denied God’s punishment for the wicked. He had simply refused to believe that his sufferings were a result of God punishing him for any intentional wickedness on his part. Job never once claims to be without sin. However, he knows in his heart that he loves God and that he hates evil. Notice that the more Job praises God and speaks of God, the more he begins to repeat God to others. Job closes this chapter with a clear statement that he realizes that wealth and prosperity are no indication of spirituality. He clearly knows that a life cannot be judged by what we have in our *hands* but by what we hold dear in our *hearts*.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to use his Word to continually strengthen you in your walk with Him. **Thank** God for the blessing of His Word. **Commit** yourself to its reading and to obeying what you are shown as you spend time with Him.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 10: Job 28:1-14** |

*“‘But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?’”(Job 28:12)*

***Some Technical Terminology***

It is apparent that Job understood something about precious metals and how they were mined. The first 11 verses of this chapter offer a fair description of the mining techniques used in his day. He mentions silver, gold, iron, and copper. He speaks of the dangerous work of mining with great familiarity. He speaks of miners going places where man’s foot had never trod – places that the average man would never dare nor even think to go. Verse 10 mentions “channels” (“rivers” or “tunnels” in other translations) being cut out in the rocks so that men can mine the aforementioned precious metals and stones and bring them out to light. However, Job is quick to point out that despite his technological skills, man cannot find the rarest of all jewels – wisdom – without the help of Almighty God. There is much to be learned from what Job has shared from his knowledge of the mining of precious stones and metals. He who would have the blessing of wisdom must be willing to search for it – going further and digging deeper, perhaps, than others might be willing to go. We must be dedicated to its discovery and pursue it in a methodical way. Wisdom is found by those who are willing to dig deep into God’s Word and search out the things that are hidden therein. Just as working the land produces “bread” (v. 5), searching God’s Word provides the children of God with a strength and sustenance that cannot be explained to those who have never experienced its power.

**Prayer Emphasis: Study** God’s Word. **Read** and **pray**, asking God to show you His wisdom and help you to **apply** it to your life. Select a verse from the Bible and **memorize** it this week.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 11: Job 28:15-28** |

*“…‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.’” (Job 28:28)*

***The Gold of Ophir***

Job 28:16 includes the second of the two times that “the gold of Ophir” is mentioned in Job. I resisted commenting on it when we read chapter 22 because I knew that I would have the opportunity to do so at this point in our reading. Although there are two mentions of a man named Ophir in the Old Testament (Genesis 10:29 and 1 Chronicles 1:23), the word here, and all the other nine places that it is mentioned in the Bible, refers to a place in Southern Arabia where the finest of gold was mined and smelted. It was the gold of Ophir that David used in the construction of the temple (1 Chronicles 29:4). We are told that Solomon and other kings also purchased gold from Ophir. In speaking of wisdom, Job states that it cannot be purchased with gold or silver, nor can any precious metal even begin to compare to the value of wisdom - even the gold of Ophir. Job goes on to list other precious things that cannot compare with the value of wisdom. Destruction and Death must admit to hearing of the value of wisdom. Job explains that true wisdom is best expressed in our lives by our “fear of the Lord” (v. 28). This “fear” speaks of a reverential trust that one has for God. It is a term used to describe the reverential awe and respect in which we are to hold our God. Job was once a very rich man – but he is no less “rich” sitting here among the ashes than he was when he lived in his fine house!

**Prayer Emphasis: Thank** God for many things today but **thank** Him especially for giving you the wisdom to trust Him as your Savior! **Share** your own salvation experience with someone today.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 12: Job 29:1-13** |

*“‘Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God watched over me;’” (Job 29:2)*

***Job Looks Back at His Life***

Back in Job 16:12, Job spoke of his past life, back when he was “at ease,” and before he was “shattered” by his many afflictions. In chapter 29, he begins to recall some of his better days from “months past” (v. 2). From the word “months,” we get an indication that Job’s suffering has been over an extended period of time. He wishes aloud that his life could return to what it was those months ago when God “watched over” him. He recalled the days when God’s light was shining brightly in his life, guiding his path through the darkness. The word “darkness” in verse 3 indicates that Job’s life was not “perfect” and without challenges prior to this time of testing. He speaks of the days of his youth, the presence of God in his life, and the blessed times that he had spent with his children. He goes on to tell about his financial successes as well as his political and social successes. There was a time when the young men would have seen him and yielded or stepped aside to make way for him. Even the older, wise men stood in his honor. In his company, even the princes and noblemen of the city would stop speaking so that they could listen to him. Job knew that people respected him because of his good works and the many acts of kindness that he had shown to the many needy people that he encountered. It seems that none of the seeds of doubt that Job’s friends have been sowing into his mind have taken any root at all. Job is now reliving the experiences that have made him who he is, and it is clear he has absolutely no regrets about the way that he has lived his life.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to help you to live a regret-free life! **Begin** now to **focus** on the needs of others. **Defeat** selfishness at its very root and **learn** to **live** a life that matters to the world around you.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 13: Job 29:14-25** |

*“‘I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban.’” (Job 29:14))*

***Nice Outfit!***

Job quickly explains the source for the kind of unselfish life that he had lived before his affliction and states that it was not something that he found in his natural flesh. Rather, it was something that God had provided to him. He had “put on righteousness and… justice” (v. 14). Once again, we hear Old Testament Job sounding a whole lot like a New Testament saint! You will find commands to “put on” the new man in several places (like Ephesians 4:24) in the different letters to the churches. Needless to say, Job would not have been able to use the “I” word in verses 15 and 16 if he had not allowed God to clothe and equip him for service. He was able to minister to the blind, lame, and poor because of the work that God had done in his own heart. Job was so committed to helping people in need that he “searched out the case that (he) did not know” (v. 16). In other words, Job loved helping people so much that he “searched out” opportunities to do so – even to people that he did not know! Because of his burning desire to minister to people, his glory remained “fresh” and his strength (“bow”) was constantly “renewed” (v. 20). We would say it like this, “Living out my faith by giving to others keeps me feeling renewed and strengthens the new man within me!” Or, perhaps we would say, “The more I serve the Lord, the more I want to!”

