

Job Chapter 42

Verses 1-6: Job's confession and repentance took place finally. He still did not know why he suffered so profoundly, but he was done complaining, questioning and challenging God's wisdom and justice. He was reduced to such utter humility, crushed beneath the weight of God's greatness, that all he could do was repent for his insolence. Without answers to all of these questions, Job quietly bowed in humble submission before his Creator and admitted that God was sovereign (Isa. 14:24; 46:8-11). Most importantly for the message of the book, Job was still diseased and without his children and possessions, and God had not changed anything (except for the humbling of the heart of His servant). Satan had been proven completely wrong in the charges he brought against Job and in thinking he could destroy true saving faith; Job's companions were completely wrong in the charges they brought against him, but most critically, Job himself was completely wrong in the charges he had raised against God. He expressed his own sorrowful regret that he had not just accept God's will without such ignorant complaints and questions.

The point of all of God's questions was not lost on Job: he has a new awareness of the wisdom of God's hidden plans, a new sense of the limits of his own wisdom, and a new sensitivity to his own sin. He admits that his has been a limited perspective, and he totally submits to God's will and authority.

Jobs second response is one of complete submission to the sovereignty of God. He affirms that God is free, He can do anything, and He does what is good and right. Job was right where God wanted him to be, where He wants each person to be, humbling, bowing before Him in worship and repentance. Job had gone from silence to submission.

Job 42:1 "Then Job answered the LORD, and said,"

For though he had said he would answer no more (Job 40:5); yet he might mean not in the manner he had, complaining of God and justifying himself. Besides he might change his mind without any imputation of falsehood or a lie (see Jer. 20:9). To which may be added, that he had then said all he had to say, and did not know he should have more. He then confessed as much as he was convinced of, but it was not enough. And now through what the Lord had since said to him he was more convinced of his ignorance, mistakes, and sins, and had such a sight of God and of himself, that he could not forbear speaking. Moreover, an injunction was laid upon him from the Lord to speak again, and therefore he was obliged to give in his answer (see Job 40:7).

Verses 2-4: Job did not confess any of the sins that Eliphaz accused him of or say any of what Eliphaz told him to say, because he was guiltless of all these things. Job's folly was in making judgment about matters "I understood not", especially disputing with God over His justice.

Job 42:2 "I know that thou canst do every [thing], and [that] no thought can be withholden from thee."

Job here subscribes to God's unlimited power, knowledge, and dominion, to prove which was the scope of God's discourse out of the whirlwind. And his judgment being convinced of these, his conscience also was convinced of his own folly in speaking so irreverently concerning him.

"No thought can be withholden from thee": No thought of ours can be withholden from thy knowledge. And there is no thought of thine which thou canst be hindered from bringing into execution.

Job recognized the magnificence of God. God has all power, as well as all wisdom and understanding. God reads the heart of man, even before he speaks his words. God knows that Job had a clean heart. Job knew that nothing he might think or do, could ever be hidden from God. Job had never denied that God was all powerful, but it was brought even more clearly to his attention in the last few chapters, as the LORD spoke to him.

Verses 3-4: Job twice alluded to statements God had made in His interrogation of Job. The first allusion "Who [is] he that hideth counsel without knowledge?" (Compare 38:2), indicted Job's pride and presumption regarding God's counsel. The second, "I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me" (38:3; 40:7), expressed God's judicial authority to demand answers from His own accuser, Job. The two quotes manifested that Job understood the divine rebuke.

Job 42:3 "Who [is] he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not."

What am I, that I should be guilty of such madness?

"Therefore have I uttered that I understood not": Because my mind was without knowledge, therefore my speech was ignorant and foolish; things which I knew not.

