

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 4.5%

Weekly Readings will cover: Job 1 - 10

Sunday: Job 1

Monday: Job 2

Tuesday: Job 3

Wednesday: Job 4 & 5

Thursday: Job 6 & 7

Friday: Job 8

Saturday: Job 9 & 10

Current # of email addresses in group: 555

This week we start the book of Job. You may wonder why Job falls here in a chronological reading plan. This will be explained in the introduction to the book. Unlike the book of Genesis where there are a lot of Hebrew words we need to define, and a lot of doctrine that needs mentioned, the book of Job is a bit different. This book is more about the experience and feelings of Job and the poetic style is more about reading and understanding the feelings and thoughts he is processing. I have found that I relied even more heavily on the UCG reading program this week since it does a very good job of providing the high-level narrative.

Day one will be a lot this week as we have both a long introduction to the book of Job and the first chapter of Job. The rest of the week is much less and feel free to modify the reading to break day 1 into a couple days and catch up over the rest of the week.

Website archive location for audio files & PDFs:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/posts/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep-dive-reading-program-circa-2022-2025-903711>

### **3 YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 9**

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 50 - SUNDAY: December 18<sup>th</sup>

Job 1

Daily Deep Dive:

Introduction to the book of Job: There are a lot of various ideas about who wrote Job, when it was written, where it took place, etc... I

thought the UCG reading program did a tremendous job with the introduction to the book of Job.

Their introduction will help you understand why we are reading Job after the book of Genesis and before the book of Exodus from a Chronological standpoint.

“Contained within the Writings section of the Old Testament are what are often referred to as the Poetical or Wisdom books: Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes and Job. Chronologically, the first among these is evidently the book of Job—or at least the story contained within the book appears to precede most of the material in the other Writings. We did not read the book of Job in harmony with earlier sections because its chronological placement is not completely clear and its contents are not crucial to the story flow of the Law and Prophets. Nevertheless, Job is directly mentioned in the Prophets as an illustrious example, along with Noah and Daniel, of righteousness (see Ezekiel 14:14, Ezekiel 14:20). And it is possible that he is mentioned in the Law as well, as we will see.

Job is widely considered to be one of the great, epic works of literature. The famed 19th-century French author and playwright Victor Hugo said, “The book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind.” Of course, as part of Scripture, it is not ultimately a product of the human mind—though God did inspire a human being to write it down. The 19th-century Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle said: “I call this book, apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written. Our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem: man’s destiny, and God’s ways with him in the earth. There is nothing written, I think, of equal literary merit.” Religious encyclopedist Philip Schaff said, “The book of Job rises like a pyramid in the history of literature, without predecessor and without a rival” (all quoted in *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, introductory notes on Job).

Yet who it was who penned the book of Job is not named. Jewish tradition credits Moses, and that is certainly possible as the book's story seems to have preceded him. Others maintain that Job himself may be the author—or perhaps the author of a record that was used by another author, again possibly Moses, as the foundation on which to create a dramatic narrative and series of lofty orations. Yet even many who accept the great antiquity of the story believe it was initially passed down through oral tradition and then written down much later. Some see it as the work of Solomon, as he compiled the wisdom of the East.

Because the work is poetic in structure, some today try to paint Job as an allegorical, fictional character. Yet the literary genius of the work should not lead to the conclusion that the events and dialogue recorded in it are not genuine. The reference in Ezekiel 14 clearly portrays Job as a historical figure. He is also mentioned in the New Testament: “You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (James 5:11).

So who was Job? When and where did he live? The answers to these questions are not known with certainty. Indeed, it is not necessary to know them to appreciate and benefit from the story, themes and lessons of the book. There is a palpably timeless quality about the book of Job. He represents all believers in our struggle to cope with the hardships of life and maintain our trust and confidence in God come what may.

Still, there are a number of clues to the historical setting of the book of Job. The evidence points to Job living in patriarchal times. For instance, he offered sacrifices. Yet in the period after Israel became a nation, sacrifices were to be performed by the Levitical priests. This would indicate that Job lived before this period.

*The Expositor's Bible Commentary* states in its introductory notes on the book of Job: "It seems likely that Job himself lived in the second millennium B.C. (2000 to 1000 B.C.) and shared a tradition not far removed from that of the Hebrew patriarchs. Job's longevity of 140 years, his position as a man whose wealth was measured in cattle and who acted as priest for his family, and the picture of roving Sabean and Chaldean tribesmen fit the second millennium better than the first.... The book shows considerable Aramaic flavor that may mean Job and his friends lived near centers of Aramaic influence. Aram-Naharaim [the area in which the family of Abraham's brother Nahor lived] was such a center in northern Mesopotamia. At the end of the millennium, some Aramean tribes moved south and settled on the borders of Babylonia and Palestine; but Arameans continued to control the caravan route through the Khabur River area. This was the time when Aleppo and Damascus became Aramean centers and when the Chaldean tribes invaded Babylonia.... If Job 1:17 means that Chaldean tribes were still roving, the event could reflect a time before they settled at about 1000 B.C."

The same commentary further explains Job's name in its historical setting: "The English name 'Job' comes from the Greek *Iob*, which derives from the Hebrew form *Iyob*. Earlier attempts to determine an etymology of the name have given way to evidence from a well-attested west Semitic name in the second millennium found in the Amarna Letters, Egyptian Execration texts, Mari, Alalakh, and Ugaritic documents. The original form of the name was *Ayyabum*"—related to the biblical name Jobab.

Gleason Archer's *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* gives more information on this, noting that renowned archaeologist William F. Albright "suggested that Job may have been a contemporary of the patriarchs of the pre-Mosaic age. He supports the credibility of Job by the authentic second-millennium employment of

the name *'Iyyob*. (It should be noted that in the Berlin Execration texts, *'Iyyob* appears as the name of a Syrian prince living near Damascus; in the Mari documents of the eighteenth-century B.C., *Ayyabum* is mentioned; and in the Tell el-Amarna correspondence from about 1400 B.C., *Ayab* is referred to as a prince of Pella [in what is today northwestern Jordan].) Albright also certifies the credibility of the name of Bildad (one of Job's three "comforters") as a shortened form of *Yabil-Dadum*, a name found in the cuneiform sources of the early second millennium" (1982, p. 236).

What of Job's nationality? Exceedingly wealthy, he was referred to as "the greatest of all the people of the East" (Job 1:3)—"East" most likely from the perspective of the land of Israel. More specifically, Job lived in the land of Uz (verse 1). Genesis 10:22-23 lists Uz as a son of Shem's son Aram, father of the ancient Aramaeans or Syrians. Genesis 22:20-22 lists a Huz, essentially the same as Uz, as the firstborn of Abraham's brother Nahor. So there could be some relation to the people dwelling near the Euphrates. Then again, according to Lamentations 4:21, Edom was in the land of Uz. *Expositor's* states: "It seems then that Uz might have been the name of a region east of Palestine including the Edomites and adjacent tribes."