**Prayer Emphasis: Put on** the “new you” that is available to every believer. I promise that you are going to love the way you look! **Search** out opportunities to help and serve others. **Plan** some act of kindness to do for someone in the next few days and **realize** that it really is more blessed to **give** than to receive.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 14: Job 30:1-15** |

*“‘And now I am their taunting song; yes, I am their byword.’” (Job 30:9)*

***Back to the Present***

After a brief recollection of his past, Job now discusses his present condition and acknowledges that God has allowed much change to come into his life. The change that he discusses in our Scripture for today is the way that people now view him in his weakened and diseased condition. This man, once honored by young and old alike, feels as if he is now disrespected socially. For the young to disrespect their elders was considered to be socially unacceptable in ancient times. And, look at the kind of people that are being so disrespectful of Job. They are the sons of derelicts and outcasts from normal society. Look carefully at verses 1-8 and see if you don’t agree that Job was saying that even the “lowest of the low” now looked *down* on him! Now they mock him and are making up songs and stories about him. Some treated him shamefully – and even spit in his face! Those who had once made way for him as he walked through the city gates now show him complete and total disrespect. Job is near death. How sad it is for this man who had done so much for so many to feel as if there is no one who cares for him enough to comfort him in his trials.

**Prayer Emphasis: Imagine** the change that has come into Job’s life and then **realize** that such change comes suddenly into the lives of people around us every day! Every day someone gets a bad diagnosis or receives the news that tragedy has come to their door and rudely interrupted their lives. **Pray** for those who have suffered such loss and, like Job, **“search out”** a way to **comfort** someone who has experienced sudden, devastating trouble and the change that often accompanies it.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 15: Job 30:16-31** |

*“‘My bones are pierced in me at night, and my gnawing pains take no rest.’” (Job 30:17)*

***Physical Agony***

Job now moves from his discussion of his lack of social support and begins to discuss his physical agony. Just like his friends, life itself was now abandoning him. Even in the midst of his spiritual rally, Job knows that his physical life is nearing its end. His nights are marked with pain that disallows him the rest that he so desperately needs. His inner, spiritual man had once “put on” a garment of righteousness (29:14), but now his physical man has been clothed in pain and anguish. Notice the wording of verses 19 and 20. Job goes from speaking to his “friends” to speaking directly to God. He has some very personal questions for God in verses 20-23. He tells God that he is no longer sure that his prayers are even heard. Even so, Job had not discontinued his practice of prayer. We know that because he just prayed “publicly” in those 4 verses! He who had once wept for those in trouble – and who had grieved for the poor – now felt that he had “looked for good” only to have evil come into his life (v. 26) . He had looked for light only to find himself engulfed in darkness. Life had brought great and sudden change to Job and his insides and he was “in turmoil” (v. 27). Even worse, he saw no hope for relief while in his physical body. He felt that only days of suffering lay ahead for him. He mentions one of the symptoms of his diseased body is that his skin has become “blackened” and was literally falling off of him (v. 30). His life song is now a song of suffering and his words were now filled with the weeping and grief of those who mourn their dead.

**Prayer Emphasis: Pray** specifically for someone who needs physical healing. Make a **call** or **send** a card to let someone know that you prayed for them today.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 16: Job 31:1-15** |

*“‘Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps?’” (Job 31:4)*

***Job’s Closing Argument***

Job returns to his argument that the suffering that he just described had not come to him for punishment for any willful sin or disobedience to God. He had made a covenant with his eyes and he had kept it. Because of that covenant, he had not looked wrongfully on any woman. He denied that he had dealt dishonestly with others. He had cheated no one in his business dealings. If he had, then he would gladly accept the chastening hand of God upon his life. He denied that he had lived immorally as an adulterer. He considered such sin to be shameful and worthy of punishment. He also believed that these kinds of sins brought destruction to the lives of those who committed them. This was not a confession of guilt. It was simply an acknowledgment of his understanding of the law of sowing and reaping. He knew how things looked in the eyes of his friends and neighbors, but he also knew how things looked in the eyes of God. God knew that he was innocent of living in such dishonest and immoral ways. He went on to say that he had always dealt fairly with his servants because he knew that God was always there when he interacted with others. He treated his servants as equals and as he would if God was physically there in his meetings with them. Job 31:15 is an important verse because it is a clear statement that a fetus in its mother’s womb is a creation of God, formed and fashioned by the hands of the Almighty.

**Prayer Emphasis: Commit** to living out the Golden Rule as you interact with others today. **Refuse** to *look down on* or *talk down to* anyone. **Express** appreciation and kindness to those who serve you today.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 17: Job 31:16-30** |

*“‘Indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin…’” (Job 31:30)*

***Living Proof!***

Eliphaz had earlier (22:7-9) accused Job of neglecting and taking advantage of the poor and needy. Job now addresses these accusations and agrees that anyone who has committed such offenses surely deserved to be punished. At the same time, he denies that he has ever been that kind of person. He firmly believed that compassion for the needy was “living proof” of a right relationship with God and “evidence” well worth presenting in defense of his plea of innocence. Job had shared his wealth with others. He had taken orphans into his own home and cared for them. He had been an encouragement to widows. He had provided clothing to those who had none. In verse 23, Job tells us why he has chosen to be an unselfish person. He had lived his life as one who was fully aware that God was always watching. His fear (reverential respect) for God had disallowed him from disrespecting any of God’s children. He knew that his trust was not in what he possessed but in the One who possessed him! He agrees that to trust in wealth would be a sin that should be judged by God because it would be evidence that he had been unfaithful to God. He declared himself to be innocent of wishing evil upon anyone – even his enemies. In fact, he considered disrespectful speech, even towards his enemies, to be a sinful act.