"I have spoken foolishly and unadvisedly of things far above my reach": Even of God's infinite and sovereign majesty, and of his deep and unsearchable counsels and providence. "The recollection of Job," says Dr. Dodd, "in this and the two following verses, is inimitably fine, and begins the catastrophe of the book, which is truly worthy of what precedes. The interrogatory clause in the beginning of this verse is a repetition of what Jehovah had said; the latter part of this verse, and the fourth and fifth verses, are Job's conclusions."

The truth is that no one has this kind of knowledge, until the Lord God Almighty chooses for us to know it. He teaches us by His blessed Holy Spirit. Job did not understand what was going on. His only failure was that he insisted on knowing. Job wanted to confess to God his total dependence upon Him. The things of God are too wonderful for mortal man to know and understand.

Job 42:4 "Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me."

Not in the manner he had before, complaining of God and justifying himself, but in a way of humble entreaty of favors of Him, of confession of sin before Him, and of acknowledgment of His wisdom, goodness, and justice in all his dealings with Him, which before he arraigned.

"I will demand of thee": Or rather "I will make petition to thee", as Mr. Broughton renders it; humbly ask a favor, and entreat a gracious answer; for to demand is not so agreeable to the frame and temper of soul Job was now in.

"And declare thou unto me": Or make him know what he knew not. He now in ignorance applies to God, as a God of knowledge, to inform him in things he was in the dark about, and to increase what knowledge he had. He was now willing to take the advice of Elihu, and pursue it (Job 34:31).

This was the beginning of Job's confession to God that he knew very little of the ways of God. Job wanted to speak to God and explain his foolishness.

Verses 5-6: God did not condemn Job for any sin or foolishness. He did though, charge Job for mistakenly and arrogantly asserting that he could better explain what was happening in the world and better order and control its affairs. Job was wrong on both counts. Therefore, Job said "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes".

Job 42:5 "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."

"Have heard ... now mine eye seeth thee": At last, Job said he understood God whom he had seen with the eyes of faith. He had never so well grasped the greatness, majesty, sovereignty, and independence of God as he did at that moment.

Job had been taught of others of God, but this voice of God coming from the whirlwind had given him a brand new awareness of who God is. Hearing from others is not like hearing for ourselves. Job had been in the very presence of God, and was greatly humbled by the experience.

Job 42:6 "Wherefore I abhor [myself], and repent in dust and ashes."

"Repent in dust and ashes": All that was left to do was repent! The ashes upon which the broken man sat had not changed, but the heart of God's suffering servant had. Job did not need to repent of some sins which Satan or his accusers had raised. But Job had exercised presumption and allegations of unfairness against his Lord and hated himself for this in a way that called for brokenness and contrition.

This was the same ash heap that Job had been sitting in from the beginning of his troubles. Now, he hated that he had not trusted God, that all was well with his soul. He had listened to too much that his so called friends had said, and knew it wasn't true that he worked himself up to the position to question what God was doing with him. God is the potter and we are the clay. Job

was clay in the hands of the LORD. The clay cannot tell the potter what to do with it. Job realized that now. He abhorred himself for not having more faith than he had.

(In verses 7-17), the text returns to prose instead of poetic language begun (in 3:1), in the epilogue. The final picture of Job mirrors the opening picture of him (in chapter 1). God restored Job, not as payment for Job's sacrifice but as a gift.

Verses 7-9: Job's friends are rebuked for their errors, with Eliphaz being singled out as the leader of the three. The Lord refers to Job as "my servant" four times to show His approval.

"Eliphaz" was the oldest of the group, so God addressed His rebuke to him. The sacrifice required for the three men was staggering (enough for all of Israel), and shows the great error of their counsel. Anyone who speaks on behalf of God must make sure his or her words reflect the Word of God and represent His character. Human opinion is worth nothing.

Verses 7-8: "ye have not spoken of me [the thing that is] right": God directly vindicated job by saying that Job had spoken right about God in rejecting the error of his friends. They are then rebuked for those misrepresentations of insensitivity and arrogance. This does not mean that everything they said was incorrect, but they had made wrong statements about the character and works of God, and also had raised erroneous allegations against Job.

