

Jobs sufferings are not a picture how God treats all believers, these are exceptional, and more than most believers will ever suffer. But we do see some worthy lessons. Job himself is quite unaware of the fact that he is being used by God as an object-lesson to all generations, Helpful lessons that we can apply to our own lives in this age.

The constant insistence of his 3 friends. Eliphaz the most polite and sophisticated. The best orator. Yet we saw there is error in His view. He supposed that Job losing his prosperity and health was Gods Judgement and punishment, and that he needed to repent.

Bildad was very straight and offensive. How long will you speak Job going on with your unconvincing arguments that you are innocent. and on does God pervert Justice. – meaning can an undeserved sentence come from God. His view is very mechanical and unsympathetic. He seems to say it's not hard to understand Gods ways – You must have done wrong or this would have never happened to you. Its simplistic and shallow.

Suppose Bildad was to advise Joseph- When He was sold as a slave, when He was put in prison for resisting Potiphar's seducing wife. His mind may have well said Joseph you are in prison for wrong- no one goes to prison for not doing wrong. **Or he would have told the 3 Hebrew boys** who were thrown into the burning fiery furnace because they refused to bow down- this must be a sentence from God. Can you see, he lacked wisdom and understanding. His view was, this is how God works I know – hardship and suffering is because you have sinned. But would of it been right to say Joseph sinned, or the 3 Hebrew boys or Daniel in the Lions den.

The last friend was **Zophar** we read Ch 11:1-20. He is **very arrogant**. He **accuses Job** of being **full of talk**, he says your talk can't vindicate you. He attacks what Job believes; you have said your doctrine is pure. **You have said my way is upright my heart is clean.** But he has concluded Job is guilty and offers no word of comfort or hope... he says Job you deserve worse than what you are suffering. He acts so superior, He speaks great truth, do you think you can explain the mystery of God, God is higher and deeper than you can imagine. It seems He thinks that he understands why Job is suffering. Why God is acting like He is acting. It looks like he is saying he understands the deep things of God. He speaks rationally and it

seems he is more concerned with putting Job in his place. But he says one good thing. Behold God will not cast away a perfect man. Job 8:20. We can interpret this two ways. Job if you were really perfect, God would not cast you away. Or, If you are a perfect man God will not cast you away even although you have been brought low.

Isn't it a comfort to know that when others are misjudging us it is God who sees our hearts. He knows them that are His. "He will not forsake His inheritance" (Psa 94:14). To Bildad's credit he finishes his speech with a glimmer of hope. God will not cast away a perfect man.

Job's three comforters said all they could say, and did the best they could, but they brought no relief. **They were as blind men seeking to lead** a blind man.

Job scorns the comforter's speeches.

You say if I was righteous, I would prosper, if my life was right I'd prosper. Well, it can't be right because you are not prospering. **This was their argument.** Job points out That robbers prosper – People who are thieves and wilfully disobey God **seem** to get away with it and appear to be prospering. **I say appear** because there will come a day that they will be required to give an account. Just because God is long suffering and merciful giving ample time for repentance doesn't mean that He can't see our wrongs.

Job begins his great and final Speech, which we read the following six chapters.

He says Even if He slay me yet will I trust Him, I have no other hope. **He longs for an audience with God.** He begins to focus upon the Majesty of God. – No matter what the trial we may be facing, it's always the only solution to focus upon God.

Gods majesty is unsearchable and Job shows some deep and encouraging truths-

Hell is naked before Him, that world of darkness and gloom, no place is hidden from His light.- His eyes see all- Even if we make our bed in hell he is there. No darkness or night is so dense that it can cover the soul of man from the Holy eyes of God. If hell is naked and open before Him then so are our hearts open before Him. So many human hearts are full of pain and fear and darkness, nothing more than a miniature hell. But He sees, knows and cares.

He hangs the earth on nothing. The point is, He has the entire universe balanced, the stars in their orbit, and the sun rising and setting and not one of the stars is missing, He knows them all and calls them all forth. Thousands of years before man could define gravity and orbit of planets – Job spoke under the inspiration of God, about the earth being hung upon nothing. The spirit of God knows what man doesn't yet know.

Job speaks about the clouds bound together with invisible bands that pour out their treasure when he unites them.

He had subdued the swift serpent 26:13. Whether this swift serpent is the devil himself, or great flashes of forked lightning, lightning flashes so fast. But God is swifter and faster in a moment he is able to stretch out his hand and stop the serpents evil. Satan is a conquered foe.

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

In creation we hear a small voice of the whisper of God – But in CHRIST we hear the loud Cry of an agonising heart of Love.

He speaks much of wisdom in ch 28 A man may have all the treasures this earth can offer but is still a fool. A man cannot find satisfaction even in the very best this world can give. **Wisdom is the chief thing.** *Behold the fear of the Lord is wisdom, to depart from evil is understanding. Job 28:28*

Where is this wisdom found – Only one place and that place is Calvary. Where the wisdom of God is offered to a world perishing with lack of knowledge. In Christ are all the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col 2:3. Nothing is equivariant, there is no substitute for heavenly wisdom. Nothing can ever stand in Christs place.

