

10b JOB

Let's resume our study now. We're in Job chapter 13, verse 20. Job, having prepared his friends, and having refuted them, and having gotten a little bit put out with them, and said some pretty harsh things to them, has said, listen, pay attention, I'm going to talk to God now.

You all keep telling me I need to talk to God, I'm going to go talk to Him. I find this particularly fascinating because you will remember just a couple of chapters ago, Job was saying how much he could not talk to God. Remember back in chapter 9, Job said, How then can I answer him, Job 9.14, and choose my words to reason with him? Though I were righteous, I could not answer him.

I would beg mercy of my judge. If I called and he answered me, I would not believe that he was listening to my voice. Remember that? Now, verse 22 of chapter 13, he says, Call, O Lord, and I will answer, or I will speak, and you respond to me.

So, I asked myself, what changed between chapter 9 and chapter 13? Well, who has spoken besides Job in the intervening time? Mr. Zophar. Mr. Zophar has spoken, and what did he say? Should a man full of talk be vindicated? That's what Zophar said. You big wind, you talk all the time and you don't get anything done.

Should your empty talk make men hold their peace when you mock? Should no one rebuke you? You said your doctrine is pure and you're clean. I wish God would speak and open His lips against you, that He would show you the secrets of wisdom. They would double your prudence.

Job, know therefore that God exacts from you less than your iniquity deserves. You're probably not getting half of what you really ought to be getting. Well, for some reason, mysterious to me, this changes Job's mind about whether or not he's going to talk to God.

I think he's just up to here with his friends, and he says, Alright, God may kill me, but it's better than listening to you three. And so he's going to go ahead and speak. Zophar has pushed him over the top.

He was trying to be reverent. He said, you know, it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. If I spoke, He might slay me.

And now Job says, If I speak and He slays me, fine. I mean, I will get resurrected, and it's better than listening to you lot. So, if you want to know what the difference is between chapter 9 and chapter 13, it's Zophar.

And you remember, that's a pretty no-nonsense speech that Zophar makes. And he pretty much says, Job, I don't care if you are sitting there scraping your boils, you goof. Why don't you get off the ash heap there and go talk to God.

And Job says, Alright, watch this. If I get struck with lightning, you know, you may want to step

back. And so now Job is going to do it.

But he has been more or less egged on to the point of disregarding his personal safety to end the abuse. That's fairly clear because it's a radically different approach. When you read chapter 9, he says, I wish there was a mediator.

I wish someone could speak. And now Job says, well, anything is better than this continuing. So, he says, only two things to not do.

And those two things are, please no more testing. And please no more silence. I really need an answer.

These three caravans have come and gone. And I'm standing here at the station watching the tumbleweeds go by. And there was no freight in the caravans.

Lord, as was pointed out on the break, you know, you expect that these are the wisest men in the land, wisest men of your friends. And they've got nothing. It reminds you of the people heckling the pitcher, you know, you've got nothing.

You're up there, you're winding up, and when you throw, the ball doesn't even make it to the plate. So, he says, two things to God. He says, please no more testing, and please no more silence, essentially.

Now, he's going to expand on that, beginning in verse 23. How many are my iniquities and sins? Make me know my transgression and my sin. Because, right now, I don't, is the implication.

I don't know of anything against myself. You know, the Apostle Paul makes this argument over in the New Testament. He says, I don't know of anything against myself.

And all I can go by is what I know. I can't confess what I don't know. I can't know what I don't know.

So, how many are my iniquities and sins? List them out for me. Why do you hide your face and regard me as your enemy? Now, notice, I find this fascinating. Stop and think about this for a minute.

Job says, why do you hide your face and regard me as your enemy? What is normal for Job? I mean, granted, he's had some disasters strike. But he says, well, not only have I gotten these disasters, but God has hidden his face from me. We've got a memory verse that says, God's arm is not shortened that he cannot save.

His ear is not heavy that he cannot hear. Your iniquities have separated you from your God. Your sins have hid his face from you so that he will not hear.