Job 42:7 "And it was [so], that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me [the thing that is] right, as my servant Job [hath]."

What follows came to pass:

"That after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job": Which he spoke to him out of the whirlwind, and after he had heard Job's confession, and the declaration he made of his humiliation and repentance.

"The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite; who with his two friends were still present and heard the speeches of the Lord to Job, and the acknowledgment he had made of sin. Though some think that, when the dispute ended between Job and them, they returned to their own country, where Eliphaz was now supposed to have gone, and was bid with his two friends to go to Job again, which they did, as is concluded from the following verses. But no doubt they all stayed and heard what Elihu had to say; and the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind would command their attention for them to stay. And they were very interested as they wanted to know how the cause would go, for or against Job; the latter of which they might expect from the appearance of things. Now the Lord directs his speech to Eliphaz, he being perhaps the principal man, on account of his age, wisdom and wealth, and being the man that led the dispute. Began it, and formed the plan to go upon, and was the most severe on Job of any of them; wherefore the Lord said to him:

"My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends": Who were Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. Who gave into the same sentiments with Eliphaz, and went upon the same plan, speaking wrong things of God, charging Job falsely, and condemning him. Which provoked the Lord, and caused his wrath to be kindled like fire against them, of which there were some appearances and breakings forth in his words and conduct towards them.

"For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath": They had said many right things of God, and Job had said many wrong ones of him, and yet upon the whole Job had said more correct things of God than they. Their notion, and which they had expressed, was, that God deals with men in this life according to their outward behavior. That God did not afflict good men, at least not sorely, nor long. And that wicked men were always punished now. From whence they drew this inference, that Job, being so long and so greatly afflicted, must be a bad man, or God would never have dealt with him after this manner. Job, on the other hand, affirmed, that wicked men enjoyed great prosperity, which good men did not. And therefore, the love and hatred of God were not known by these things. And men's characters were not to be judged of by these outward things; in which he was doubtless right. Some render the words "have not spoken unto me", before him, in his presence; for they were all before God, and to him they all appealed, and he heard and observed all that was said, and now passed judgment. No notice is taken of Elihu, nor blame laid on him; he acting as a moderator, taking neither the part of Job, nor of his friends, but blaming both. Nor did he pretend to charge Job with any sins of his former life as the cause of his calamities. Only takes up some indecent, unguarded, and extravagant expressions of his in the heat of this controversy, and rebukes him for them. And throughout the whole vindicates the justice of God in his dealings with him.

This was about the last thing these friends wanted to hear, but they fully deserved every word. They had judged Job without any evidence to convict him. We must notice in this verse above, that God approved of the things that Job had said, but did not approve of the things the others had said. He spoke to the three friends here, and not to Elihu, because He had already reprimanded Elihu, and because Elihu was a young man and probably knew no better. These old counselors should have known better. God was very angry with Job's friends.

Verses 8-9: As God had been gracious to Job, so He was to Job's friends, by means of sacrifice and prayer. Here the book points to the need for a sacrifice for sin, fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ who gave Himself as an offering for sins and ever lives to intercede (compare 1 Titus 2:5). Even before the Levitical priesthood, family heads acted as priests, offering sacrifices and mediating through prayer.

Job 42:8 "Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you [after your] folly, in that ye have not spoken of me [the thing which is] right, like my servant Job."

"Seven bullocks and seven rams": This was the number of sacrifices specified (in Num. 23:1), by Balaam the prophet, so perhaps it was a traditional kind of burnt offering for sin.

"Go to my servant Job": Whom though you have censured and condemned as a hypocrite, I own for my faithful servant, human infirmity excepted.

"Offer up by the hand of Job": Whom I do hereby constitute your priest, to pray and sacrifice for you.

"Him will I accept": To wit, on your behalf, as well as on his own.

"Lest I deal with you after your folly": Lest my wrath and just judgment take hold of you for your false and foolish speeches.