After this speech the three friends are silenced.

Elihu now comes forward –

He offered himself in God's stead to reason with Job, He doesn't agree with the other three comforters, He is not coming with ear tickling words. He is speaking clearly, He accuses Job of charging God for injustice. But some of the truths He speaks are very helpful. God is infinitely wise as well as powerful; and as none can work like him, none can teach like him. **Job is reminded God is mighty**, mighty in strength and understanding.

Remember to magnify His work. Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God. **Go to God Look for wisdom-** Is God not willing to instruct us? Then let us be early and often at His throne, praying, as the Psalmist did, "Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on you do I wait all the day."

Then shall we will say, as Elihu did, *Job 36:22 "Behold, God is exalted by His power; Who teaches like Him?"*

Patient Job wanted to get near to God, in his great trouble; he cried, "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" He felt sure that God's presence would be the best and safest place for him to be. **We ought not to lose this lesson.** When trouble is upon us-the true and best thing for us to do, is to *run to God!* Some people, in their affliction and sorrow, flee *away* from God. They pray less, rather than more. They become *afraid* of God, at times almost *distrustful* of him. They even think God cannot be their friend-or he would not cause them such suffering. Many people in time of sorrow, get *away* from God. But this is the reason they lose their joy and peace, they miss the comfort which they would get if only they kept near to him. **The right way to respond, is to try to find the way to God's very presence.** This is the only safe refuge, when the storms of trouble break upon us.

When we face an affliction or a trial. When we come to the Lord in prayer or sit and read his word or just think devotional thoughts, **a vital part is remembering his goodness and grace** towards us, to remembering and thanking Him for his past help, His eye upon me, that He has hid me under the shadow of His wings, that we have a secure anchor in Him an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence *behind*

the veil. (Heb 6:19). **This secure hope we have.** *Sailors throw their anchors downwards; we throw ours upwards. The sailors anchor goes within the veil of the waters into the depths of the sea; ours goes within the veil of glory, into the heights of heaven, where Jesus sits at the right hand of God: “within the veil;”* — When we begin to think on the un-changeableness of God, the immutability of his eternal promises, the faithfulness and mercy new every day, the **rivers of living water** that **never run dry**, the **Eye of the Lord** that watches over me that **neither slumbers nor sleeps**. **Gratefulness wells up in my heart.** I have a sense of His grace. I have a sense of peace. I’ve come to Him, I realise how mighty He is, how kind He is. Faith is kindled. The sun of righteousness has risen in my heart.

But how often to we come into Gods presence bent over with a heavy load, discouraged, and upset. Like Job in His suffering and pain, questioning Gods fairness, questioning Gods wisdom. We begin to ask for help immediately. Or we ask why this is happening to me. There is no considering His majesty and greatness. **What has happened is that we have lost a sense of God’s grace.** Lost sight that with Him and in Him we shall be kept safe.

The way this sense of Grace is rekindled is by taking the theme of this psalm- *Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!*

This is an exhortation for the redeemed to praise the Lord. *Let the redeemed say so.* Just think of His providence in our lives, think of His faithfulness, think upon his attributes. Very soon gratefulness will well up in your heart and you will begin giving thanks for all of His goodness.

A Happy ending.

At last, the storm tossed soul is anchored to Gods manifest goodness. Job has been passing through some rough places , some dreary deserts, dry and full of ravenous beasts. But now he has entered into the Light and Joys of home. Now we reach the climax of Jobs history. The Storm is over. The troubled waters are now still. What revelation and understanding flowed - *Job 42:5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.*

It's one thing to hear others speak about God, but it's very different when His word is spoken personally to the heart. Job had seen Him. Gods word dwelling among us, Gods word full of grace and full of truth. Have you seen this grace for yourself. Have you tasted that the Lord is good?

When we come into Gods presence into the glorious light of His truth a normal consequence is that we see our true condition and abhor ourselves

When Isaiah saw the Lord upon a throne high and lifted up, he also abhorred (repulsed by the way he was) himself, saying, "Woe is me!... because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa 6:5).

Job repented Job 42:6 *Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.*" If Job was seventy years old when he lost all, his years were also doubled, for he lived after this "a hundred and forty years" (Job 42:16). The Lord's measure is always "heaped up and running over." Those to whom He shows His salvation will be satisfied with long life, yes, eternal life (Psa 91:16).

No one would want Job's sufferings, but who would not say, "Let my last end be like his." Judge not before the time. If God hath begun a good work in you, He will carry it on till the day of perfection.

Comfort one another with these words. Yet there are some that Gods good work is yet to begin.

Job in his sufferings longed for a daysman. Someone to represent Him to be his mediator. These well-known words truthfully express the deepest need of a sinful suffering spirit.

O for one able to act as umpire between a mighty God and a miserable soul.

One who is Divine and human, one able to lay his hand on both and meet the need of each, satisfying the just claims of God and speaking peace to a troubled heart.

This great need has been **perfectly met in Jesus Christ** for, "If any man sin, we have an advocate *with the Father*, Jesus Christ the *righteous*, and He is the *propitiation* for our sins" (1Jn 2:1-2).