**Prayer Emphasis: Imagine** having to defend your “case” (the life that you have lived) in a court of law. **Consider** the evidence you would present to convince a jury that you have lived a Christian life.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 18: Job 31:31-32:5** |

*“‘Oh, that I had one to hear me!’” (Job 31:35a)*

***Calling Witnesses!***

Job is ready and willing to call witnesses to speak to the way that he has lived. He believes that his servants that have lived in his tents will testify that he was always gracious to them and that he had provided well for them. He believes that the homeless would come forward to say that he had opened his doors to them allowing them to stay in his home. He had not hidden the fact that he was a mere, sinful man – a son of Adam – therefore a man with a sin nature (Romans 5:12). He knew of others who had tried to act as if they were not sinners, but that was not the case with him. Job prays aloud that someone would hear him. He looks to God to defend him. He states that if a “book” of evidence can be presented against him, then he will read it and learn from it. He would bear the burden (“carry it on my shoulder”) of living differently if someone could show him that he truly needed to change his lifestyle (v. 36). He was open to suggestions if someone could show him where he had truly wronged others. As a businessman, Job had taken part in many land transactions. He vows that he had never dealt unjustly in any of those deals. If he had worked people and then neglected to pay them, then he would be willing to accept the hand of God moving against his crops. It is obvious that Job was pleading his case to people and to God at the same time. One of the people listening was a younger man named Elihu. We will look closely at him and hear from him tomorrow.

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** that **Kingdom Patience** sees us through our long and protracted trials. It helps us to **hold fast** to what God knows and to **refuse** to allow the opinions of others to change the way that we see ourselves.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 19: Job 32:6-20** |

*“So Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said…” (Job 32:6a))*

***Enter Elihu***

When Job’s three friends finally gave up and ceased their arguments against Job, a younger man spoke up. He had probably been in this circle of conversation from the beginning, but he had remained silent because he was the youngest in the group. But, now he is angered at Job for not admitting his guilt and confessing his sin. He is also angry with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar because they are abandoning their argument with Job. He takes advantage of the break in conversation to speak his mind and to defend the honor of God. He explains why he has remained silent thus far. He has respected the wisdom of his elders and allowed them to speak first. However, he now concludes that age does not always make one wise or bring understanding in judgment. This is why he believes that he must now share his opinion on the matters that have been discussed. Elihu is going to take a different approach to Job’s situation. He concludes that Job’s three friends believe that Job has suffered because he sinned. He is going to assert that Job is *now* sinning because of his suffering. Since the earlier speakers had run out of words, Elihu felt that his time to speak had come. And speak he did! His “sermon” lasted almost as long as Job’s final speech. It was longer than the combined speeches of any of Job’s earlier antagonists! He felt compelled from within to speak out and stated that he felt that he would explode (“like wine that has no vent”) if he did not speak his mind (v. 19).

**Prayer Emphasis: Imagine** Job’s long battle of words with his three friends and the peace that came to his soul when they were finally silenced and how he must have felt when Satan’s reinforcements joined in the battle! **Refuse** to repeat gossip or to join in on conversations that are critical of others.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 20: Job 32:21-33:14** |

*“‘My words come from my upright heart; my lips utter pure knowledge.’” (Job 33:3)*

***Elihu’s First Argument***

Job had presented three definite concerns about his situation. He was concerned that God had been silent during his suffering (13:22) and that God had not responded to his prayers (33:13). Elihu now argues that God has responded, but Job has simply not been willing to hear Him. He begins by stating that he is not going to speak with flattering words. His intention is clearly not to impress anyone. He urges Job to listen carefully to him – to everything that he has to say. He declares that his words are coming from his heart – a heart that he believes is right with God. He truly believes that he can explain all that has been previously discussed in a way that will make it clear to everyone. Verse 4 sounds as if Elihu believes that this moment might have been the very reason for his earthly existence. He challenges Job to listen and to prepare himself to answer his logic – that is – if Job still believed that he could stand against what he had to say. He tells Job that he is just a man – made of clay like Job or anyone else. He states that he has heard Job maintaining his innocence and his arguments that his suffering has not come because of malicious sin on his part. However, Elihu has been angered by Job’s complaint that God has refused to hear him or to respond to Job’s complaints. He says that God has spoken – and more than once! The problem, he argues, is not that *God* refused to answer Job, but that *Job* had refused to accept God’s answers.

**Prayer Emphasis: Refrain** from judging others. **Avoid** prideful speech. **Refuse** to speak out of anger. **Rehearse** your words before speaking, considering how they may be received or misunderstood.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 21: Job 33:15-28** |

*“‘Man is also chastened with pain on his bed, and with strong pain in many of his bones,’” (Job 33:19)*