The number "seven" means spiritually complete. After all of the hard things they had said to Job, now they must go back to him and ask him to pray for their forgiveness, or they would feel the wrath of God upon them. The time of Job was before the time of the priests, so Job would receive their offerings for their sins for them. They had not spoken for God with all of their accusations of Job. They must now humble themselves before the very man they tried to humiliate and destroy.

Job 42:9 "So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite [and] Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job."

I.e. "went" to Job, and asked his aid and interposition, and obtained it. The Lord also accepted Job; i.e. looked favorably on Job's intercession, and for his sake pardoned those for whom he made his prayer. Job is thus a type of Christ, not merely in his sufferings, but also in his mediatorial character.

Their only chance of being forgiven was for Job to accept them and pray to God for them. God had already accepted Job. They knew they must go, since God had commanded them to. This had to be one of the hardest things they had ever done.

Verses 10-17: "Turned the captivity" is a figure meaning "released." In other words, God brought an end to Job's suffering and set him free to enjoy life again. God's restoration of Job is immediate and bountiful: he is given friends (verse 11), material prosperity (verse 12), family (verses 13-15), and long life (verses 16-17). The point to be garnered from the book is not that God intends to deal with every servant as abundantly as He did with Job; rather, that God holds sovereign and loving sway over every human life. Therefore, He can be trusted implicitly in all things (Rom. 8:28; 1 Thess. 5:18). Yahweh "turned" the fortune and family of Job to a level surpassing that at the beginning of the book.

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."

Job prayed for his friends, evidence that Job's heart was no longer filled with resentment or bitterness toward them. Job not only forgave his friends but experienced the forgiveness of God for himself.

Job was completely restored when he prayed for his friends to be forgiven. Job had been a rich man before this all began, but now God had restored him double for his faithfulness.

Job 42:11 "Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold."

When Job had humbled himself, and God was reconciled to Job, he quickly turned the hearts of his friends to favor him, according to (Prov. 16:7). As during his impenitency, and for his trial humiliation and lies had alienated their hearts from him, of which Job so sadly complains.

"His brethren and his sisters": Largely so called, according to the Scripture use of these titles, to wit, his kindred distinguished from his other acquaintances.

"Did eat bread with him": I.e. feasted with him, as that phrase is commonly used in Scripture, to congratulate with him for God's great and glorious favor already vouchsafed to him in so eminent a vision and revelation.

"They bemoaned him": They declared the sense which they had of his calamities whilst they were upon him, although they had hitherto wanted opportunity to express it.

"Over all the evil": Or, concerning all the evil; which though it was bitter to endure when it was present, yet the remembrance of it revived in him by the discourses of his friends was very delightful, as is usual in such cases.

"Every man also gave him a piece of money and every one an earring of gold": Partly to make up his former losses, and partly as a testimony of their honorable respect to him.

Now that things had turned around for Job, all his relatives and friends came to celebrate with him. They all brought presents to Job such as gold and money. They had not even sympathized with Job during his trouble, but now they had much sympathy for his punishment he endured without a cause.

Verses 12-14: God gave Job back twice as much as he lost, including another 10 children. These did not replace the first 10 but were added to them. Between heaven and earth, he had 20 children.

Job 42:12 "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses."

Which verified the words of Bildad (Job 8:6); though they were spoken by him only by way of supposition. All blessings are of the Lord, temporal and spiritual. And sometimes the last days of a good man are his best, as to temporal things, as were David's, and here Job's; though this is not always the case. However, if their last days are but the best in spiritual things, that is enough. If they have more faith, hope, love, patience, humility, and self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God. Are more holy, humble, spiritually and heavenly minded; have more light and knowledge in divine things; have more peace and joy, and are more fruitful in every good work, and more useful. And often they are in their very last moments most cheerful and comfortable: the best wine is reserved till last.

