

Job's Heart Cry After God

Lesson Scope: [Job 2:11-37:24](#)

Lesson Focus

In the last lesson we studied Job and his friends' discussion concerning his plight. Job's friends, as miserable comforters, were part of Satan's plans for Job. They helped to add to the difficulties of his sufferings.

Job's friends' insistence that he had sinned caused him to cry out to God with his questions, because he needed God's answers. His friends' supposed wisdom was really no more than erroneous guesswork.

Job's knowledge of God helped him to maintain his faith through these difficult times. "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:22). Through it all he continued to wait for God's answers.

This lesson follows Job's progression from despair to trust in God's help and, finally, to receiving God's promise of wisdom. The first part of the lesson will necessarily have some negative aspects because of Job's great trials and sufferings. Even in this we can emphasize that answers can be found if men honestly seek after God and commit their lives to His care.

In the answers God gives, we will not always understand the why. We need to trust Him and rest in His care. To develop this trust in God should be one of our main goals in studying this lesson.

Human reasoning suggests various answers to the perplexities of life. But apart from faith in God, the deepest needs of man remain unanswered.

Lesson Aim: To understand the soul's search for true meaning in life.

Theme Verse: [Psalm 17:15](#). As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Lesson Text**Hopelessness**

[Job 6:1-3](#) ¹ But Job answered and said, ² Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! ³ For now it

would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up.

Job 6:8-9 ⁸ Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant *me* the thing that I long for! ⁹ Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

Job 7:5-6 ⁵ My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome. ⁶ My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

Perplexity

Job 9:2-3 ² I know *it is* so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? ³ If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

Job 9:20 If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: *if I say*, I *am* perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Job 9:30-33 ³⁰ If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; ³¹ Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. ³² For *he is* not a man, as I *am*, *that* I should answer him, *and* we should come together in judgment. ³³ Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, *that* might lay his hand upon us both.

Job 13:3-4 ³ Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. ⁴ But ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all physicians of no value.

Job 13:11 Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?

Trust

Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

Job 14:1 Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble.

Job 14:7-10 ⁷ For 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. ⁸ Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; ⁹ *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. ¹⁰ But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he?

Job 14:14-15 ¹⁴ If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. ¹⁵ Thou shalt call, and I

will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands. **Job 19:25-27** ²⁵ For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: ²⁶ And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: ²⁷ Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

Job 23:3 Oh that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his seat!

Job 23:10-12 ¹⁰ But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. ¹¹ My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. ¹² Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary *food*.

Wisdom

Job 28:12-13 ¹² But where shall wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of understanding? ¹³ Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

Job 28:23 God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

Job 28:28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.

Questions for Study

Hopelessness

1. List some reasons for Job's hopeless outlook on life.
2. How can we overcome discouragements that come to us in times of trial and suffering?

Perplexity

3. Why was Job perplexed as he thought about relating to a holy God?
4. Explain how Christ meets God's approval as our intercessor.

Trust

5. What were some factors that caused Job to trust in God?
6. How does our hope of the resurrection relate to finding meaning in life?

Wisdom

7. How can man find wisdom?
8. How does one manifest an appreciation for godly wisdom?

Analyzing the Passage

Grief (Job 6:2) relates to vexation. The word was frequently translated anger, indignation, wrath, and so forth. Thoroughly weighed was translated from one Hebrew word. This was used primarily in referring to business transactions. Job was wishing that his calamities could be placed in the balances alongside his bitter complaint so that it could be seen that his violent outburst (chapter 3) was even less than would have been justified. He compared the weight of his calamity to the weight of the sand of the sea (Job 6:3).

Job used the illustration of a weaver's shuttle (Job 7:6) to communicate how swiftly his life seemed to be slipping away.

The daysman (Job 9:33) speaks of a judge who would plead his cause before God. Job understood man's need for a mediator as he stood before Almighty God.

Reason (Job 13:3) is translated from the same Hebrew word as daysman. Job desired to discuss his afflictions with God. Although the word suggests animated discussion and even argument, it is evident that Job felt confident that God would hear him and answer him fairly, which his friends did not. In his desire to find God's answers, we see him expressing genuine faith in Job 19:25-27. He indicates his confidence that he would finally experience a bodily resurrection and see God face to face (Job 19:26).

Principles and Applications

Hopelessness

1. The perplexity and imbalance of human experience should cause man to reach out to God for answers (Job 6:1-2). When grief or calamity is our experience, we often do not understand why. The Christian seeks answers from God, and sometimes God simply says, "Trust Me." By faith, the Christian lays hold upon God's promises.

2. Life's true meaning will be found when man realizes that God's way is best (Job 6:8, 9). When the best thing for us might seem to be to leave this life, we must rest in God's perfect wisdom. When we rest in God, difficulties will not seem to loom so large before us.

3. The frailty and brevity of life should cause man to search for life's true meaning (Job 7:5-6). Sometimes the material involvements of life tend to dim our connection to the eternal. Perhaps the sudden death of someone close to us or some other suffering or calamity is needed to

help us realize the shortness of life. Such experiences can help us to keep the temporal and the eternal in proper perspective.

Perplexity

4. True meaning in life will be found only as man learns how to be just with God and then enters into that justified condition (Job 9:2, 20, 30-33).

