

1. Job 26-29:
 - A. Chapter 26 – Job’s answer to Bildad’s 3rd and final speech.
 - B. Chapter 27 – Job’s collective answer to all that has been said by his “comforters”
 - C. Chapter 28 – A poetic ode to wisdom, much like the Book of Proverbs
 - D. The beginning of a new section of the book

2. We need to learn from the mistakes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. We need to listen and be more deliberate (careful) of what we say and how we say it.

3. Job’s response to Bildad’s final speech:
 - A. ‘I know about the power and greatness of God, but I see just the faintest whisper of Him.’
 - B. We cannot neatly package up the ways and works of God. It is better to simply say, “I don’t understand.”

4. Job’s collective answer to his friends:
 - A. They will never agree with him about his innocence.
 - B. They do agree on 2 things - the mighty power of God and the fate of the wicked.
 - C. They disagree on this: automatically assuming adversity s a sign of God’s punishment.

5. A theology of sickness and adversity:
 - A. It can be that we are being punished for sin. (1 Corinthians 11)
 - B. God is allowing Satan to test us. (Job 1)
 - C. We are being equipped for ministry to others who are suffering (2 Corinthians 1)
 - D. It is “training in righteousness” – faith building. (The Red Sea)
 - E. It is a way to teach what we would not otherwise learn. (Paul’s thorn in the flesh)
 - F. God’s tool to transition us to new and better things. (Example – death)

6. Chapter 28 reads like the Book of Proverbs. Wisdom is:
 - A. The most valuable of all commodities
 - B. Incredibly difficult to acquire
 - C. “The fear of the Lord” (and understanding is the shunning of evil)
 - D. This poem is a bridge between Job’s thoughts and his friends’ speeches, and God’s speech in Chapters 38-42. (Tunnel)

7. Chapter 29 – A look at Job’s life before Satan tested him
 - A. “God’s council was in my tent.”
 - B. My children were around me.
 - C. I was honored and respected by everyone, not only for my wealth, but my life.
 - D. I never turned the needy away; I helped the poor and the orphans; I befriended the bereaved; I was kind to beggars; I helped strangers.
 - E. I stood up to the wicked.

8. Because of all this, everyone wanted to hear what he had to say. But now that he is poor, weak, old and sick, that is not the case. And that was their loss.

1. Job 30-32 – the end of the second section of the book
 - A. Chapters 1-2 – first section of Job
 - B. Chapters 3-31 – The interaction between Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar – 3 cycles (2 for Zophar) of them ‘explaining’ and ‘exhorting’ Job, and Job’s responses
 - C. Job’s response in what we read today:
 - 1) He is bitterly reflecting upon his life as it is now.
 - 2) “...I sign now my defense – let the Almighty answer me...”
 - D. Chapter 31: “The words of Job are ended.”
2. Who won the argument between Job and his friends? No one – it is a stalemate. If the book ended with Chapter 31, we might be tempted to say that Job is innocent and God is guilty.
3. Elihu begins to speak in Chapter 32.
 - A. He has been there for a while and has been silent because of his youth, but he cannot refrain from speaking any longer.
 - 1) He is angry with Job for defending himself at the expense of God’s honor.
 - 2) He is angry with the friends for their inability to listen to Job and answer him.
 - 3) Elihu will point us in a different direction – he will look higher.
4. Wisdom does come with age, but the young can also be wise if their wisdom comes from the Holy Spirit. As Paul said to Timothy, “Let no one despise your youth...”
5. Who do we choose to honor?
 - A. We should honor the wise and the righteous.
 - B. We often honor the affluent and the powerful.
6. Job was a real man, Uz was a real place, angels and demons are real beings. The Bible refers to Job in other places (Ezekial 14 for one). The Book of Job is real history.

1. Job 33-35 – Elihu makes 4 speeches, to which Job does not respond.

2. Elihu differs from the 3 friends in that he sees the possibility of suffering for other reasons –
Speech 1:
 - A. God wants to teach, not harm, Job.
 - B. Some suffering is chastening.
 - C. Suffering can be redemptive, not punitive, in nature.
 - 1) Punishment is retribution and the satisfaction of justice.
 - 2) Chastening has a redemptive goal. (“Whoever the Lord loves, He chastens...”
– Hebrews 12:6)

3. Speech 2: Chapter 34 – Elihu defends the justice of God.
 - A. “Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong.”
 - B. Elihu thinks Job has sinned in his response towards God.
 - C. Elihu reflects on the providence of God in our lives: “...if He withdrew His Spirit and His breath, all mankind would perish...” (Hebrews 1 - “He (Jesus) upholds all things by His powerful Word.”)