"For he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses": Just double the number of each of what he had before (Job 1:3).

These are twice as many animals, as he had before all of his trouble came to him.

Job 42:13 "He had also seven sons and three daughters."

"Seven sons ... three daughters": While the animals are double the number of Job 1:3, why are not the children? It is obvious that Job still had 7 sons and 3 daughters waiting for him in the presence of God (42:17).

This was exactly the same number of sons and daughters Job had before his trouble. The worst loss that Job had felt was his children.

Job 42:14 "And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch."

The three names Job gave his daughters were Peace, Fragrance and Beauty.

The name "Jemima" means dove, or fair as the day. "Kezia" was the same as cassia, a very rare spice. "Keren-happuch" means horn of beauty. This had to be the names of his three daughters.

Job 42:15 "And in all the land were no women found [so] fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren."

The book ends as it begins, with a positive picture of Job and focused on his just character. Job acknowledges all of his children as equals in the "inheritance" he left them, a rarity in ancient times. By Jewish law, daughters only received an inheritance when there were no sons (Num. 27:8). Job had plenty for all.

These daughters of Job were extremely beautiful. In the Orient, this is thought to be a great blessing from God. Job made no difference between them and their brothers. He gave the daughters inheritance, as well as his sons. The sons' names were not given for some reason.

Verses 16-17: Job lived 140 years longer, so he probably lived to be 210 years old, a typical lifespan for the patriarchal age. "Old and full of days" is an idiom that means Job lived a rich, full life all the way to the end.

Job 42:16 "After this lived Job a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, [even] four generations."

Some conjecture that he was seventy when his troubles came upon him. If so, his age was double, as his other possessions.

"And saw his sons, and his sons' sons": Though his children were not doubled to him, yet in his children's children they were more than doubled. As God appointed to Adam another seed instead of that which was slain (Gen. 4:25), so he did to Job with advantage. God has ways to repair the losses, and balance the griefs, of those who are deprived of their property, or are written childless. As Job was when he had buried all his children, and was robbed of all his sheep and cattle by the Chaldeans and Sabeans.

Job had been spoken of by Elihu as an elderly man. If you add 140 years to the life of an elderly man he would be unusually old. He was thought to have been 70 years old when his calamities came. This would make him live to be 210 years old. The four generations would work out about right for that length of time, also.

Job 42:17 "So Job died, [being] old and full of days."

These concluding words take the reader back to where the account began (1:1). Job died in prosperity and his days were counted as a blessing. In the words of (James 5:11), and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealing, that the Lord is "full of compassion and is merciful." But the "accuser of our brethren" (Rev. 12:10), is still "going to and fro on the earth" (Job 1:7). And God's servants are still learning to trust in the all-wise, all-powerful Judge of the universe for what they cannot understand.

Job went the way of all men. His flesh died and returned to the earth from whence it came.

There are many profound lessons of life brought out in this study. We could all see ourselves in Job. Sadly enough, we could also see ourselves in his so-called friends too.

Job Chapter 42 Questions

1. What did Job say to the LORD in answer?
2. God reads the _____ of man?
3. God teaches us by his blessed _____.
4. Job wants to confess his total dependence upon _____.
5. The things of God are too wonderful for _____ to know and understand.
6. Which verse is the beginning of Job's confession?
7. How had Job known God before?
8. What was different now?
9. How did being in the presence of God effect Job?
10. Job was _____ in the hands of God.
11. What does God say to Eliphaz and Job's other friends in verse 7?
12. What did they have to do to make things right with God?
13. Who must pray for them for God to forgive them?
14. What did God say about what Job had said?
15. What does the number "seven" mean?
16. How do we know that Job was before the time of the priests?
17. What did the friends do about what God had told them?
18. What was their only chance to be forgiven?
19. When was Job completely restored?
20. What did his friends and family do after he was restored?
21. How many animals did God give Job back?
22. How many children did God give Job?
23. How long did Job live?