Men have many theories about self-improvement, but the true answer is the daysman, one who can mediate between God and man. That is found in Jesus Christ. Only as we trust in His provision for us can our condemnation be lifted and true meaning found.

5. Regular communication with the Almighty prepares one for finding true meaning in life (Job 13:3). God has created us with a sense of need, a native desire for a relationship with someone higher than ourselves. Nothing can replace a personal contact with God through reading the Word and prayer. It is here that we unload our cares and find guidance and assurance. Sometimes the thing that prayer changes is our own attitude and outlook.

Trust

6. An unconditional trust in God in difficult times helps one to focus on life's true meaning (Job 13:15). Faith is man's link to God's eternal purposes. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). When things seem to be all wrong from a human perspective, faith rests in the confidence that God does all things well.

7. One who understands life's true meaning determines to maintain his integrity (Job 13:15). Job declared in Job 27:5: "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me." Such a commitment is needed to prevent weariness in serving the Lord and yielding to the lusts of the flesh. To yield to sin is to lose one's salvation, his hope of eternal life, and his purpose for living.

8. Life has meaning to those who have the assurance of eternal life after death (Job 14:14-15; 19:25-27). "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15:19). But Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). Life is meaningful when we think of our present life as a time to prepare ourselves and others for eternity.

9. Taking God's way even through fiery trials will help us maintain a meaningful life (Job 23:3, 10-12). In submission, man recognizes his

need to search out God's will and fit into it, rather than trying to fit God into his will. We must draw near to God, "even to his seat," with a desire to better understand His ways and to receive His strength (Job 23:3, 5-6).

Wisdom

10. Man finds the true meaning of life as he applies godly wisdom (Job 28:12, 13, 28). "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). The rebellious become deceived and cannot understand truth, but God gives wisdom liberally to those who ask Him (James 1:5). May we pursue and actively apply the wisdom that God gives.

Important Teachings

1. The perplexity and imbalance of human experience should cause man to reach out to God for answers (Job 6:1, 2).
2. Life's true meaning will be found when man realizes that God's way is best (Job 6:8, 9).
3. The frailty and brevity of life should cause man to search for life's true meaning (Job 7:5, 6).
4. True meaning in life will be found only as man learns how to be just with God and then enters into that justified condition (Job 9:2, 20, 30-33).
5. Regular communication with the Almighty prepares one for finding true meaning in life (Job 13:3).
6. An unconditional trust in God in difficult times helps one to focus on life's true meaning (Job 13:15).
7. One who understands life's true meaning determines to maintain his integrity (Job 13:15).
8. Life has meaning to those who have the assurance of eternal life after death (Job 14:14, 15; 19:25-27).
9. Taking God's way even through fiery trials will help us maintain a meaningful life (Job 23:3, 10-12).
10. Man finds the true meaning of life as he applies godly wisdom (Job 28:12, 13, 28).

Answers to Questions

1. List some reasons for Job's hopeless outlook on life.
The magnitude of Job's suffering seemed more than he could bear. No

respite seemed to be available for his extreme physical suffering. His life seemed to be so fleeting and without purpose.

2. How can we overcome discouragements that come to us in times of trial and suffering?

We need to keep focused on the future and on God's promises that the trials of this life will someday be past. We need to commit our life to the Lord and find strength as we fellowship with Him in prayer. We need to keep a long-range focus (2 Corinthians 1:8-10; 4:16-18).

3. Why was Job perplexed as he thought about relating to a holy God? Job recognized his undoneness before God. He felt he could not approach a holy God and that there was no daysman or mediator to bring him and God together.

4. Explain how Christ meets God's approval as our intercessor. Christ in offering His own perfect blood satisfied God's requirements for sacrifice (Isaiah 53:10-12) and therefore is able to represent sinful man to a holy God.

5. What were some factors that caused Job to trust in God? He came to rest in the fact that God's workings were for his good (Job 23:10). He esteemed the words of God as truth (Job 23:12).

6. How does our hope of the resurrection relate to finding meaning in life?

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15:19). How much more when hope fails! But the promise of immortality in the life to come gives every reason to endure trial, hardship, and even death. True meaning in this life is found in preparing for the life to come.

7. How can man find wisdom?

Man finds wisdom by inquiring of God, who understands (Job 28:23). See also James 1:4, 5. To enter the realm of wisdom requires a full surrender to God for salvation from sin. Wisdom will be forthcoming as a man grows in his relationship and fellowship with God through Bible reading and prayer. The brotherhood also aids in finding wisdom.

8. How does one manifest an appreciation for godly wisdom?

One manifests an appreciation for godly wisdom by developing qualities associated with that wisdom (see James 3:17). Enjoying fellowship with those who are manifesting godly wisdom also indicates an appreciation for that wisdom.

Summarizing the Lesson

Job moved from a hopeless and perplexed condition to a deeper understanding of God's ways. Even though he did not understand God's workings, he placed unconditional trust in his God. As we do likewise, we can depend upon God to reward us with true meaning in life and godly wisdom that will see us through all the circumstances and situations we face. He will bring us to our desired haven (see Psalm 107:23-30).

Research Guide

1. Read Scriptures in a Topical Bible under "Faith—Trial of."
2. Read Scriptures in a Topical Bible under "Jesus, the Christ—Mediation of."