Uz is also listed in the Bible as a son of one of the Horite chiefs, Dishan son of Seir, who lived in the land of Edom (Genesis 36:20-21, Genesis 36:28). Recall that Edom was another name for Jacob's brother Esau. So related were the Edomites and Horites by proximity that Mount Seir was the geographical name for the Edomites' territory. Note that the sons of Seir are listed in the same chapter as the genealogy of Esau's family (Genesis 36). Job's friend Eliphaz the Temanite was clearly an Edomite. Another Eliphaz was the firstborn of Esau, and Teman was *his* firstborn son, being the first listed chief of Edom (verses 4, 11, 15). Teman is often reckoned to have been a city or district in Edom (see Jeremiah 49:7; Ezekiel 25:13; Amos 1:12; Obadiah 8-9).

As *Expositor's* notes, "The site may be the same as the Arabian town of Tema mentioned in Babylonian sources" (and in Jeremiah 25:23). Eliphaz's identity as a Temanite dates the story of Job to at least a few generations after Jacob and Esau—most likely to when the Israelites were in Egypt (since, as we've seen, it appears to have been written prior to Israel becoming a nation).

Another of Job's friends, Bildad (mentioned above), is referred to as a Shuhite. The Shuhites were apparently descendants of Shuah, a son of Abraham by his last wife Keturah (see Genesis 25:1-2). Thus the Shuhites were closely related to the Midianites (see verses 2, 4) and to the Arabian peoples of Sheba and Dedan (verse 3). Indeed, Jeremiah 25:23 seems to place Dedan in proximity to Tema. Yet "there is a land of Suhu on the Middle Euphrates mentioned in Assyrian records" (*Expositor's*). So it is quite possible that the Shuhites stretched from northern Arabia up to the Euphrates. Indeed, as noted in the *Beyond Today Bible Commentary* on Obadiah, the Edomites appear to have stretched over this whole region. And Uz could have been anywhere in this expanse.

The land and people of Job's third friend, Zophar the Naamathite, are not known, except that Naamah was a fairly common name. But another major character in the book, the young man Elihu, is described as being the son of Barachel the Buzite. Buz was the brother of Huz, both sons of Abraham's brother Nahor (Genesis 22:20-21). Furthermore, in Jeremiah 25:23, Buz is mentioned in conjunction with Tema and Dedan. All of this helps to substantiate the conclusion that the book of Job was set among Abraham's non-Israelite descendants and related family a few generations after Jacob and Esau—again, probably while the Israelites were in Egypt. And it helps us to locate, at least generally, where the story took place.

Building on what we have already seen, *Halley's Bible Handbook* says regarding the setting of the book: "The land of Uz (Job 1:1) is thought to have been along the border between Palestine and Arabia, extending from Edom northerly and easterly toward the Euphrates river, skirting the caravan route between Babylon and Egypt. The particular section of the land of Uz which tradition has called the home of Job was Hauran, a region east of the Sea of Galilee, noted for its fertility of soil and its grain, once thickly populated, now dotted with the ruins of three hundred cities....

"The Septuagint, in a postscript, following ancient tradition, identified Job with Jobab, the second king of Edom (Genesis 36:33). Names and places mentioned in the book seem to give it a setting among the descendants of Esau.... If this is correct, and if Hauran was Job's home, it would indicate that the early kings of Edom may, at times, have migrated from the rock cliffs of Edom northward to the more fertile plains of Hauran. At any rate the book has the atmosphere of very primitive times, and seems to have its setting among the early tribes descended from Abraham, along the northern border of Arabia, about contemporary with Israel's sojourn in Egypt."

King Jobab, whose name relates to the aforementioned second-millennium-B.C. name *Ayyabum* (as an m sound is a nasal b), was the son of Zerah of the Edomite city of Bozrah—this Zerah likely being the same as Chief Zerah, a grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:17). The early kings of Edom, as listed in verses 31-39, apparently did not hold hereditary office and so were probably elected for life terms. It is reasonable to suppose that Job was such a king considering his vast wealth and his distinction of being the greatest man in the East. In fact, in Job 29 he seems to portray himself as a king.

As descendants of Abraham and Isaac, many of the Edomites probably continued to worship the true God in this early period—helping to explain the religious understanding of Job and his friends.

We will consider the themes and issues of the book as we progress through it, summing up the book’s great lessons at the end.” [END]

Job 1:

Verse 1 – See above in the introduction about the land of Uz.

Regarding the name and meaning of Job, the Jamieson-Faucet-Brown (JFB) commentary does a good job showing the possibilities: “The name comes from an *Arabic* word meaning “to return,” namely, to God, “to repent,” referring to his end [Eichorn]; or rather from a *Hebrew* word signifying one to whom enmity was shown, “greatly tried” [Gesenius].” We learn a great deal about Job by God’s wonderful description of him. We are told he is “blameless, upright, fears God & shuns evil”. Wow! What praise! What are we to understand from these Hebrew words? The word “blameless” in the Hebrew means: perfect and complete in the KJV is almost always translated “perfect”. We understand that no one is “perfect” without sin. This wouldn’t mean that Job never made a mistake, but was a man who had proven and consistent integrity, character and genuineness in all facets of his life.

Here’s an excerpt from the UCG reading program: “

As *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* explains: "That Job was 'blameless' (*tam*) and 'upright' (*yasar*) should not be construed to imply he was [utterly] sinless (cf. 13:26; 14:16-17). The former, from the root 'be complete' (*tmm*), usually refers to a person's spiritual maturity and the integrity (purity) of his inner being." It continues “The translation "blameless" gives the sense of being beyond reproach—that is, having no obvious sins to criticize. In the New Testament, we find that John the Baptist's parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth, were blameless (Luke 1:6), as was the apostle Paul (Philippians 3:6). Indeed, all elders and deacons in the Church are expected to be blameless (1 Timothy 3:2, 1 Timothy



3:10; Titus 1:6-7). In Job's case, it seems clear that it was difficult to find any specific transgressions of God's law of which to accuse him." [END] The word "upright" comes from a word that means "straight". It's almost always (87% of the time) translated as "right, upright, righteous". He stayed straight on the path he understood and didn't veer. Job did what was right!

It says that Job "feared God". In our study through Genesis, this was only used once in the context of someone having a proper fear, reverence and respect of God. It was said about Abraham in Genesis 22:12 when after almost sacrificing Isaac out of obedience to God, God said "now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me."

Like Abraham, Job had this proper fear of God. (I'll leave it at that, as we could do a whole sermon on this topic).