Job says, I don't know of any iniquities. I don't know of any sins. All these people keep telling me I've got some kind of sin.

I don't know of any. What's the list? What's the number of my iniquities? Why do you hide your face from me and regard me as an enemy? Now, it's one thing to have suffered these terrible things, but in what sense is God's face hidden? I would submit to you that Old Testament believers, Old Testament saints who were living for God and were interested in the things of God had fellowship with God of some kind and could tell when they had lost it. And it's separate and distinct from reading into circumstances whether God is pleased or not pleased.

This is what you find in a lot of pagan cults and religions. And goofy people who twist Christianity will say, well, you know, I was wrestling with a decision and I finally decided that I would do option A. And as I walked out of my house to go down and sell my car, why, three white doves flew over and I knew that it was God's almonds and signs. This isn't the way God works and there's no indication that He ever did this in the Old Testament.

So, this is my question. How does Job know that God is hiding His face? How does Job know this? Is he just reading all of this into loss of blessing? I don't think so. Because he says God is regarding him as His enemy and has hidden His face.

And when you think about the Isaiah passage, when God's face is hidden, what happens? He does not hear. He does not respond. There is no more two-way fellowship and two-way communication.

And there is a sense and there is an experience of loss of something that was there before. And I would suggest that as is the case with us, it goes beyond what happens in circumstances. We can not really be having any bad things going on and yet know that we are far from God and know that the ministry of the Spirit is not active in our soul and we sense the distance.

We sense that God is not near and that God is not happy with us. And Job evidently has that same sense. And he says, why are you hiding your face? Why are you regarding me as an enemy? Will you frighten a leaf driven to and fro? And will you pursue dry stubble? Job says, I've got nothing left.

There is no more moisture in the leaf. There is no more life in the stubble. I was looking at a plant a couple of days ago.

People were speculating whether it would live or die. But you start looking at the roots and they are dry and crumbly. There is just nothing left.

Put it on the burn pile. You can't do anything with that plant. It is too far gone.

Job says, you are beating a dead horse. You are pursuing dry stubble. You write bitter things

against me and make me inherit the iniquities of my youth.

Now, from the beginning of man's life outside the Garden of Eden down to the present, God has never gone back and visited the sins of youth on believers. It didn't happen to any Old Testament saints. It doesn't happen now.

It's never spoken of in the law. All behold, if you mess up in your youth, stand by because sooner or later God is going to drop the hammer and you will pay. There is nothing of that.

But Job says, if Eliphaz and Bildad and Zophar have any traction in their argument, this must be something that happened so far back that it is a sin of my youth. That is the only way I can figure out that this could be disciplined. And Job knows better.

He knows that God doesn't do this. And we are going to find out that he knows it as we go forward into the next chapter. But Job says, and the idea here, and remember this is poetry, this is Hebrew, and we are struggling through the veil of the English translation.

You write bitter things against me. You make me inherit the iniquities of my youth. And I think this is more of a question.

Have you got a book where old stuff is written down? Have you dug up something out of my past? It reminds you of election year when they go back. Oh, well, back when you were 18 years old you got a traffic ticket. Or, look, you didn't get all your drills done as a reserve pilot, and therefore you shouldn't be president, and so on.

And so Job, I think, is asking the question to God. He says, are you pursuing me? You have already dried me out to stubble, and now you are going to go back in my past, and am I suffering for the sins of my youth? You put my feet in the stocks, and watched closely all my paths. You set a limit for the soles of my feet.

This is actually not so much setting a limit, and I'm trying to see if you have the text note here on verse 27. Yeah, see, you have it in the New King James. It says, inscribe a print.

The Hebrew word here is put marks on, to mark something. You put my feet in the stocks, and now you are beating them with a stick. This used to be a form of punishment where they would actually whip the soles of people's feet.

They would have them in the stocks. They can't jerk their feet away, and then they would just beat their feet with a stick. And Job says, you've already got me in the stocks, and now you're leaving marks on the soles of my feet.

And notice in the next verse, verse 28, where it says, man decays like a rotten thing, but man is in italics. They had to supply it. Well, this is a real difficult piece of Hebrew to decipher, because there is no subject here.