***Elihu’s Opinion***

It is important to recognize who is doing the speaking as you read through Job. What we have read today expresses *Elihu’s* opinions on how *he* believes that God speaks to His children. First, Elihu mentions dreams and visions. He believes that God could speak to His children while they sleep and warn them of the dangers of sinful living. Verse 18 indicates that he believes that God uses these dreams to protect His children’s *spiritual* and *physical* well-being. Elihu also believes that God speaks to His children through pain and suffering (vs. 19-22). Reread those verses and see how he seems to use Job’s present condition to explain the ways that God might *inflict* suffering on our *flesh* in order to *instruct* our *spirit*. Even if they had been in a church full of people, Job would have had to believe that Elihu was preaching directly to him! Obviously, Elihu is unaware of Job’s relationship with God, so this young zealot begins to witness to Job about the Redeemer. He speaks of a Mediator who will graciously pay the ransom to free sinners from the danger of hell. That Redeemer would first save the soul of the sinful and then spare him from his physical suffering by restoring his health. Then, that sinner would be able to testify to others about how God has saved his soul and spared his life so that he can now walk in the ways that God intends.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Experience soon teaches us that suffering is not necessarily the result of sinful living. If that were the case, how would we explain Christ’s suffering? **Remember** that Jesus was never more in the center of God’s will and plan for His life than when He was dying on the cross.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 22: Job 33:29-34:9** |

*“‘Give ear, Job, listen to me; hold your peace, and I will speak.’” (Job 33:31)*

***Arrogance!***

Elihu may be one of the people that God most used to teach Job about **Kingdom Patience**! Can you imagine what it must have been like for this suffering saint to have to listen to this young man’s attempts to teach him a thing or two about God? Once again, Job is being told that his suffering has come from God for the purpose of bringing him to a place of repentance from sin and restoration to physical and spiritual health. It appears that Job might have wanted to respond to Elihu’s comments, because Elihu asks him to be silent and let him finish his speaking. He tells Job to “listen” to him. He tells Job that he will provide him an opportunity to respond to his words at a later time. He then repeats his command to his elder friend and adds that he intends to “teach” Job about wisdom (33:33). Elihu then begins to speak to all who will listen, including those of us who read these words. In his first speech, Elihu quoted Job seven times (33:9-11). In this second speech, Elihu attempts to quote Job six more times (34:5-9). However, he often misquotes Job and takes things that Job has said completely out of context. All of Job’s other friends who have spoken to him thus far have always allowed Job an opportunity to respond. This young man has taken the floor and refuses to allow Job to respond to him until he has said all that he has to say. Elihu is teaching Job something – but it is *patience* and not *wisdom* that Job is going to gain from these lectures!

**Prayer Emphasis: Show** godly respect to elders! **Realize** that such respect is commanded of us in the New Testament. **Pray** for our senior saints today and **express appreciation** to at least one of them.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 23: Job 34:10-24** |

*“‘If you have understanding, hear this; listen to the sound of my words:’” (Job 34:16)*

***“Listen to Me!”***

We have read where Elihu twice demanded that Job listen to him. He now demands that *everyone* listen carefully to his words of wisdom! He implies that Job’s arguments of innocence are nothing less than accusations that God is punishing him wrongfully and therefore doing evil. He, like all our earlier speakers, states that God repays people for the wrongs that they have done and that men who live sinfully deserve to suffer accordingly. Elihu considers it unthinkable that God would be punishing anyone, including Job, wrongfully. Therefore, Job must have sinned, or else this time of suffering would not have been introduced into his life. Elihu correctly states that God is in control of all that happens in this world – whether man chooses to give God control or not. Elihu is also correct in his opinion that without God, men would perish. He believes that anyone with any sense of understanding in such spiritual things should listen closely to him because Elihu has the answers to all of life’s questions! He argues that God is sovereign in the lives of men and that God can bring a king down to nothing and see wickedness in even the most noble of men. He argues that God shows no partiality to either the royal or the rich. God sees the ways of all men – watching their every step. There is no place in which anyone can hide from God.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to help you to **avoid** bringing harsh judgment against others. **Commit** to *comforting* without *lecturing*. We should remember to **focus** on the needy and not on our need to be heard.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 24: Job 34:25-37** |

*“‘Oh, that Job were tried to the utmost, because his answers are like those of wicked men.’” (Job 34:36)*

***“Show and Tell”***

In verse 25, Elihu states that God takes note of the deeds of sinful men and quickly acts against them. He argues that God refuses to overlook sin and always punishes men for their wickedness – often publicly – so that others can see what happens when one turns away from following God. One can only imagine what our well–known, well-loved Job is thinking as he is being used as Elihu’s “object lesson” to warn about how a holy God deals with sinful men! He states that people who have no regard for God’s laws must be made aware that the mistreatment of the poor and needy will always lead God to punish. Although Job was known for his acts of kindness to people in need, he is again accused of just the opposite. Elihu believes that a tolerant God may choose to remain silent for a while and not take immediate action against sinners, but He will not allow sinful men to take advantage of the needy. Elihu seems to be terribly offended at the way that Job has repeatedly argued his innocence. He felt that Job, by asking God to show him where he had sinned, was telling God what to do. He believes that Job is trying to get God to act on his terms, and by doing so, Job is being unrepentant and even more disobedient. Elihu believes that anyone with understanding should be able to clearly see that Job’s words lack true spiritual insight. He believes that Job’s refusal to repent is rebellion against God. We see how little compassion this man has for Job as he wishes for God to test Job “to the utmost” (v. 36). Everyone there, including Job, must have wondered how much more a man could possibly be tested!

**Prayer Emphasis: Learn** the wisdom of silence. Carefully **weigh** each word you speak and **consider** their impact and implications. **Pray** much for guidance when you are visiting with the suffering and grieving.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 25: Job 35:1-16** |

*“Moreover Elihu answered and said:” (Job 35:1)*

***Elihu’s Third Speech***

Again, Elihu refuses to yield the floor and continues to speak. In his third speech, he challenges Job’s statements that he will ultimately be cleared by God (13:18 and 23:7). After repeating Job’s questions, he states that he would like to reply to them in the presence of Job’s friends. Before we speak about Elihu’s reply, I think that it is important to note that these were questions that Job was asking of God – and not Elihu or any of his other friends. The patience of Job should be clearly noted in this situation. How many of us would have told Elihu that we couldn’t remember asking him any questions, therefore, we certainly did not want to listen to any of his pious answers? He asks Job to consider the fact that his sins affect God’s attitude towards him and that in response to these sins, God has surely sent all of this trouble into Job’s life to punish him. Elihu pounds away with the heavy hammer of accusation again – insinuating that Job must have turned a deaf ear to the cries of those that he oppressed if he cannot now remember their desperate pleas. Elihu believes that a truly godly man would hear God’s message and return to obedience and service to God. The first three of Job’s accusers dealt more with Job’s *actions* while Elihu seems to deal with Job’s *attitude.* He concludes that Job’s words are “words without knowledge” (v. 16). In other words, he states that Job does not know what he is talking about!