Lastly, it said he "shunned evil". This is an interesting word. It means "to turn aside from, to depart, to remove". It's most often translated to "put/take away", "depart", or "remove".

Job didn't tolerate or put up with "evil". He removed it and departed from it. Evil had no place in Job's life.

From a human standpoint, this was an incredible man!

Verse 3 – After describing his great wealth of possessions and servants, it tells us that Job was "the greatest of all the people of the East".

John Gill's commentary states: "that is, he was a man of the greatest wealth and riches, and of the greatest power and authority, and was had in the greatest honour and esteem"

Verse 4 – This word for "feast" means "feast, banquet, drink". By itself it doesn't have a negative connotation (compare Gen 19:3, 21:8)

Verse 5 – Job was so zealous to obey God and look out for those he loved, that he went above and beyond to offer burnt offerings (sin offerings) on behalf of his children in case they had sinned in some manner.

Verse 6 – We spoke in an early reading in Genesis about this term "Sons of God" usually being used about men who obey and fear God, but can

also apply to obedient angels (messengers) of God. Here these “sons of God” present themselves, meaning to “place, stand, set or station oneself” before the Lord. In addition to the sons of God, another being comes with them: Satan. We all know this name. However, it’s interesting to me, that if we were reading the Bible for the first time, the name or title of Satan, this evil angelic being that opposes God, is not used a lot in the Old Testament. In fact, outside of the book of Job, we find “Satan” 4 times (1 Chronicles 21:1, Psalm 109:6, Zechariah 3:1,2). It’s found 14 times in the book of Job. Additionally, it’s found an additional 37 times in the New Testament. “Satan” means “adversary, one who withstands” (BDB).

I’m finding myself wrestling with potential “assumptions” as I begin reading this interaction between Satan and the Lord.

First, where is this interaction taking place. Before reading this right now, I would have told you emphatically that it is occurring in the throne room of God. Is that true? Maybe, but maybe not.

I would have also told you that this interaction was occurring between Satan and God the Father. Is that true? Or was the interaction with the other God Being, the One we later know as Jesus Christ, but in the Old Testament was known as The Word?

I can’t say for sure either way.

Here’s an excerpt from the UCG reading program, that helps us to see some of the complexity: “Job 1:6 tells us of a remarkable event—the “sons of God” coming to present themselves before the Lord. As the book later says that the “sons of God” were present at the creation of the earth (Job 38:6-7), it is clear that the reference is to the angels—God’s “sons” by virtue of His having created them. Even more remarkable on this occasion is that Satan comes among the angels appearing before God, leading to a dialogue between God and Satan. Many believe this event occurred in God’s heavenly court. Yet it seems highly unlikely that God the Father would allow Satan to be in His direct presence and defile His celestial throne room. Indeed, nothing

abominable or profane is permitted to enter the holy city of God, the New Jerusalem, that now waits in heaven (Revelation 21:27). God cast Satan down from heaven prior to man's creation and will later do so again at the end of the age in response to a last demonic assault. Why would the Father grant Satan casual access to heaven in between? In a related vein, some think Satan's constant accusation of God's people before God in Revelation 12:10 occurs in heaven. However, we should consider that whenever God's people pray to Him they are coming before His throne (see Hebrews 4:16). Surely Satan's words too, though spoken on earth, are heard before God the Father in heaven. Yet is that what was happening in the book of Job?

In considering the matter, it is nowhere specified that God in Job 1 was God the Father or that the Lord in this chapter was in heaven at all. It seems much more likely that the Lord here in the book of Job, who later spoke to Job, was God the Word (see John 1:1-3), the One who would become Jesus Christ (verse 14). The preincarnate Christ walked on the earth in patriarchal times. Recall that He was the Lord who walked and talked with Abraham while in the company of angels (see Genesis 18). God, as we know from other passages, has angels walking about on the earth who report back to Him. And consider that Ezekiel 1 and 10 portray the preincarnate Jesus in possession of a portable throne on which to travel about the world. With that in mind, it should be easier to imagine reconnoitering angels appearing before the preincarnate Christ somewhere *on the earth* and then Satan—whom God has allowed to remain as the ruler of this world for the time being—coming upon this gathering.” [END]

Verse 8 – Take note that it is God who brings up Job to Satan (not the other way around). This is important because God continues to work with His people (God calls Job His servant) in whatever state of refinement they are in. No one is ever so “blameless” that God says “I’m done here. Nothing else to do with this person.” As God’s people,

those God has called now to a relationship with Him, He continues to refine and complete us until the end of our life.

God repeats the high praise of Job found in verse 1 and adds “there is none like him on the earth”. Referring back to the introduction of this book, this would seem to indicate that the other patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) are not living at this time, and that at this time in human history, that Job stands alone in great character.

Verse 10 – Could be translated a “hedge” or “fence”.

Verse 12 – After God allows Satan the limit of destroying “all that he has”, Satan leaves the Lord’s presence. This word presence means “face, presence” and would indicate that Satan was talking face to face with the Lord in His literal presence.

Verse 13 to 19 – These verses describe the terrible events that were allowed by God to fall upon Job. I won’t go into these verses because I believe they read clearly.

Verse 21 – In the midst of unbelievable emotional pain and hardship, we see Job make an incredible statement: “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

This continues to speak to what a great person of faith and integrity that Job was.

Verse 22 – In his deep grief, Job did not sin or accuse God of wrong doing. Amazing!

The UCG reading program has more to add on this whole section from verse 8 to the end: “The Lord mentions the righteous life of Job to Satan, who is quick to argue that God has essentially “bought” Job’s loyalty through protecting and blessing him (Job 1:8-11). Take away the hedge of protection, Satan argues, and Job will “curse” God. We should note that, oddly enough, the word for the verb “curse” used throughout this passage (verses 5, 11; 2:5, 9), *barak*, normally actually means “bless.” Gleason Archer’s *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* offers this possible explanation: “The

verb *berak* means 'say goodbye to' in Genesis 24:60; [31:55]; Genesis 47:10; Joshua 22:6; 2 Samuel 13:25; and 1 Kings 8:66, generally with the connotation of invoking a parting blessing on the person taking his leave. From this usage we may surmise that an insolent sinner might say goodbye to God Himself, with the intention of dismissing Him from his mind and conscience, of totally abandoning Him.... [Commentator] Delitzsch (Keil and Delitzsch, Job, 2:51) calls this use of *berak* an antiphrastic euphemism. He feels that in Job 2:9 it clearly means... 'say goodbye to'...as a benedictory salutation at parting. But in his general handling of these negative usages, he prefers to render it 'dismiss God from one's heart' (ibid., 2:49)" (p. 237).

