

Job 42

February 20, 2011

Confession and Conclusion

I. Suffering and Soul Searching

After establishing the backdrop for Job's suffering in the first two chapters, we have now studied 39 more chapters where his suffering has been the primary topic or the platform for discussion. When Job spoke we felt his personal soul searching concerning his horrible situation. Now we have come to the end of the book.

II. Job's Confession, Job 42:1-6

Job 42

1 Then Job replied to the Lord: 2 "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. 3 [You asked,] 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge? 'Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. 4 ["You said,] 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' 5 My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. 6 Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

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- 42:1: Finally Job finds His voice! He appears to be attempting an answer to God's words at the beginning of Chapter 40.
- 42:2: If God cannot be thwarted, why do some people (including us) sometimes attempt to do so? How has God's presentation of Behemoth and Leviathan help Job's understanding the truth of this verse?
- 42:3: "Wonderful" means beyond understanding.
- 42:3: Why is it important that we understand that God is beyond understanding? If you are speaking to an unbeliever, is it a weakness to admit that God moves in mysterious ways that are beyond our understanding? That we trust in God even though we do not fully understand Him or know what He is doing?
- 42:3-4: Job appears to quote God's statements as in Job 38:3 and 40:7.
- 42:5: How has Job "seen" God?
- 42:6: Verses 5 and 6 represent how we should all feel when we come into the presence of the almighty God. Isaiah said it this way:

Isa 6:5

5 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."

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- 42:6: Did Job learn anything from his suffering? If he did, it was the lesson that result in his statement in verses 5 and 6. Of course, we do not know much about the blameless and upright man of chapter 1 who feared God. Even though Job knew God before, his suffering has brought him closer to God. He knows God now even better afterwards than before.

42:6: It is not stated explicitly that Job has sinned (even though this writer believes that it is obvious that he has sinned). From what might he be repenting? (Note: Technically, “repenting” means that Job was going in a different direction.)

III. Disposition of the Friends, Job 42:7-9

Job 42:7-9

7 After the Lord had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. 8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the Lord told them; and the Lord accepted Job's prayer.

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- 42:7: Note that Elihu is not mentioned, but he said many of the same wrong things as the three “friends.”
- 42:7: We have seen Job repent. Now, we might view God’s statement of Job in this verse as vindication for him. Of course, it is good that Job of “words without knowledge” (re: Job 38:1) is taught or reminded of the greatness of God and Job’s unimportance relative to God.
- 42:7: How do you think that the three “friends” felt about what God has said to them, indicating that they are wrong? What do you think that they would say to Job when they spoke with him again?
- 42:8: The friends do what God tells them. They do not argue back to him. Perhaps they felt the same about God as did Job. Clearly, their sin in the incorrect way that they had characterized Job and God is obvious.
- 42:9: Why was Job’s prayer important (See 42:10 as well)? Was it helpful to the “friends”? Or was it for Job only?
- 42:9 Acceptance of Job’s prayer by God shows that the man is under God’s grace as are the friends.

IV. Job’s Restoration, Job:42:10-15

Job 42:10-16

10 After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before. 11 All his brothers and sisters and everyone who had known him before came and ate with him in his house. They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the Lord had brought upon him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring. 12 The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys. 13 And he also had seven sons and three daughters. 14 The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch. 15 Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.

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- 42:10: By praying for his friends, we know that Job has forgiven them. Interacting to the friends would probably have been a little awkward with him, but he was likely gracious to them, as God has been to him.
- 42:10: Note that we do not see Job asking for restitution of his past position, but God gives it to him anyway.
- 42:11: Notice that the Lord takes responsibility for what has happened to Job. Was the Lord correct in allowing Satan to test him?
- 42:11: Job had been an outcast, but now he is surrounded and supported once again by his family and friends. “Brothers” and “sisters” can include cousins.
- 42:11: The gifts were either likely to honor Job or to help make up for his financial loss, a stake to begin again...perhaps the gifts served both purposes.
- 42:12: Job had fabulous wealth at the beginning of the book. Now he has double the sheep, camels, oxen, and donkeys.
- 42:13: As has often been observed, he is blessed with only 10 children, rather than 20...the answer being that the other 10 are stored up in heaven.
- 42:14: Usually the sons are usually the ones noted in OT literatures, but here we have only the names of the daughters.
- 42:14: The names mean:
- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Jemimah: | Dove |
| Keziah | Cinnamon, a type of fragrance |
| Keren-Happuch | Horn of beauty (was beautiful without cosmetics) |
- 42:15: Typically only sons inherited. This verse probably indicates that the loving family of Job’s children as found in the beginning portions of the book are also present at the end of the book

V. A Happy Ending, Job 42:16-17

Job 42:16-17

16 After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. 17 And so he died, old and full of years.

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Job lives another 140 years old, twice the ideal age of Psalm 90, after his restitution. Satan does not appear to have any influence on Job or his family during the Job’s remaining life.

Satan is left out of the ending of this story: given that he deserves no part in it, his absence is totally appropriate. However, what do you think that Satan thought of Job now? Job had not “cursed” God as Satan contended that he would. Do you think that he would like to test the man some more? What else might he have done to Job? Job was not perfect as he agonized. Perhaps, Satan thought that he had won. Apparently God disagrees.

Note: The Septuagint has a long addition to the end of the book of Job, which begins with a statement that Job will be raised with those the Lord will raise. Then an extended genealogy is provided.

VI. Fellowship of Sharing in His Suffering

Earlier, we had spoken of the fellowship of sharing in His suffering:

Phil 3:10

10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

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How would you describe this fellowship?

The pastor has been going through James. How does this well-known verse relate to the fellowship of sharing in His suffering?

James 1:2-4

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

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Remember that James speaks of Job as an example of perseverance:

James 5:10-11

10 Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

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How would you use Job's perseverance as an example in your life?