It just says, something is decaying like a rotten thing, like a garment that is moth-eaten. And they assume that this refers back to Job. And so, some translations say, I waste away like something rotten.

I am disintegrating like a garment eaten by moths. And that's the best sense here. He's not speaking in general terms.

He's talking about himself. You've got my feet in the stocks. You're beating me.

I'm dry stubble. And I'm like a rotten vegetable. Look at my skin.

Look at my situation. I'm wasting away. Verse 28.

Now, he's going to pick up Eliphaz's remark about man being born to sorrow, and like the sons of the sparks, the sons of the flame ascending. Job says in chapter 14, verse 1, man, born of woman, is of few days and full of trouble. This word for trouble is not the same as the one we had before that was toil, sorrow, the one that Eliphaz used.

This is the word rogez. R-O-G-E-Z. And we had this word way back in Job chapter 3 and verse 17.

And there have been gospel songs that incorporate this verse. When Job says, Why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, like infants who never saw the light? There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. And this is a different kind of trouble.

This doesn't have so much the idea of toil or sorrow. This is disquiet. This is rage and turmoil and anguish.

It's used of the rumbling of thunder. It's agitation. And so, Eliphaz says, Well, it's inevitable that man is going to sorrow and toil.

Job says, What man is born to is, from my point of view, he's saying, it's agitation and turmoil. You're saying, be resigned to your fate. I'm not resigned.

I'm in conflict. I'm wrestling. I'm grappling.

I'm not just a Calvinist here saying, well, doom and gloom, and have to wait for hope that God's grace holds out, hope I'm one of the elect, and just be fatalistic. Eliphaz suggests sort of a fatalism. Job, everybody goofs up.

Just admit you goofed up, and let's get on with it. God finds fault with the angels. Job says, No, what man is, man born of woman, has just a few days, and during those days, if he's doing what he's supposed to do, he's engaged.

He's interested. He's trying to figure it out. There's turmoil.

There's uncertainty. He's agitated. He's not resigned.

He's not fatalistic. He wants to figure it out. He comes forth like a flower, and fades away.

He flees like a shadow, and does not continue. This is sort of the equivalent of the old beer commercial. You only go around once in life, so you got to grab for the gusto.

You don't say, well, I'm only going around once, and it's going to be over, so why bother? That's the Eliphaz point of view. Why bother? Job says, look, the time is short. You got to get with it.

Let's get this thing figured out. You're like a flower. You got your day in the sun, and you better do your thing.

You flee like a shadow, and don't continue. So he says in verse 3, do you open your eyes, he's talking to God, do you open your eyes on such a one, and bring me to judgment with yourself? Do you fix your eye on such a one? Literally in Hebrew, do you open your eye, and this is, you know how somebody gives you the eye? They raise the eyebrow, and they're looking right at you like, ah, well, I'm dealing with you next. That's the idea here, to fix the eye, to open the eye on someone, is well, you're the one I'm now going to deal with and judge.

It's a preparation for judgment. And actually, the end of the English is the beginning in Hebrew. It's an exclamation.

He says, you've got a flower that's fading, you've got the shadow that's fleeing. On such a one, do you fix your eye? I've just barely got here, and I've stuck my head up, and I'm trying to figure out what's going on, and you're already going to judge me before I can even get it figured out. This is kind of the idea.

On such a one, do you fix your eye? It's so short a time. Do you bring me before you for judgment? And a lot of people try to, a lot of translators try to amend this and say that it's bring him, because do you fix your eye on such a one? But Job takes this general principle and then personalizes it, and he says, he's trying to talk in the abstract, but it's him he's talking about. It's himself.

And so he switches from the abstract to the concrete. He switches from the third person to the first person. Are you bringing me before you to judgment? And he's talking right to God.

Then in verse 4 he says, who can make a clean thing come from an unclean? And this isn't the word for make. This is not *asa*, to make or to do. This is from Nathan.