Surprisingly, God responds to Satan's challenge by putting Job's possessions and family in the destroyer's power. Yet note that God does not at this time permit Satan to do Job any bodily harm (verse 12). This demonstrates that God has total power over what Satan is permitted to do. While this fact should provide us with comfort, for many it is extremely disturbing that God would allow Satan to hurt Job in any way, especially given the great loss of family he suffers.

Verses 16 and 19 apparently speak of lightning and a destructive tornado respectively, showing that weather calamities can be acts of Satan. Yet these events were by the express permission of God...

Job 1:18-19 seems to say that Job lost all his children, though Job 19:17 may indicate that at least two of them were not in attendance at the ill-fated banquet and therefore survived. In any case, Job's loss of children and his wealth in a single day is difficult to fathom. Yet his reaction to it is stunning. Though he grieved deeply, Job's response was one of humbly worshiping God, acknowledging God's sovereignty over all circumstances (Job 1:20-21). This is truly amazing considering that Job did not have the special knowledge the reader of the account has regarding the discussion between God and Satan. Despite the horror of

what had happened, and the seeming abandonment by God that he must have felt, he did not sin (verse 22). Instead, God says that he held fast to his "integrity" (Job 2:3), the Hebrew word here having the same root as the word for "blameless" in chapter 1. In fact, "when Job said, 'May the name of the Lord be *praised*' (v. 21), he was using...the same word that Satan used in v. 11 as an euphemism with the opposite meaning. The play on the root *brk* ('bless') is forceful. It stresses how the Accuser is foiled at this point. Instead of cursing God to his face, Job praised him" (*Expositor's*, note on verses 20-22)." [END].

### Day 51 - MONDAY: December 19<sup>th</sup>

#### Job 2

#### Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 1 – Again, like chapter 1, we see the Adversary/Opponent, Satan, standing (Hebrew: “to station oneself”) before the Lord.

Verse 3 – Again, it is the Lord who brings up Job to Satan. He repeats again the high praise of Job, adding “And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

The UCG reading plan states “Once again, Satan comes upon an angelic presentation before God and God presents him with Job's unswerving devotion. This time Satan presses the issue by saying that if God will remove His protection and allow him to attack Job's physical health, Job will reject God as he had predicted. God then allows the devil to cross that line. But, demonstrating his power and authority over Satan, He still imposes a limit—Satan is not allowed to kill Job. Yet what Satan *is* allowed to do—afflict Job with painful boils from head to toe—was no doubt extremely and unrelentingly agonizing. And on top of the psychological pain of losing his family, it must have been all the more excruciating.”

It also records: "...You incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause" (Job 2:3). This may shockingly appear to say that there was no reason at all for what God allowed to befall Job—and that God can be

prodded into doing things contrary to His will. But this is not what God is saying. He is simply saying that Satan presented no reason for any punitive action against this man. Moreover, the fact that Satan was provocative does not mean that this is what motivated God to act. Indeed, God initiated the discussion with Satan over Job—surely knowing what Satan's response would be.” [END]

Verse 4 – Regarding “Skin for skin”, Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “That is, A man will part with all he has in the world to save his life; and he will part with all by piecemeal, till he has nothing left on earth, and even be thankful, provided his life be spared. Thou hast only destroyed his property; thou hast left him his life and his health. Thou hast not touched his flesh nor his bone; therefore, he is patient and resigned. Man, through the love of life, will go much farther: he will give up one member to save the rest; yea, limb after limb as long as there is hope that, by such sacrifices, life may be spared or prolonged. This is the meaning given to the passage by the Targum; and, I believe, the true one; hence, Job 2:6, the Lord says, Save his life.” [END]

Verse 7 – Satan is allowed by the Lord to strike Job with “painful boils”. The word “painful” is the common Hebrew word for bad or evil. The word “boil” means “boil, inflamed spot, inflammation, eruption” (BDB) and is the same word that is used in the plague of Egypt (Exodus 9:9-11). Job is covered over his whole body with these terrible boils. JFB commentary states: “malignant boils; rather, as it is singular in the *Hebrew*, a “burning sore.” Job was covered with one universal inflammation. The use of the potsherd [Job 2:8] agrees with this view. It was that form of leprosy called *black* (to distinguish it from the *white*), or *elephantiasis*, because the feet swell like those of the elephant.”

Adam Clarke’s adds: “His scraping himself with a potsherd indicates a disease accompanied with intolerable itching”

A “potsherd” is simply a piece of pottery/earthenware.

Verse 10 – The word translated “foolish women” means “foolish, senseless” and can be applied to men or women.

The UCG reading plan states: "Job's wife urges him to "curse God and die!" (verse 9). Many today imagine her as an impious, unsympathetic, bitter nag or even that she wanted to be rid of Job, thinking the loss of their children must have been his fault—that he had done something to deserve punishment from God. But it seems more likely that Job's wife, having been so close to him and witnessing his unceasing devotion to God even now, would have perceived him just as God described him—as blameless. We should consider that besides losing her family, she was now watching her husband suffer intolerable pain and anguish. It was no doubt difficult for her to understand why God would allow her faithful husband to be stricken. Indeed, it is difficult for most people *today* to understand it! She may well have been quite angry with God. Moreover, she perhaps said what she did thinking that Job's illness was terminal anyway and that he could with just a few words find immediate relief from his suffering." [END]

This verse ends by saying "In all this Job did not sin with his lips." It is amazing, in all that has occurred to both his family and his body, that Job has not allowed a single word of sin to pass from his lips. This is slightly different from what was said in Job 1:22.

Are we to assume this to mean that in his heart, he was starting to slip? Some commentators think so. I'm not sure.

James 3:2 tells us "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body."

Verse 11 – Job has three friends/associates arrive with the planned meeting together to comfort and mourn with Job.

Eliphaz the Temanite – From JFB "Eliphaz is an Idumean name, Esau's oldest son (Gen 36:4); and Teman, son of Eliphaz (Gen 36:15), called "duke." Eusebius places Teman in Arabia-Petraea (but see on Job 6:19). Teman means "at the right hand"; and then the south, namely, part of Idumea; capital of Edom (Amo 1:12). Hebrew geographers faced the



east, not the north as we do; hence with them “the right hand” was the south. Temanites were famed for wisdom (Jer 49:7).”

Bildad the Shuhite – From Adam Clarke’s commentary: “Shuah was the son of Abraham by Keturah: and his posterity is reckoned among the Easterns. It is supposed he should be placed with his brother Midian, and his brother’s sons Sheba and Dedan. See Gen 25:2, Gen 25:3.

Dedan was a city of Edom, see Jer 49:8, and seems to have been situated in its southern boundary, as Teman was in its western.

Eze 25:13.”