**Prayer Emphasis: Remind** yourself of the many times that God has shown you grace in light of your wrong attitudes or actions. **Focus** more on your attitude than the attitudes of others.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 26: Job 36:1-14** |

*“Elihu also proceeded and said: ‘Bear with me a little, and I will show you that there are yet words to speak on God’s behalf.’” (Job 36:1-2)*

***Elihu Asks for More Time***

Elihu asks Job and everyone else listening to bear with him for just a little longer. If they will, he says he will show them that he is really speaking on God’s behalf. This will become the topic of this young man’s fourth speech. Elihu claims to have knowledge from afar that will help them all to better understand God and His holy actions. Twice Elihu accused Job of being “without knowledge” (34:35 and 35:16). He assures that his words are not false, implying that the words of everyone else, including Job’s three friends, might have been false. He informs them that one who is “perfect in knowledge” is with them (v. 4). Some think that those words might have been spoken in reference to God while others think that our arrogant, young friend was speaking of himself. You can come to your own conclusions. Verse 5 begins with the word “behold” (not translated in some versions) and demands that we pay careful attention to four statements about God’s power. The first of these statements is found in verse 5 where Elihu says that God is mighty and firm in His justice. However, this firm and mighty God is not without mercy and He does not despise men. Elihu differs from Job’s expressed opinion that some men sin and live lives that appear to be long and fruitful. He, like the three speakers before him, is convinced that people who sin are judged harshly and quickly and pay the ultimate price for their sins if they refuse to repent and return to God.

**Prayer Emphasis: Learn** when *not* to speak! **Remember** that a controlled tongue is one of the evidences of a truly spiritual person (James 1: 26).

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 27: Job 36:15-30** |

*“‘But you are filled with the judgment due the wicked; judgment and justice take hold of you.’” (Job 36:17)*

***Two Attitudes Towards Suffering***

In the last two verses of yesterday’s reading, we learned about those who are godless in heart and resent God’s chastening hand, refusing to cry out to Him for help or to return to the path of righteousness. This, Elihu implied, was one attitude often taken towards suffering. Such unrepentant sinners were surely doomed to an early death and harsh judgment. However, today’s reading speaks of a second attitude towards suffering. It argues that those who suffer, and learn from it, hear God speaking to them in their affliction. In other words, they hear from God and learn from His chastening hand. So, Elihu says Job has two paths set before him. One is marked by *rebellion* and leads to *death*. The other is marked by *repentance* and leads to *deliverance*. How Job’s life is to go from this point all depends on the attitude of his heart and how he chooses to respond to his difficulties. Even Job’s great wealth had not proven itself sufficient to protect Job from the disaster that has come into his life. In verse 22, he emphasizes again that God is trying to teach Job lessons from all his suffering. Elihu then begins to exalt and praise God for His power and majesty, declaring His greatness to be beyond our understanding. It all sounds so good and so spiritual, but I am sure that Job could use a little more *comfort* and a lot less *condemnation* right now.

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** that it is easy to see the tiny piece of sawdust in our neighbor’s eye while failing to see the large log in our own. **Ask** God to fix the person in your mirror before you set out to fix anyone else. When God does chasten you, the sooner you make a spiritual “U Turn,” the better!

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 28: Job 36:31-37:11** |

*“‘He covers His hands with lightning, and commands it to strike.’” (Job 36:32)*

***God’s Sovereignty***

Elihu begins to speak of God and the way that He “judges the peoples” (v. 31), explaining that God often uses the forces of nature to both provide for His obedient children and to punish His disobedient children. Referring again to the lightning, Elihu says that God “covers (fills) His hands with (it) and commands it to strike” (36:32). Perhaps it was from preachers like Elihu that people first got the idea that God was an angry old man sitting up in heaven throwing lightning bolts at sinners down below. Job is told that God first sends a warning through the thunder and that even the cattle in the fields are smart enough to hear. These kinds of displays of God’s power make Elihu’s heart pound and leap with joy. He hears God’s roaring voice in the rumbling thunder and sees God’s handiwork in the lightning. He goes on to say that God’s voice rumbles in marvelous ways and that God holds nothing back from his people. He commands the elements to do His bidding and even the animals take cover and remain hidden in their dens until it is safe to come out. God controls all nature, Elihu declares, even the temperature! Elihu’s constant referencing of stormy conditions and extreme weather is just another way of telling Job that the “storms” in his life are evidence that he has done something to deserve chastening from God. I am sure that Job now knows this “sermon” by heart.