The prophet Nathan gets his name from this verb. It means to give. Who being unclean can give something clean? Who can give forth or bring forth? It's the same as the verses that talk about can a bitter spring bring forth clear water? Can you get figs from thorns or grapes from thistles? Unlike things.

Who can give forth a clean thing from the unclean? And Job is recognizing that we are all as an unclean thing. There never was an expectation. The picture that his friends painted was well, you're innocent, innocent, innocent, innocent but pretty soon you're going to fall.

And Job says, no, no. We've been unclean from the beginning and we can't produce. Your view is skewed.

I'm not a perfect guy sooner or later going to fall in some fatalistic manner. I am an unclean thing cleansed by the grace of God, I'm provided for by the grace of God. I've been availing myself of that grace and I don't understand why that has stopped.

Who can make a clean thing? Job is saying, you knew I wasn't clean to begin with. I've never been able to bring forth clean from unclean. That's your doing.

That's the supernatural work of God. No one can do that. Man's days are determined.

The number of his months is under God's control. He says in verse 5, You have appointed his limits so that he cannot pass. He's got one go.

He's got one turn. Look away from him that he may rest. And this is rest in the sense of cease.

To desist. To stop doing a thing. Not rest at ease.

Look away from him that he may cease till, like a hired man, he finishes his day. Until he fulfills his time. And Job is reviewing in his mind, this is the thing we're supposed to do when we pray.

What should you do when you pray? What should I do when I pray? If we're going to come before God and make a case, as Job is doing here, he's speaking directly to God. This is like a prayer. What should we do? Do we just invent our own arguments? Or do we cite to God the basis upon which we make our appeal or our request? Lord, I know that you want the glory of the Lord Jesus to shine forth in the life of believers.

Therefore, please let that be the case with this person who's sick or this person who's in a challenge. Remind them of your word. Remind me of your word in the situations that I'm in.

Help me to remember who I am and why I'm here so that my life can reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus. Well, what does Job say here? I know that God determines the span of a life. I know that in Adam all die.

We are all as an unclean thing. And those who are availing themselves of God's grace, God should not be exerting discipline on them. And Job knows that he's not in that category as his friends have tried to accuse him.

No one can make a clean thing come out of an unclean thing. And he's talking to God. Lord, you

know this.

You're not expecting me to produce something I can't produce. You don't have an expectation beyond my means. Have you ever been in this situation? Has somebody ever expected something from you that is impossible? You know, sooner or later you will if you haven't already.

I've told myself, I've told my girls this a thousand times. You can only do your best. I have 100%.

There is no such thing as 110%. There's 100%. And if I do my best, that is absolutely all I can do is my best.

If my best isn't good enough for you, I'm sorry, but my best is my best. If I could do better than what I just did, it wouldn't have been my best, would it? I can only do what I can do. I can do no more.

And it's silly for me to feel bad if I have done my best. That was my best. What am I expecting from myself? Something better than my best? It's an impossibility.

Job is making this argument to God. He says, You know, Lord, that clean doesn't come from unclean. You know that my time here is limited.

Man born of woman has his hands full just trying to figure stuff out before he winks out. He sticks his head up, comes to consciousness, comes to maturity, looks around, and he fades. He's gone.

It's all I can do to figure out who I am and why I'm here. And God doesn't expect more than what we can do. This is a great comfort in time of stress because we all get down and we get disappointed in ourselves.

We kick ourselves for our failures. And it is a part of objectivity. Now, you can go in one direction and begin excusing yourself.

I can excuse myself and let myself off the hook for things that I'm responsible for on the one side. Or I can get into self-pity and gnawing on old bones and, oh, I just messed that up. Oh, that was so bad.

Oh, woe is me. It's never going to get any better. And you can go either direction and get depressed, get discouraged, and miss the mark.

The middle road is the solid ground. You don't turn to the right hand or to the left. You don't say, well, God's grace is a license to screw up and who cares because God's got it all figured out so why should I worry? Paul says, shall we sin the more that grace may abound? Heaven forbid.