Zophar the Naamathite – It appears we understand the least about this friend’s background. From Adam Clarke “He most probably came from that Naamah, which was bordering upon the Edomites to the south”

From John Gill’s commentary: “Zophar the Naamathite, who he was, and why so called, is not certain; there is nothing but conjectures concerning him; it is most probable that he lived in Arabia Deserta, or on the borders of it, near to Job's country and that of his other two friends”

Verse 13 – I believe Job’s friends were most wise when they came and were there, yet, said nothing. Later we see them say a lot when it’s very clear, they knew next to nothing about what they spoke. I think this is a warning to all of us. We often don’t have the answers or understand what we think we do. God’s Word is truth and that we can rely on. Even then, we must take great care that we are using it appropriately.

Here’s what the UCG reading plan states about this moment: “Lastly in chapter 2, we see the coming of Job's three friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar (verse 11). It was evidently months before they got the news, arranged to meet and at last arrived (compare Job 7:3). Perhaps their initial intent was simply to go through a typical proper mourning ritual. But what they found made them aghast. It is evident that they cared for Job because they wept and remained close to him in silence for an

entire week (Job 2:12-13)—probably deeming it inappropriate to speak before Job himself spoke. Yet as we will see, these men will soon fail miserably in their role as Job's comforters, even wrongly accusing him of sin.

Finally, in looking at Job 1-2, people reasonably wonder why, if Job was such a devoted saint, God would allow Satan to harm him. The impression many have is that there was some kind of contest or one-upmanship going on between God and Satan—and that Job was just a pawn in this frivolous, heartless game. Indeed, many reject the story as fictitious for this reason, unable to accept that a loving God would ever hand his faithful servants over to Satan's abuses. But the perspective of Job as a pawn in some inane spiritual contest is totally off base. While the events of these chapters were probably intended to demonstrate God's sovereignty over Satan, we should note that the defeated enemy drops out of the account at this point—yet Job's suffering goes on. As we will see at the end of the book, Job, despite his upright character, still needed to grow spiritually and come to really know God. That being said, we should recognize that there is indeed an unwitting pawn in the story—Satan the devil. God, knowing Satan's nature and temperament, provokes him into taking action against Job—not to show Job's steadfastness off to His adversary but for the ultimate purpose of perfecting Job's character, making him an even better person than he was in preparation for a future in God's Kingdom.” [END]

Day 52 - TUESDAY: December 20<sup>th</sup>

Job 3

Daily Deep Dive:

After 7 days of mourning and saying nothing, Job finally speaks. It's clear from reading this chapter, that Job is very low. While Job is blameless, it doesn't make him somehow unaffected by this extreme grief. These chapters show that the process Job is working through is normal and not something God criticizes. I would encourage you to

read these chapters in a translation like the NLT. No translation is perfect, and I still regard the NKJV as the best English bible for detailed study, however, sometimes it's nice to have a translation that speaks in more plain English. My preference is the NLT in that regard, followed by the ERV (Easy to Read Version).

Verse 8 – The NKJV states “May those curse it who curse the day, Those who are ready to arouse Leviathan.”

In reading commentaries, it's clear they are all over the place on this verse and aren't sure it's meaning.

To me, it's interesting that the author uses two different Hebrew words for “curse” in this verse. Therefore, to me, it wasn't the authors intent to have them translated to the same thing. Both words are verbs.

The first “curse” means “to pierce, perforate, bore, appoint”.

The second “curse” comes from a root meaning “to feel or express a great loathing”.

It's my speculation that the author is saying something similar to...

“May those who express great loathing, pierce this day in such a way that they would awaken the Leviathan.

What was Leviathan? That's hard to answer and no one seems to know. We will cover this creature in great detail in Job 41, so we will save it for that time.

Verse 25 – Remember that back in Job 1, that he went above and beyond in making sacrifices to God for his children just in case they had sinned. He obviously deeply cared for his children and wanted them to be protected and blessed by God. Yet, his worst possible fears came true. How awful! I can't imagine the pain he was dealing with. I can't imagine if all that I loved and cared for was gone in an instant.

Here are some excerpts from the UCG reading program on this chapter: “A week after his friends arrive, when Job at last speaks, he is no longer the composed, almost stoic figure of the previous chapter. He pours out his heart in a flood of emotion, wishing he had never been born or

that he had died at birth. Some might argue that Job's pious integrity was based merely on personal advantage after all—that his faith and resolve were quickly overthrown. But that is much too hard of an evaluation. Recall that Job was evidently scraping at his unbearable sores and mulling over his plight for months at this point (see Job 7:3). People in agony and torment often cry out and say things they don't fully mean.”

“In verse 8, Job even expresses the wish that those "who curse the day"—perhaps meaning professional cursers like the false prophet Balaam (see Numbers 22-24)—had aimed their hexes at his date of birth. He refers to these cursers also as "those who are ready to arouse Leviathan." Leviathan was understood to be a monster or dragon of the deep. Perhaps the idea was that these cursers would call forth Leviathan to bring forth a deluge from the sea to cause utter calamity, in this case against his birthday. Such a statement from Job would not necessarily mean that he believed these cursers had such power. Rather, he could merely have been lamenting: *If only they could have...and if only they did.* Yet we should consider that Leviathan, as we will later see in our reading of chapter 41, may on some level be a figurative description of Satan. If that was in Job's thinking, then perhaps he knew that the cursers did have access to real spiritual power—that of the devil—to work dark magic and decree hexes. The irony here would be immense: *If only the devil had killed me...*

The irony is even greater near the end of the chapter. Job, longing for death to end his suffering (verses 20-23), perceived that it was God's protective hedge that kept at bay the death for which he longed (see verse 23). How true this was! Note here that Job was in no way contemplating suicide. As much as he wanted to die, he realized that life and death were within God's purview alone (see also Job 7:15-21; Job 10:18-22). Indeed, we should observe that in all Job said, he did not reject God or God's laws.

In Job 3:25, Job surprisingly reveals that he has lived in fear of what has befallen him. *The Bible Reader's Companion* suggests in its note on this verse: "This may be the key to the reason God permitted Job's suffering. Job fears God and tries to serve Him. Yet he also fears the future. Perhaps through his experience Job will find a deeper faith, one that frees him from terror of the future and permits a deeper love of God."

Finally, in ending his opening speech with the words, "I have no rest, for trouble comes" (verse 26), Job seems to recognize that the coming of his friends brings fresh turmoil and discomfort. It is likely that he well knew that his friends would view his suffering as evidence of sin and therefore hypocrisy. This, then, gives the starting point to the great controversy of the book that follows." [END]

### Day 53 - WEDNESDAY: December 21<sup>st</sup>

Job 4 & 5

Daily Deep Dive:

We are about to receive a crash course in what not to do when someone has lost a loved one, or is in the midst of a great trial.

Verse 5 – After seeming to praise Job in verse 3 and 4 for helping others who were in difficult positions, the praise turns to criticism. Eliphaz essentially says, "you can talk the talk, but not walk the walk."