**Prayer Emphasis: Acknowledge** that God is sovereign and allow Him to rule in your life. **Listen** to His voice and allow Him to speak to you through circumstances. However, do not presume that unpleasant circumstances are always an indicator that God is displeased with something in your life.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 29: Job 37:12-24** |

*“‘Listen to this, O Job; stand still and consider the wondrous works of God.’” (Job 37:14)*

***New Day – Same Sermon***

Elihu continues to “preach” to Job, and Job hears again the same sermon that he has heard at least four times before! The reference to the winds and how they “swirl about” (v. 12) sounds as if Elihu is describing a tornado. Remember that it was such a storm that came against the home in which Job’s children were dwelling, causing it to collapse and kill them all. It may be that Elihu was not aware of this fact – or it may be that he was so full of himself that he didn’t consider the insensitivity of his words. Elihu goes on to say that God can use nature to punish men or to provide water for the earth. In other words, he is saying that God can either be a burden or a blessing – and it all depends upon your actions and your attitude towards Him. He again commands Job to “listen to” him (v. 14). This time he specifically calls Job by name and demands his attention. Immediately afterwards, this man who had earlier declared God’s ways to be beyond our understanding asks Job five questions which no man could possibly answer. He again begins to wax eloquent, speaking of God’s awesome majesty and declaring Him to be beyond our reach. This young “preacher” reminds Job that he should “fear” God (v. 24). Didn’t this guy read the first verse in the book?

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to jump to conclusions and be quick to judge others. **Remember** to give proper respect to elders and honor them whenever possible. **Remind** that only God knows a person’s heart.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 30: Job 38:1-15** |

*“Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:” (Job 38:1)*

***God’s Turn!***

Job had earlier asked God for some answers. Now, after listening to multiple answers from four different men, Job will finally hear from God. We will spend part of the next few days listening as God asks Job some seventy questions. When Job requested a “hearing” with God, he had meant that he wanted an opportunity to allow God to “hear” him and his case against his suffering. What Job got was a “hearing” that required that he silently, patiently listen to all that God had to say. Verse 1 says that God answered Job “out of the whirlwind” (storm). He tells Job to brace himself because He is going to question Job and He expected Job to answer Him. The very first question must have led Job to believe that he wasn’t going to score well on this “Pop Quiz!” In verse 4, God begins with, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?” This tough one was followed by another in verse 5, “Who determined its measurements?” The questions just got tougher and tougher. God asks questions that ranged from “What holds the earth up?” to “What holds the seas back?” God explains to Job that He alone tells the sea that it can come this far and no farther. He tells the waves when to stop and go. If God is powerful enough to be in full control of all nature, then how could He not possibly be able to be in full control of Job’s life? Ultimately, God is not trying to make Job feel small. He is actually trying to help Job to realize that the same God who controls the universe desires to be in control of his life.

**Prayer Emphasis: Surrender** everything to God today. **See** the wisdom of being quiet before Him and allowing Him to speak to your heart. **Believe** that God always has the best in mind for you and that He is never without full knowledge of what you need.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 31: Job 38:16-30** |

*“‘Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth? Tell Me, if you know all this.’” (Job 38:18)*

***“Tell Me”***

I am going to paraphrase some of the questions that God had for Job in His talks with him. He asks Job to “tell” Him if he knows the answers to these questions. He asks Job if he has comprehended the source of the seas or if he knows their depth. He wants to know if Job understands death or even the shadow of death. The questions continue: “Can you measure the earth? Can you explain the heavens where light dwells? Do you know from whence the light comes and where the darkness goes after the Sun chases it away? Can you take Me down a path that will lead to the places where the Sun and Moon rest while they are not at work?” These were all questions that no mere human was capable of answering. Unlike Elihu, God gave Job several opportunities to speak up if he knew an answer. Job remained silent, so God continued to speak. God asks Job if he was there when the Sun and Moon were created. He wants to know if Job knows how snow is formed or where He stores it until He is ready for it to fall softly to the ground. He asks the same questions about hail. He wants to know if Job can show Him where the lightning is kept until He is ready to send it on its mission. He then asks Job if he can tell Him where the east winds are corralled until they are dispersed. In the last few verses of our reading, God asks Job about the many forms in which He can send water. Notice that God speaks of water, rain, dew, ice, and frost. I am sure that Job, and all who might have been listening, were ready to be silent before God and let Him speak.

**Prayer Emphasis: Exalt** God as your Creator! **Examine** His handiwork today and continually **praise** Him. **Brag** on God to someone today.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 32: Job 38:31-39:4** |

*“‘Who has put wisdom in the mind? Or who has given understanding to the heart?’” (Job 38:36)*

***Astronomy, Meteorology, and Nature***

You might think that God has said enough to convince Job and his friends that He is worthy of their undivided attention. However, He is not through with His questions. He goes on to ask about the stars and clouds. In 9:5-9, while responding to Bildad, Job spoke of God’s creation – from the mountains to the planets, the stars, and the constellations. God concludes that man, who cannot even understand the things that they *can* see, surely could not understand the things that they *cannot* see. If men believed that God created and controls the paths of the planets and stars, then they should believe that He is able to exercise the same kind of control in their lives. He asks if Job can command rain from the clouds or tell the lightning when and where to strike. “And, by the way,” God asks, “who tells the clouds when it is time to water the earth? Who puts the instinct into animals? Who feeds the ravens or teaches them how to feed their young? Who gives parenting instruction to the goats? Who knows when the fetus within them is ready to be brought into the world? Who teaches young creatures how to fend for themselves when they leave their nests and dens to continue the cycle of life?” Don’t you think that Job, and all his friends, were now ready to be still and listen to God? Wouldn’t you be?

**Prayer Emphasis: Allow** yourself some time to truly worship God today. **Interact** with someone and **share** your thoughts on how God’s ways are higher than our ways. **Realize** that we, as mere humans, do not know the answers to all of life’s questions but that we do know the One who does!

