

## Job 12

### Job's Answer to His Critics

1. Retort to the three V 12:1-12
  - a. Sarcastically responded to Zophar's calling him a stupid donkey (11:12) friends thought they were so smart that all wisdom would die with them.
    - i. Job might have been hurting but he can still think.
    - ii. He was not inferior; what they said was common knowledge to the people of the time.
  - b. Job was mocked by friends , verb used has a negative context in Ps 2:4 but reflects joy and laughter in Gen 21:6 Sarah giving birth
    - i. God used to respond to Job's prayer but now even though still blameless God had let Job become a Laughing stock.
    - ii. Seemed unfair to Job who observed that men at ease (3 advisor or friends) toward his misfortunes while tents of the wicked prosper. (remember they all lived in tents at this time) Lawrence of Arabia
    - iii. Why should idolatry prosper while Job a man of true piety suffers
  - c. Verses 12:7-8 is talking about animal's that will sing
    - i. Back to Donkey; Job said that animals are smarter; even the earth, animals know that calamities come from the Hand of God; they also know that their very breath comes from God.
    - ii. Job said he could see through his friends faulty argument Just as his tongue tasted food
      1. He was surprised the 3 friends were not displaying wisdom which normally accompanies age
      2. So by the end of verse 12 Job has responded to all three of his friends.
  - d. The word "Lord" (Yahweh) only occurs here in the poetic discourse; only other places it appears in Job is in Chapters 1, 2, 38, 40 and 42.
    - i. Therefore some scholars think this might be a later insertion

- ii. However the name “Lord” is intentionally conspicuous here by its rare occurrence within the debates. All other times it appears in Prose Narratives.
- 2. Job’s recounting of God’s wisdom and power V:12:13-16
  - a. Told friends that they were saying God was wise and powerful, but that he knew it better than they did.
    - i. God can reverse fortunes of leaders and even entire nations.
    - ii. God can control nature, tearing down what man had built, imprisoning man, bringing drought and flood.
- 3. All people are under God’s control V:12:17-21
  - a. Humbles the 3 counselors (3 friends) Judges Kings, priests, well established officials, advisors, Elders (V 20), nobles and the mighty.
- 4. Bringing to Light what is difficult to comprehend (mental darkness) V 12:22-25
  - a. God is sovereign over nations setting them up and letting them fail.
  - b. Lord can also darken leaders by depriving them of reason and send them into intellectual waste.
  - c. Normally expect leaders to be powerful and elders wise; God sometimes reverses that; Job’s advisers are older but not wiser.

### **Chapter 13**

- 1. Job had heard his friends and was not inferior to them. V 13:1-4
  - a. His friends were not the person Job wanted to debate, he wanted to debate God.
  - b. Did not want to waste time with friends who were smearing facts with lies.
- 2. V 13:5-12 Their words revealed their folly so their silence would show their wisdom
  - a. Do you know people like this?
  - b. Repeatedly he pleads for listening attentive ears not ignorant words. Prov. 17:28
    - i. Wanted his friends to listen to his arguments and his plea to God.

- ii. No good to them to be deceitful in accusing him of sin; for impartial God would not benefit from their partiality
- iii. They could not be defense attorneys because if God checked them out they could not deceive him, he would rebuke them.
- iv. The three were incompetent to counsel for their words were proverbs of ashes; fitting descriptions as we consider where Job was sitting.
  - 1. Arguments behind which they hid like fortresses made of weak clay, failed to help Job.

### 3. Verses 13:13-19

- a. Job was ready to speak out to God and to risk the consequences even though it meant risking his life. NIV margin notes “He will surely slay me” are much better rendering than “Though he slay me” which is in most other versions.
- b. Anticipating the jeopardy involved in his presenting his case to God; Job was determined to defend his case even though it might kill him.
- c. Willing to risk it because God might exonerate him.

### 4. V 13:14-16 Shows that Job is confused in his thinking

- a. Maybe God would kill him; but maybe not if defense well delivered.
- b. Job’s willingness to confront God showed he was not Godless
- c. Again asked so called attorneys (friends) to listen to his case.
- d. Contrasts with earlier words of despair; if anyone could possibly bring charges against him, only then could he be silent and die. His own silence would replace the silence requested from his friends.

### 5. Presentation of his case to God V13:20-28 or his Despondent Prayer

- a. Turns to God with his arguments
  - i. 1<sup>st</sup> request was God not to intimate him; the defendant in court has a right to a fair trial.
  - ii. Job offered to meet God as either a defendant or a plaintiff; but when he asked God about his sins, God did not appear in court
  - iii. Job asked God why he remained silent and considered Job his enemy

- iv. Why would God conjure up past sins of his adolescence and punish him for them.
- v. Why would God treat him like a prisoner watching him closely and marking his feet to trace him?
- b. After this sudden dash of daring Job quickly subsided into feeling of despair like a moth eaten garment

### Chapter 14 Job's Despair of Hope

1. Sudden change of mood from believing he could win his court case to a melancholy lament about life's futility and death's certainty.
2. V:14:1-6
  - a. Brevity of life
    - i. Men's few days are troublesome and brief
    - ii. Withering flowers and fading shadows
    - iii. Constantly under God's scrutiny and basically impure
  - b. Days and months set by God with time limits beyond which he cannot go.
  - c. Since man is so hemmed in and days limited the least that God could do is to turn away from gazing on him.
3. The futility of death V 14:7-17
  - a. Tree chopped down it will spring again from the roots
  - b. Personifying a tree as if it was nose; meaning the tree scenting water and growing.
  - c. Man dies, man has no such hope he is gone?
  - d. Man is not like a tree with roots sprout but like water vapor which changes and is gone ( 3 phases of water) Cannot be retrieved
    - i. Death is final
    - ii. Job is denying possibility of physical resurrection
    - iii. In verse 14 Job begins to question possibility of physical resurrection

- iv. This is answered in New Testament John 11:23-26. 1 Cor. 15:3-57; Is 26:19, Dan. 2:4
- v. Buried corpse cannot normally live again (exceptions?) but buried corpse would be one way to hide from God.
  - 1. Job thought he could handle it as long as God did not leave him as a corpse to long in the grave.
  - 2. Job said he was willing to wait out Hard Service (remember we talked about this earlier in the study) Death is like a discharge from Hard Service
  - 3. Person continues to exist after death because he is transferred from one condition to another.
- 4. Job came back to court V 14:15-17
  - a. Convinced God would call him because God would be longing to see him; since he was God's Handiwork
  - b. Job said that he would answer God when he spoke; but we see later that when God does speak to Job, he does not reply
- 5. Despondency again
  - a. Death would release him; no reprieve from grave
  - b. Like a crumbling mountain, stones worn away by water, soil washed away, so the hope of mortal man wears away.
  - c. In death Job thought man's pain is physical and mental. Job ends this in morose tone because he was in pain and without hope.