Verse 7 – In this verse begins the real argument of Eliphaz. He and his friends are confident that Job must have sinned and brought this on himself, because they believe confidently, that God would not let this happen to Job if he was innocent. Their assumption is completely wrong. We already know that from the first couple chapters.

Verse 8 – Much of these words are a mixture of truth and falsehood. It is true that God's Word says we essentially "reap what we sow". Of course we also see in God's Word that not everything bad that happens is because someone brought it upon oneself.

The UCG reading plan states: “Among Job's friends, Eliphaz the Temanite speaks first, showing him probably to be the oldest and likely reckoned as the wisest. As we will see, Eliphaz is the kindest of the three in his remarks to Job. This, however, is not to say that his remarks are kind. He begins by saying that Job, a counselor and comforter to others, is not able to be bolstered by his own typical consolation (Job 4:1-6). We then see that Eliphaz is convinced that God would not punish the truly righteous or sustain the wicked, and that he believes Job must have sinned to be deserving of such calamitous experiences.” [END]

Verses 10 & 11 – Jamieson-Faucet-Brown states: “Five different *Hebrew* terms here occur for “lion.” The raging of the lion (*the tearer*), and the roaring of the *bellowing lion* and the teeth of the *young lions*, not *whelps*, but grown up enough to hunt for prey. The *strong* lion, the whelps of the *lioness* (not the *stout lion*, as in *English Version*) [Barnes and Umbreit]. The various phases of wickedness are expressed by this variety of terms: obliquely, Job, his wife, and children, may be hinted at by the lion, lioness, and whelps. The one verb, “are broken,” does not suit both subjects; therefore, supply “the roaring of the bellowing lion *is silenced.*” The strong lion dies of want at last, and the whelps, torn from the mother, are scattered, and the race becomes extinct.” [END]

Here's what the UCG reading program states about these verses: “The “lions” of verse 10 are figuratively the wicked—though whether this is a statement about the wicked in general or one intended to directly identify Job is not clear. Of course, even if generalized, Job and his family seem to be at least indirectly likened to the decimated pride of lions here. Indeed, this begins to exemplify the whole problem with Job's friends, as we will see. We later are told that Job's three friends have not spoken what is right concerning God (Job 42:7-8). While many of the ideas they express are true in a general sense, these concepts do not apply universally—and they did not apply in Job's case, as God declared him blameless and upright.” [END]

The UCG reading concludes this chapter with these remarks: “To bolster his case, Eliphaz remarkably points to some sort of night vision or dream wherein a spirit communicated with him (Job 4:12-17). Whether this was a made-up story, his imagination or a real encounter—be it with God, a heavenly angel or a demonic imposter—we have no way of knowing. The statement of verse 17 has traditionally been translated as asking if a mortal man can be more righteous and purer than God. However, there would hardly seem to be a question about that. "Many grammarians...render it 'Can a mortal be found righteous in the presence of God?'" (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, note on verses 12-21; compare NRSV). The point would be that Job was certainly guilty of some sin. While this idea was true on the face of it—and is even part of what Job comes to understand more fully at the end of the book—Eliphaz's application of this truth with respect to Job was wrong, as he was trying to prove that Job's suffering was directly related to some particular sin or sins he had committed.”

[END]

#### Chapter 5:

The UCG Reading adds this about chapter 5: “Eliphaz's advice in Job 5:8—that Job should turn to God for help—was probably rather condescending. Given even the little we know of Job from the narrative so far, we would have to assume that he was a praying person. Surely Eliphaz, an actual companion of this righteous man, knew this too. "How strange to assume that Job hasn't sought God. The advice to 'just pray about it' must seem terribly trite to someone who has been pouring out his heart to God in utter anguish" (*Bible Reader's Companion*, note on verse 8).”

Verses 9 – 16: It's not that everything Eliphaz states is wrong. We see here many true statements, but their assumptions about Job are off base.

The UCG reading plan brings out the following: “Interestingly, the apostle Paul quoted the words of Eliphaz in Job 5:13—about God catching the wise in their own craftiness—as authoritative Scripture, introducing them with the phrase "It is written" (1 Corinthians 3:19). "This serves as a reminder," notes Gleason Archer in the *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, "that many of the general principles the comforters brought up in their dialogue with Job were quite true in themselves, even though they may not have been appropriate to Job's situation, and may by inference have been grossly unfair to him. But we should remember that Job himself declared to them, 'Who does not know such things as these?' (12:3)—i.e., those religious platitudes that they had been preaching to him" (p. 396). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* suggests that all of Eliphaz's words in Job 5:9-16 (including verse 13, quoted by Paul) constitute a creedal hymn. Indeed, these words may have been part of a psalm already extant within Abraham's family that Eliphaz himself was just quoting...

...Once more, the sentiments here are true when applied generally. But Eliphaz was misapplying them—not just in perceiving Job as having sinned to deserve punishment but in the heartless, tactless proclamation of these truths to one who needed comfort. Eliphaz says, for instance, that as part of the results of accepting God's discipline, "You will know that your children will be many" (Job 5:25, NIV)—thoughtless of the awful fact that Job's children were dead.

This should serve as a lesson to us of what not to do when people are deeply hurting. Job's friends were at their best when they wept for him and kept quiet. It's when they opened their mouths and started "preaching" at him—with terribly wrong assumptions moreover—that they went off course. We should never approach others suffering loss of loved ones or terminal illness and start in on them with what they should do to prevent such problems or how to get straightened out.



Eliphaz's patronizing attitude in verse 27 made the situation all the worse—and totally misrepresented God. As *The Bible Reader's Companion* notes: "Eliphaz has neatly packaged his God as one who must act according to his understanding. After all, if the innocent never perish, and if God hears their appeals, all Job has to do is pray and be healed! Eliphaz never stops to think how presumptuous it is to limit God by his own fallible reasoning. How foolish are the many Eliphazes among us, whose assurances that 'if you only have enough faith you'll be healed' are just as superficial, harmful, and wrong." [END]

#### Day 54 - THURSDAY: December 22<sup>nd</sup>

##### Job 6 & 7

##### Daily Deep Dive:

Job allows Eliphaz to make his statements and hears him out. He fully listens before responding.

Verse 2 – Have you ever hoped that some trial you were going through could be officially measured? Maybe the pain you experience due to a bad back or joint? Maybe how awful you feel due to disease? Or maybe like Job, you wish that your grief could be officially measured so that people could understand in some measurable way what you are dealing with and treat you with understanding!

The UCG reading plan comments on many of the chapters verses by saying: "Job begins his response with an admission that, due to his severe circumstances, his words have been rash (Job 6:3). It seems that his point here is to inform his friends that they should not pick over everything he says, as much of it is just anguish and venting.