But on the other hand, we can't wallow in guilt, wallow in self-pity, and get mired in failure or mired in the past or just digging up old stuff. Man's days are determined. The number of his months is under your control.

You've set his limit. He cannot pass it. There are fixed parameters for our life.

And so Job says, look away from him. This is kind of a rhetorical statement. Lord, don't expect more from me than I can do in my limited lifetime.

I can't get as wise as Gabriel in a 130-year lifespan or however long he was living in those days. Job lived to be about 170, I think. So he's saying, however long I live, it's a brief time and I can't get as wise as somebody who was going to hang around longer.

So look away. Let him cease. Let him run.

This little limited time frame, just, I'm a worker. I've got a job to do. I'm trying to get my job done before I wink out.

And so this is Job's objectivity. He doesn't expect too much. He says in verse 7, there is hope for a tree if it is cut down, that it will sprout again and that its tender shoots will return.

All of the trees that you want to live, when they get cut down, they die. All the trees you're trying to cut down and eliminate, they spring right back up out of the ground from their roots. It's like a law of the gardening universe.

It's a law of lawn care. Weeds, you pull them out and pull them out and pull them out, they just sprout right back up. Little plants that you really want to grow, they just die for no good reason.

Although its roots grow old in the earth and its stump may die in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant. It can look like it's totally dead and yet it will recover. But man dies and is laid away.

He breathes his last. And where is he? It's not like you water the tomb and the man walks out and says, Oh boy, where have I been? How much time has passed? It's not like a plant. It's not like a root buried in the ground.

He breathes his last. And where is he? Now the word here, when it says he dies and is laid away, this is the word kalash. And it means, when it says to fade away, and it says is laid away, I think maybe you have a text note there also.

It says it lies prostrate. He lies prostrate. What this really means is to be powerless, to be weak.

And this is in contrast to the mighty man. I mentioned a couple of weeks ago we're going to come back to this word mighty, the mighty angel, the mighty man, mightiness in the creation of God. This is the opposite of it, which means to be defeated or to be weak and to expire, to be lifeless and unconscious.

So he says he expires and where is he? His status, his location is completely unknown. Why

does he bring this up? He's expanding on the idea that life is brief and you don't get any second chances. Water disappears from the sea, a river becomes parched and dried up.

He has already talked about this from the caravans. Man lies down and does not rise. Until the heavens are no more, they will not awake nor be roused from their sleep.

Now, if it stopped right there and that's all we had, we might think, well, Job just believes when you die, it's annihilation. But he says man will lie down and not rise until the heavens are no more. And the idea here is once the heavens are no more, he will rise.

And you can see this as you go forward. Oh, that you would hide me in the grave, that you would conceal me until your wrath is passed. Then appoint me the said time and remember me.

Bring me back after the wrath is over. Well, keep your finger here and just for a second, turn to Psalm 102. You've got to fly through this pretty quickly.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, let my cry come to you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my trouble. Incline your ear to me in the day that I call.

Answer me speedily. Same sort of gist of an idea. My days are consumed like smoke.

My bones are burned like a hearth. My heart is stricken and withered like grass so that I forget to eat my bread because of the sound of my groaning. My bones cling to my skin.

I'm like a pelican of the wilderness, an owl of the desert. I lie awake. I'm like a sparrow alone on the housetop.

My enemies reproach me all day long. Those who deride me swear an oath against me. I've eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping because of your indignation and your wrath.

For you have lifted me up and cast me away. Verse 11. My days are like a shadow that lengthens and I wither away like grass.

But you, O Lord, endure forever. The remembrance of your name all generations. You arise, have mercy on Zion.

The time to favor her, the set time has come. Your servants take pleasure in her stones and show favor to her dust. The nations will fear the name of the Lord, the kings of the earth, your glory.

For the Lord shall build up Zion, appear in his glory, regard the prayer of the destitute, shall not despise their prayer. This will be written down. Hearing the groaning of the prisoner and so forth.

Verse 24. O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days. Your years are throughout all generations.

Of old you laid the foundation of the earth. The heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will endure.