4. Speech 3: Chapter 35 – Elihu challenges the inconsistency he sees in Job’s thinking.
 - A. Job accuses God of injustice.
 - B. Job insists God will vindicate him.
 - C. We appeal to God for justice and deliverance while at the same time railing at Him for His dealings with us.

5. Is Elihu another self-righteous judge or someone who really does want to help Job, but cannot compromise the justice and character of God?

6. Elihu’s concern - Job had lost his family, wealth, friends and health. He does not want Job to lose his God as well.

1. Job 36-38 – Elihu has finished and we begin to hear from the Lord Himself.
2. Elihu's 4th speech:
 - A. 36:14 – His opening words – 2 ways to interpret them:
 - 1) 'My knowledge comes from God and I will make sure that His character remains unimpugned with regard to His justice. Job, you can rely on this, because I have complete knowledge.'
 - a) This view sees Elihu as a prophet and his words take on greater significance.
 - b) All affliction is then seen as chastening, not because of a particular sin, but because our natures need to be corrected and shaped into a more godly pattern.
 - 2) Separate his words of assurance that his words being reliable from the statement, "One perfect in knowledge is with you."
 - a) He is speaking then about God here and not himself.
 - b) He is comforting Job with the statement that God is always present. This is Elihu's opinion as a human being.
3. The original "autograph" and the oldest copy of the Book of Job contain no punctuation, so "One perfect in knowledge" could be the end of the first paragraph or the beginning of the second. Either way, Elihu is not being arrogant – he is either a prophet or he is comforting Job with the knowledge that God is with him.
4. Elihu's last speech: Although he does not completely answer the problem of evil for us, he helps us with it.
 - A. He insists that God knows what is going on. "God does not take His eyes off the righteous."
 - B. He refuses to say that God is not good. "God is wooing you from the jaws of distress to a spacious place free of destruction..."
 - C. Evil and suffering cannot be accounted for in any way by limiting the power of God. "...How great is God."
5. According to Elihu, why is Job sitting on an ash heap if God is so good and powerful?
 - A. Job is being chastened so that God can shape and build character in him. There is a strong parallel to 1 Peter.
 - B. His concern is to counsel Job in the proper response to suffering.
 - C. Don't argue your case before God; just worship and trust Him.
6. Chapter 38 – Job hears directly from God "out of the storm".
 - A. Connection between Job 38 and Isaiah 40-41: God's power is being compared to the impotence of idols.
 - B. In Job 38-41, God Himself is speaking to us about His sovereignty, wisdom, power and authority. (This is holy ground...)
 - C. "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?"
 - 1) Job is ignorant and impotent.
 - 2) The effect – to humble the one that might dare to question God.
 - D. God asks a series of more than 30 questions, just in Chapter 38.
 - A. They focus on God's power and wisdom.
 - B. If we focus on those 2 things, we will end up in worship.

1. Job 39-42 – we finished the book. As we began today’s reading, God is still asking Job questions.
 - A. The questions underscore Job’s finiteness and God’s omniscience and omnipotence.
 - B. Their purpose is to help Job understand how wrong it is for the creature to question the workings of the Creator.
 - C. These are the questions we must confront when we think we have a better plan than God; the beginning of Chapter 40 is the hinge-pin of the whole Book of Job:
 - 1) Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?
 - 2) Would you discredit my justice?
 - 3) Would you condemn me to justify yourself?

2. Several things to notice together:
 - A. God never gives Job an explanation for the trial he has endured. (He does vindicate Job’s righteousness in his rebuke of Job’s friends, so they know that this affliction was not the result of sin.)
 - 1) We too will pass through trials that we may never understand on this earth. God the Creator, though He loves us, does not owe us, the Creatures, an explanation (the point of Romans 9).
 - 2) In the end, Job got the point and did require not an explanation. “I know that you can do all things, no plan of yours can be thwarted... Surely I spoke things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know... My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42:1-6)

3. Job’s encounter with a sovereign God has left him with the understanding that knowing who God is, is more important than having an explanation of his trial. (And this was before God restored all that had been taken from him.) Job learned with his heart what he had known in his head – God was the sovereign, omnipotent Creator and he was a finite, fallen, fragile Creature.
 - A. After the questioning by God, Job is completely satisfied that God is all-powerful.
 - B. He is also confident that God is aware of everything that is happening in the universe.
 - C. God addresses the issue of His caring, love and justice.

4. If we can, in the midst of adversity, still affirm that God is all-powerful, all-knowing, good and just, then we can, with Job, shut our mouths and simply trust Him.

5. “It is Well with my Soul” – a hymn written by a man who had lost his job, his fortune and part of his family in a shipwreck, all in the space of a few weeks. “When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrow like sea billows roll, whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, “It is well, it is well. With my soul.”

6. Satan’s plan was thwarted. Satan failed! In the end, he always does.