Eliphaz, we may recall, had told Job to turn to God (Job 5:8). Yet Job had no doubt spent much time in prayer. By this point, however, Job has come to regard his situation as one of being pierced through with poison arrows from God. Thus, relief did not seem to immediately lie in that direction (Job 6:4). Instead, he saw a need for relief and comfort from his friends.

In verse 5 Job pointed out that donkeys and oxen cried out when they were hungry. He was, by analogy, saying that he himself was crying out because he was in need of nourishment—the nourishment in his case being the relief and comfort he sought. Yet the tasteless "food" that Eliphaz had thus far provided turned Job's stomach (verses 6-7).

In verses 8-9 Job again wishes for God to bring him the sure relief of death. Verse 10, in which the translation is disputed, seems to be saying that if he died right now, Job would still find comfort beyond death because he did not live apart from God's words in his life. The implicit concern, though, is that if his present circumstances continue, he may indeed reject God and lose his future reward. For how, he wonders, can he go on (verses 11-13).

In verse 14, Job says that a suffering person's friends should treat him kindly even when that friend turns from God. That is, while it might look like there is a pressing need to "save" a suffering sinner by preaching to him and warning him, the more immediate need is actually for compassion. This does not mean there is no place for spiritual advice. But it must come with proper tact and timing—and wisdom." [END]

Verse 14 – I want to interject another possible translation of verse 14 that is backed up by multiple commentaries (Adam Clarke's & Gill's).

NLT - **Job 6:14** "One should be kind to a fainting friend, but you accuse me without any fear of the Almighty.

Back to the UCG reading plan: "Job likens his companions to desert wadis that look promising as sources of water from afar but evoke great disappointment when they are found dried up (verses 15-21). He had not asked them for some great thing like a ransom or military help to rescue him (verses 22-23). All he was asking for was simple human

kindness. The arguments he had heard thus far were not only worthless to him, but accusatory and unjust (verses 24-30)—and not at all what he needed right now.” [END]

Verse 30 – Have you ever felt that by your proven character, someone you consider a close friend should know better than to either believe something about you, or think so little of you? Job was a man of great character and his friends should have given him more credit than immediately assuming he has some hidden sin.

## Chapter 7:

Verse 1 – Job starts by saying, “Is not all human life a struggle?” (NLT). The answer is yes, human life in this world is a struggle. Back in Genesis 3, when mankind were made to leave the garden God had prepared for them, he told them life was going to be hard now and it has been. It’s not that we don’t all have some good times too, but life is difficult. For us as Christians, we are reminded in Act 14:22: “We must through many tribulations (pressures/afflictions) enter the kingdom of God.” The Bay Area congregations are used to me saying: “We don’t get to enter the Kingdom of God on a cruise ship.”

The UCG reading plan states about the beginning of this chapter: “In chapter 7, Job sinks back into lamenting his condition. He views himself like a weary laborer in drudgery and toil beneath the heat of the sun looking for shade or the end of the workday (verses 1-2). Yet the end of the day, when night comes, is no relief to him at all as he struggles with the unceasing agony of his illness, which he has suffered with for months (verses 3-5).”

Verse 5 – Here we get a glimpse into the terrible misery that Job is going through. His body having broken out in these terrible boils from head to toe, is now covered in scabs from the scraping and his body

trying to heal. As he has been sitting on the ground, maggots/worms have found his broken flesh. What an awful state he is in.

Verse 6 – A weaver’s shuttle were tools (of various sorts from simple to complex) for the use of holding yarn and aiding a person in weaving clothes, blankets, etc...

The UCG reading plan finishes this chapter with these words: “Job perceives his days as running out fast. And in the time he has left, he wants some answers from God (verses 6-11). Why, he prays, are You doing this to me? What have I done to deserve this? (verses 12-20). Why, he asks, won't You forgive me? It looks like You are going to let me die unrepentant without showing me what I need to repent of—so that I will be lost forever (verse 21).

*As The Expositor's Bible Commentary* notes regarding the dispute of chapters 3-27, "Job repeatedly struggles over God's justice and his own vindication." This will get worse as we go along. How is it then that God will later proclaim Job right and his friends wrong? The commentary continues: "A significant difference between their speeches comes from a difference in relationship with God. Job is determined to be absolutely honest with God. Job tells God everything, every tear and every doubt. They tell God nothing. They only talk about God, never to him. This should be kept in mind as we become impatient with Job. We should also keep in mind that despite all the hair-raising things Job will say, he never asks for restoration. His main concern is about his relationship with God, and that is why he puts so much stress on vindication. Without vindication all that he is suffering is proof God is his enemy. So when Job calls God his enemy, the reader must remember these are words of poetic passion used analogically as the total context proves."

Job was not penning a theological treatise in what he was saying. Rather, he was pouring out his heart in a flood of emotion. And he was pouring it out in the right direction. For if one is going to complain (Job 7:11), God is the proper "complaint department," as He is the One who has the power to resolve any and all complaints. What is most remarkable about Job is that despite the fact that he sees his grief and suffering as coming from God, he is nevertheless determined to "hang in there" with God. Hoping when there is no hope. Believing beyond seeing." [END]

Day 55 - FRIDAY: December 23<sup>rd</sup>

Job 8

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 4 – What an awful thing to say to someone who is grieving the loss of his family. To state that they got what they deserved is awful. May we never be this kind of friend.

The UCG reading program for this chapter states: "Bildad the Shuhite now answers. Eliphaz had started by "attempting a word" (see Job 4:2). Bildad, in contrast, opens by outright blasting Job, asking him how long he would spew forth his nonsense. In verse 2 of chapter 8, "Bildad twists Job's words of Job 6:26. Job had acknowledged that he had overreacted with words that belonged to the wind. To paraphrase Bildad's sarcastic response: 'Yes, you're right, Job! All your words are like a mighty wind; you are full of hot air!'" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on 8:2).

This demonstrates that Bildad had listened to what Job said—but only with his ears and not with his heart. Job had described himself as helpless and full of despair (Job 6:13-14; Job 6:26). He had pleaded for comfort and compassion from his friends. Yet, while Bildad had silently mourned with Job for a week, what was his response now? "It seems almost incredible that Bildad would reply so callously. There is not only

steely indifference to Job's plight but an arrogant certainty that Job's children got just what they deserved and that Job was well on his way to the same fate. The lesson we must learn is that there are such people in the world and that they do their heartless disservice to mankind under the guise of being the special friend of God" (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, note on chapter 8).