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 33: Job 39:5-18** |

*“‘Will the wild ox be willing to serve you? Will he bed by your manger?’” (Job 39:9)*

***More “Classroom” Material***

Before God has finished this speech, He will have referenced twelve different kinds of living creatures. Since twelve is a number closely associated with authority in the Scriptures, I think that these questions have all had something to do with God’s authority over all creation. Review them carefully and see if you do not agree. The lecture continues – and I do not think that anyone is leaving early! God wants to know if anyone can explain the wild donkeys. “Who put them out there in the wilderness? Who taught them how to survive in the desert? Why do they stay out in the barrens alone and avoid being around people? Who made them so stubborn that they will not obey a master’s commands?” God goes on to say that the wild ox is yet another case of man’s inability to exercise authority even over dumb animals. God wants to know if man can corral them and harness their great strength. Can man trust the ox to harvest their grain or will the beast simply eat his fill and meander on about his way? God quickly moves on to discuss ostriches and storks. Would man have ever had enough imagination to create an ostrich? The ostrich is a very large bird (weighing up to 300 pounds) that doesn’t act very much like a bird at all. In fact, it spreads its wings and then *runs* rather than flying like other birds. And look how God has empowered them to run! She “laughs” at the horses and their riders as she passes them.

**Prayer Emphasis:** I pray that Job and his friends are not the only ones who are pondering these questions. **Meditate** on what you have read today as you go about your daily tasks. **Ask** yourself, “Who, but God, could have created all that we see before us?” **Admire** His handiwork today and **express** your appreciation for all that you see.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 34: Job 39:19-40:2** |

*“‘Have you given the horse strength? Have you clothed his neck with thunder?” (Job 39:19)*

***Some Equestrian Questions***

As God continues to ask Job questions about His creation, He enters into a series of questions and comments about horses – specifically the war horse. Again, I will paraphrase some of these questions. God asks, “Who gave these mighty beasts their strength? Who provided them with their instincts for battle? Who endowed them with the ability to leap like locusts and Who filled them with such bravery in battle? Who taught them to paw at the ground as they impatiently waited for the sound of the charge from the bugle? How do these amazing creatures smell the scent of battle even from great distances?” From His questions about horses, God moved on to ask Job what he knew about “the hawk” (39:26) or “the eagle” (39:27). God continues with questions like, “Who taught these majestic birds how to fly? Man? Surely not! Can man exercise authority over the eagle? Can he teach them how to fly or where they can safely build their nests? Who taught them how to hunt and to feed their young?” God then spoke directly to Job. He wanted to know if Job still had any questions or instructions for Him. What He really wanted to know was whether or not Job was ready to truly submit to God’s authority in his life.

**Prayer Emphasis: Submit** yourself to your Creator. Seek to **discover** and **fulfill** His divine purpose in your life. **Turn** to Luke 22:42 and **pray** the prayer that Jesus prayed in the last few words of that verse. **Surrender** fully to God’s will for your life for today, tomorrow, and forever!

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 35: Job 40:3-18** |

*“‘Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth.” (Job 40:4)*

***Job Replies to God***

The first words out of Job’s mouth expressed his unworthiness to be telling God anything! He considered himself to be “vile” before God. Job says that he is going to put his hand over his mouth and remain silent. He had earlier stated that if he could have a conversation with God, he would say to God, “Do not condemn me; show me why You contend with me” (10:2). Twice he told God that he would answer Him if only God would speak to him (13:22 and 14:15). Now that he has his opportunity to speak, Job can only ask, “What shall I answer You?” Job readily admitted that he could not respond to God’s questions. He tells God that he has spoken more than once already, but he now realizes that he has nothing to add to what God has said. Verse 7 indicates that God now believes that Job is becoming more teachable. He says to Job, “Prepare yourself…I will question you, and you shall answer Me” (v. 7). God then followed that statement with some more questions, some demands, and then some explanations. The *questions* are found in verses 8 and 9 and the *demands* begin at verse 10 and run through verse 13. The *explanations* begin at verse 14 and continue through verse 18. Many scholars believe that the creature described beginning at verse 15 is a dinosaur. Others attempt to explain that the animal that God is describing here is an elephant or a hippopotamus. Look at the description of this creature’s tail (v. 17) and then compare it to the tail of an elephant, a hippo, and a dinosaur. What do *you* think?

**Prayer Emphasis: Be** teachable! **Admit** what you don’t know so that God can begin to show you what you should know. **Humble** yourself before God and **ask** Him to instruct you in the ways of life.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 36: Job 40:19-41:8** |

*“‘Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, or snare his tongue with a line which you lower?’” (Job 41:1)*

***Dinosaurs?***

Whatever creature God was describing in verse 15 is now described as being the “the first” of the things “made” by God (40:19). However, the Creator has authority over even these colossal creatures and can overcome them with only a *sword*. That same word is also translated “knife” or “dagger” in other places in the Bible. The purpose of the statement is to reveal how easily God exercises His power and authority over all that He has created. The Hebrew word translated “behemoth” back in verse 15 is used only that one time in all of the Scriptures. However, its root word is found in Genesis 1 where the “cattle” or “beasts” that God created are mentioned. Whatever the behemoth was, it was a creation of God and it was probably the most powerful creature that God ever made. Yet, even this large creature is easily subdued and controlled by God. The “leviathan” is mentioned in the first verse of chapter 41. This creature is mentioned only five times in the Old Testament and is also believed by many scholars to be a reference to dinosaurs. Several words used in 41:1-7 imply that the “Leviathan” was a sea creature. This word was translated “dragon” in other ancient manuscripts that date back to biblical times. We must remember that the actual word “dinosaur” did not become a part of the English language until sometime in the late 1800’s.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Remind** yourself that you may appear to be small and insignificant when compared to some of God’s other creations, but that you are very significant in His eyes and heart. **Repeat** the statement, “God loves me!” several times throughout your day. **Tell** someone else that He loves them, too!