They will all grow old like a garment. Like a cloak, you will change them. Now, what's he talking about perishing and growing old like a garment? It's in verse 25.

The foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of your hand. That's what Job is talking about, when the heavens pass away. Like a cloak, you will change them and they will be changed.

But you are the same and your years will have no end. Look at verse 28. The heavens and the foundation of the earth will pass away, grow old like a garment, and be changed.

But the children of your servants will continue and their descendants will be established before you. And this is an expression of knowledge about the resurrection. After the foundation of the earth and the heavens, children of your people are going to live on.

The children of your servants will continue. The descendants will be established before you. Well, Job knew this long before the psalmist did.

Man lies down and does not rise until the heavens are no more. They will not awake or be roused from their sleep. Oh, that you would hide me in the grave, that you would conceal me until your wrath is passed, that you would appoint me a set time and remember me.

I remember right before I left home to go halfway across the continent where I had never been into what I knew was going to be a very stressful little four-year experience. I was sitting in my room out in the barn contemplating going off to Annapolis and I thought, you know, this is going to be really hard. I'm 16 years old right now and I'm not going to get out of that place if I survive it until I'm 20.

And what would be great is if this evening, as I'm sitting here in my room in the barn, I could just fall asleep and when I wake up, I'll be 21 and I will have graduated and it will all be like it happened, but I didn't really go through it. I'll just wake up and it will be a memory and I'll think, oh boy, I'm glad that's over with. And actually, when I went home on leave the first time after I graduated and I went out and sat in my room in the barn and I remembered four years earlier when I had sat there and I thought, well, now, did that really happen? Or did God answer my prayer and I just think it happened? But I know people who were there at the time and they tell me it happened so I believe them.

But this is sort of Job's idea. It's so grievous. This is so hard and so painful.

I wish I could fall asleep and wake up and it would all be over. I think a lot of us have been in situations where we just thought, you know, give me the general and wake me up after the

operation. I don't want to be conscious for this.

If a man dies, shall he live again? Oh, that you would hide me and conceal me till your anger has passed. That you would set me a time and then remember me. Just knock me out.

Wake me up when it's all over. If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my hard service, I will wait until my release comes. This word for wait is hope.

It's the same one we've seen earlier when we were talking about the verse and there's a textual problem. Does it mean to him or does it mean not? Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him? This is the same word for hope. It means to wait, to have an expectation.

Hope in the sense of waiting. Until my release comes. And this is a word that means to sprout.

We saw this in the last words of David. And many things that I thought were going to happen in my household and many of these things did not sprout like I thought they were going to. But God is going to bring them to fulfillment in the future.

And it's interesting, Job uses the very same word here. Until my sprouting again comes. Or my renewal comes.

So when it says change, this is a sprouting forth type of idea. All the days of my hard service I will wait. And this hard service is the same thing we saw back in Job chapter 7 and verse 1. What does it mean? Is he dead or is he alive when he's doing this waiting? Well, verse 1 of chapter 7, Is there not a time of hard service for man on earth? Are his days not also like the days of a hired man? So this is during his life.

He's not just on his deathbed saying, well, I'll wake up in the sweet by and by. It's his hope while he's living. We've talked many times about the Christian virtues of faith and hope and love.

And that hope ought to be a motivation now. The resurrection ought to be a motivation now. Not just at funerals.

Not just when we're on our deathbed. But day by day by day. I will wait.

I will have an expectation. All the things that I can't do in this limited time when I'm in the anguish and in the turmoil and just trying to figure out what's going on, I have a hope that I will sprout forth. David and Job essentially say the same thing.

David, in his last words, he said there are many things that I had hoped, many things I had dreamed, many expectations I had that did not sprout, but they will in the resurrection. Job is saying basically the same thing here. I will wait until my sprouting forth comes.

The things that haven't happened in this life, I'm going to wait. You shall call and I will answer you. You shall desire the work of your hands.

Job says you will not forget me after I'm gone and after I'm dead. You will remember me. Now he's thinking of it in terms of so please go ahead and snuff me out now.