Bildad's reaction was evidently wholly focused on Job's challenge in 6:24: "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; cause me to understand wherein I have erred." Bildad did not have a specific answer for Job. He was more concerned with the implication that Job had done nothing wrong to deserve what was happening to him. This contradicted his theological worldview. In chapter 8, Bildad's "one and only theological point [was that] Job's suffering was the proof of his sinfulness. Since God cannot be unjust (v. 3), there is only one conclusion—Job and his family (v. 4) had received the punishment they deserved. Job should plead for mercy (v. 5). Then, if he deserved it (v. 6), God would restore him (v. 7). Bildad failed to see that mercy implies the forgiveness one receives even though he does *not* deserve it" (note on verses 1-10). Indeed, the fact that all people are wholly undeserving of God's grace is one of the great lessons of the book.

In support of his views, Bildad invokes the tradition of the fathers of times past (verses 8-10). The poetic discourse beginning in verse 11 appears to be quoting from this tradition. As with Eliphaz, it may be that Bildad is here quoting from an extant psalm—perhaps one that was known to Abraham and Isaac or possibly even written by them. Again, the principles espoused here are generally true, as Job himself will acknowledge (Job 9:1-2). It is Bildad's application of them with respect to Job that is the problem.

Verse 13 of chapter 8 speaks of the hope of the hypocrite perishing. Bildad reckoned that Job must surely have been a hypocrite. For while

Job maintained his innocence, his suffering, Bildad reasoned, was proof of sin. The faulty premise here led to a completely wrong conclusion. His earlier remark, "*If you were pure and upright...*" (verse 6), was meant exactly as it sounded—to indicate that Job obviously was not.

Continuing in the poetic discourse, by applying the metaphor of the fleeting and frail spider's web of verses 14-15 to the present situation, Bildad implied that Job had trusted in his wealth and estate rather than in God. This was not true. Recall that after the listing of Job's possessions in 1:3 we immediately learned that he was constantly concerned about his family's devotion to God (Job 1:4-5).

The Hebrew at the end of Job 8:16-19 is difficult and the translation is disputed. The New Living Translation renders the passage this way: "The godless seem so strong, like a lush plant growing in the sunshine, its branches spreading across the garden. Its roots grow down through a pile of rocks to hold it firm. But when it is uprooted, it isn't even missed! That is the end of its life, and others spring up from the earth to replace it."

In verse 21, it is true that God will not ultimately cast away the blameless and uphold evildoers. Yet this does not mean that God will not allow the blameless to suffer or even to die. Nor does it mean that God will not, for the time being, sustain the lives of the disobedient. God in many ways sustains the whole disobedient human race—for now. But in the end, those who remain faithful to Him will be eternally preserved and those who choose to ultimately and forever reject Him will be destroyed. Once more, Bildad misapplied this general truth—seeing Job's immediate suffering as proof that he could not be blameless." [END]

Day 56 - SATURDAY: December 24<sup>th</sup>

## Job 9 & 10

### Daily Deep Dive:

#### Chapter 9:

I'll make a few comments before pasting in the UCG reading plan:

Verse 11 – I think we all have felt this way. We know God exists, we know He is perfect and Holy, yet, we can't sit and talk with Him face to face and we don't get to ask Him direct questions etc. Therefore we can feel an emptiness in that, especially in the midst of trials.

Verse 22 – 23 – Certainly Job makes some wrong statements. He feels as if God doesn't care and doesn't differentiate between the righteous and the unrighteous, but certainly that isn't true and God doesn't laugh when bad things happen to His people.

Here's the UCG reading plan for chapter 9:

“Job acknowledges that what Bildad has said is true in principle (Job 9:1-2). Yet he views himself as innocent—the intended nuance of the word "righteous" in verse 2. That is, "not absolutely sinless, but innocent of any sin comparable to his suffering" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verse 28).

Job's despairing point here and in what follows is to say: How can I be found innocent before God when God, who is omnipotent and the ultimate Judge, has set Himself against me? In its note on verse 3, *The Nelson Study Bible* states: "The verb *to contend* indicates that Job was considering the idea of entering a legal case against God. The prophets often used this word when speaking of God bringing a legal case against Israel (Isaiah 1:2; Micah 6:1). The Hebrew for *contend* is almost always used metaphorically in Job, referring to a 'lawsuit' between Job and God. Job's legal dilemma before the Lord, who served simultaneously as Job's judge and legal adversary (see [Job] 13:20-28), underscores the urgency and hopelessness of Job's call for a mediator to hear his case ([Job 9] v. 33). Job calculates that the chances of answering God's



interrogation are very slim, one in a thousand—something God later verifies (see Job 38:1-42:6). The legal term *answer* means to respond to an accusation in court, particularly under cross-examination."

Job mentions in Job 9:9 that God is responsible for the configuration of the stars in forming constellations, a fact noted later in Amos 5:8. God will later confront Job with this fact (see Job 38:31-33). Indeed, in Job 9:10 Job acknowledges that God does great things past finding out. Job should have applied that to his own situation rather than demanding a full explanation of what God was doing. Of course, considering the unimaginable ordeal he was going through, it is completely understandable that Job was not always perfectly rational in his thinking. Auschwitz survivor Primo Levi wrote: "Imagine how a man who is deprived of everyone he loves, and at the same time of his house, his habits, his clothes, in short, of everything he possesses: he will be a hollow man, reduced to suffering and needs, forgetful of dignity and restraint, for he who loses all often easily loses himself" (*Survival in Auschwitz*, 1958).

In his anguish and confusion, Job begins to consider some disturbing notions about God. As *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* summarizes: "Would God ever treat him justly? He doubted it (vv. 14-31). Does God mock the innocent? Job thought probably so (vv. 21-24). 'If it is not he, then who is it?' (v. 24). These are hard words, but his question instead of a statement implies doubt. These words are followed in vv. 32-35 with a yearning for someone strong enough to take up his cause with God. " [END]

Chapter 10:

Verse 2 – Job wants to understand. It's so hard to suffer and not understand what God is doing and why he is allowing your suffering to take place. It would be so much easier for Job to endure if he could talk

to God and have God explain the situation to him and answer his questions.

“in chapter 10 Job decided to plead his own cause and direct all his words to God. How could God who created him [with such obvious care] want to destroy him and that without any formal charges?” (note on Job 9-10). Job wanted to know what he did that was wrong. No doubt, he had been examining himself for months and remembering that he had tried so hard to please God in every detail—to the point God said he was blameless. Considering what he endured, the wonder of all of Job's rhetoric is that he managed to stay so sane.

Regarding Job 10:17, *The Nelson Study Bible* notes: "The phrase *you renew your witnesses against me* is a legal metaphor that may refer to each new aspect of Job's illness. In the equivalent *war* metaphor, the Lord was sending *changes* or troop reinforcements against him." This could even refer to Job's friends. Perhaps Job viewed them as sent by God to condemn him further.

Job ends by asking God to leave him alone in the few days he thinks he has left before he dies. He equates death here with utter darkness (verses 20-22).” [END]