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 37: Job 41:9-23** |

*“‘…Who then is able to stand against Me?’” (Job 41:10b)*

***Unforgettable!***

God tells Job that any hope that man has of subduing the giant leviathan is “false” (v. 9). The Hebrew word translated “Leviathan” is found twice in Job - here in 41:1 and earlier in 3:8 - where it is translated “Leviathan” in the NKJV but “mourning” in at least four other translations of the Bible. The reference to this creature in Psalm 104:26 definitely describes it as a being created by God, and the statement that it lives where “the ships sail about” leads us to believe that it was some kind of sea creature. Beginning at verse 10, God refers to this creature’s fierceness, power, size, teeth, and scales. Verses 18–21 are very interesting and I will allow them to speak for themselves: “His sneezing flash forth light…out of his mouth go burning lights…” and “sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke goes out of his nostrils…his breath kindles coals, and a flame goes out of his mouth.” Some say that this creature (the leviathan) was, and is, a crocodile. If it was, and is, then I sure don’t want to run into one of these giant, fire-breathing, spark-spitting lizards! Again, God is merely pointing out to Job that all creatures, great and small, answer to God’s authority. If that is the case with all other parts of God’s great creation, then it should also be the case with man.

**Prayer Emphasis: Humble** yourself before God and keep your heart in that prayerful posture throughout the day. **Submit** to Him – **crown** Him King – **serve** Him with joy and gladness. **Remember** that our God is a mighty God who rules heaven and earth and all who dwell therein.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 38: Job 41:24-42:4** |

*“‘When he (the Leviathan) raises himself up, the mighty are afraid…’” (Job 41:25)*

***“The Mighty Are Afraid”***

God tells Job that even the mighty are afraid when they encounter giant beasts and that their human weapons are of no use against them. Even instruments of iron or brass are rendered as useless as straw or rotten wood when used to try to attack and subdue these mighty beasts. What, then, can prevail against such a creature? Arrows? Nope! Slingstones? No! (Stones may later wreak havoc against Goliath, but they shatter into pieces against this creature!) A club? No way. They, too, break like a piece of straw against this thick-skinned giant. Spears rattle against him and fall to the ground. Read 41:30 again and see if you do not think that God is using the words “potsherds” to describe scales. In verse 33, God concludes that there is none equal to this creature on the earth. This means that even the mighty “Behemoth” could not stand against the Leviathan! Yet, even these two colossal creatures were once, literally, like putty in the hands of the creating God, and Adam once had dominion over them. In chapter 42, Job begins to tell God that he is beginning to see things from God’s perspective. He acknowledges God’s great power and ability to do anything that he desires. He also acknowledges God’s great knowledge and admits that he has said some things that he is now no longer sure that he believes. He tells God that he wants to now ask some questions of Him and that he is ready to accept God’s answers unconditionally.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to speak to you today and **commit** yourself to being obedient to His commands - even before He speaks. **Offer** God your unconditional surrender to His divine will. Let Him write His will upon your heart. Make your life a “blank check” that God can make out to any payee for any amount. **Let Him be God** and let us be his servants.

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 39: Job 42:5-10** |

*“‘I have heard of You…but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent…” (Job 42:5-6)*

***Job Can See Clearly Now***

Job basically tells God that he can now see that everything that he has heard about God is absolutely true. It is important for us to understand that Job lived before there was ever a tabernacle or temple. He lived before Moses ever took pen in hand to write the first pages of the Bible. Since Job lived prior to the establishment of the priesthood, then he had no one to instruct him in the knowledge of God. Yet Job clearly tells God that he has “heard” about him. The first time that this Hebrew word is used in the Scripture is in Genesis 3:8, where we are told that Adam and Eve “heard” the voice of God in the garden. Somehow God had been speaking to Job even though none of the conventional means to which man has always been accustomed were available. Because of what Job now “sees” about God, he now sees himself a bit differently and humbles himself in repentance before God. God then speaks to Job’s three friends and tells them that His wrath is kindled against them for not speaking right things about Him, as Job has done. He commands them to make offerings unto Him and then humbly asks Job to pray for them. For whatever reasons, Elihu is not mentioned here, a fact for which I am sure that he was grateful. God restored Job’s health and his wealth, actually making him twice as rich as he had been prior to his calamities. His brothers, sisters, and friends were soon rejoicing with him and feasting in his house with him.

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Relive** your own personal salvation experience throughout your day. **Thank** God for sending Jesus to die on the cross in your place and to pay the penalty for your sins**.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Day 40: Job 42:11-17** |

*“Now the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning…” (Job 42:12)*

***Job’s Blessings Doubled***

Note that according to verse 11, even after Job was restored, his family and friends continued to console and comfort him over all of the “adversity” that had come into his life. From this, we come to understand that even though Job’s troubles are behind him physically, he still has spiritual and emotional needs that can best be met by the love and attention of true friends and family. Notice that each one of them brought Job some gift or expression of love and support. Since the word for “a piece of silver” in verse 11 is only found in the story of Jacob, these financial gifts provide us with an additional reason to believe that Job lived during the times of the patriarchs. In the end, Job was even more blessed by God than he had been in the beginning. He had twice as much livestock and God gave him ten more children – seven sons and three daughters, just like before! Job was truly blessed with twice as much of everything, including his number of children. He now had ten children on earth and ten in heaven. The names of these new daughters are mentioned at the closing of the book and are the only names of Job’s twenty children that are ever given. Job lived an additional 140 years after his suffering, and as far as we know, he never received an explanation from God as to why so much pain and suffering was allowed into his life.

**Prayer Emphasis: Realize** that **Kingdom Patience**, like all noble virtues, may come at a great price. May God help us to **trust** Him throughout trials and afflictions and patiently **wait** for our next opportunity to **praise** Him! If we can minister to you, please **contact** us at [gary@seminolebc.com](mailto:gary@seminolebc.com) or call Seminole Baptist Church at 850-562-8069.