And he's kind of back to the curse the day of my birth. Why am I still alive? Why am I breathing good air? Oh Lord, couldn't you just put me to sleep and wake me up at the resurrection? I don't really want to see the rest of this life. Have you seen the movie where Mel Gibson thinks he's lost his girlfriend and they freeze him? They're supposed to wake him up in a year when she will have finished dying from her coma.

And he basically has the same wish as Job. He doesn't want to watch her wasting away in the coma. And they're pretty sure she's going to die any day.

And he says, oh, just freeze me. I don't want to go through that. Well, then the guy burns up in a fire and they lose him for like 50 years or something.

And by the time he wakes up, the whole world has changed. Well, Job basically says, put me away, let me go to sleep until the resurrection. What would Job have missed? What Mel Gibson missed is his girlfriend woke up shortly after they froze him and lost him.

And she went on with her life and got married. And he missed it all because he put himself to sleep. He said, I don't want to go through the pain.

And he missed the whole life with his life's love there. He just missed it. He was frozen.

And so when he wakes up, she's a grandma. And he's a young guy. Of course, they conveniently deus ex machina and he suddenly gets as old as she is and they live happily ever after for about two years.

You know, do the rocking chair thing and then they're gone. But that's their idea of a happy ending. But this is what Job is saying.

Knock me out, O Lord. I don't want to experience any more pain. Now, we know the ending of Job.

What would Job have missed if God answered this prayer? Seven new sons, three new daughters, twice as much stuff as he ever had before, twice as renowned as the wisest man in the East, grows old in grace, sees his sons and his sons' sons to the fourth generation. Couldn't see that in chapter 14. Couldn't see that coming.

He just wanted to dive out. But, Lord, put me away. You'll call and I'll answer.

You can reboot me. You can bring me back. You can start me up again.

Now, you number my steps. Now, do not watch over my sin. My transgression is sealed up in a

bag and you cover my iniquity.

And this is what Job knows that the friends don't. God's grace is sufficient for the iniquity. Job has claimed that grace.

He says, my iniquities are in the bag. My iniquities are covered. So, I don't understand this pain.

Put me out and wake me up when it's all over. As a mountain falls and crumbles away, a rock is moved from its place, water wears away stones, torrents wash away the soil of the earth. So, you're destroying the hope of man.

I don't know what my expectation is supposed to be because my expectation has been turned on its head. You prevail forever against him when he passes on. You change his countenance and send him away.

His sons come to honor. He does not know it. They are brought low and he does not perceive it.

His flesh will be in pain over it and his soul will mourn over it. It's interesting that Job talks about what's going to happen to the sons and so on when he doesn't have any. But he's speaking in the third person.

And this, once again, is the tact mode. Job realizes that he's been speaking pretty forcefully to the Almighty and so now he's putting this back in general terms. So, this man we're talking about, you know how people go into the drugstore and say, well, I have a friend who's got this problem.

Do you have some medicine? It's not me, it's my friend. I want to talk about somebody in the third person. So, Job goes back and forth and he says, you destroy the hope of man.

You prevail forever against him. And he passes on. You change his countenance and send him away.

He grows up and he's young and he just withers up and wrinkles. Boy, the older you get, the more you look at pictures and you say, whoa. You know, time tied in formation.

Wait for no man. And you just get old and wrinkly and time passes and you say, I can't hardly recognize myself. You change his countenance and send him away.

Man springs up like a flower. You shrivel him and knock him off the earth is what Job is saying. His flesh will be in pain over it.

His soul will mourn over it. So Job, basically, his argument is, I used to have hope. I used to look forward.

And now, it looks to me like the future is very bleak and I don't want to look forward to it. Just take me out. Well, Job has answered in these chapters all of the observations of his three friends and

he has made his appeal to God.

What is the response going to be? Well, the second dialogue cycle is going to pick up and that's where we'll start next week. Father, thank You for these observations. Thank You for the truth of Your Word and the hope that we have in the Lord Jesus.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress that hope on our hearts and it will motivate us to live in a way that's pleasing in Your sight. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.