

Introduction:

The French philosopher Voltaire, of the eighteenth century, was lying on his deathbed. Speaking to his doctor, the bitter man said, “I am abandoned by God and man. I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months’ of life.” The doctor replied, “Sir, you will not live six weeks.” To which Voltaire responded, “Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me.” A short time later, Voltaire died and entered eternity without God and without hope. The wicked perish without hope because they die without God. Someone has made this point with a play on words: know God-know hope no God-no hope. Job was very ill and it appeared he was ill at his deathbed. However, Job didn’t know much about the condition of man after death, but he had **hoped** and confidence in the resurrection. We will examine this and many other perplexities that man struggles with.

I. Chapter 12, Job sarcastically answering Zophar

1. As we read this text we can sense the cynical and bitter tone in Job’s voice. The next three chapters is Job sarcastically answering Zophar. In the three verses his tone of voice is understandable because Job’s friends really behaved as if they had a monopoly on wisdom. Job now responds with rebuke to Zophar and made two points. First, that he was a man of understanding and second that the theological principles that were proclaimed by Zophar is common knowledge that even nature alleges. What you know, I also know: Job here complained against the claim of superior knowledge on the part of his friends. To them – especially perhaps to Zophar – the situation seemed so simple; therefore Job must be somewhat ignorant to see what they believed was so easy to see.

In verses 4-6 Job’s complaint: “**I am as one mocked of his neighbor (rā’·ah, means friend).** Look at Job 2:11. The way that Job was mocked by others reminds us of what Jesus endured in His sufferings and on the cross for us. We will soon reflect on the passions of Christ at our Maundy Thursday service...

Job did not give up on God, but he had to give up on his *prior understanding of God*. “Job’s creed has crumbled into ruins, ‘therefore’, he says, ‘I leave my creed, but I deny that I have left God. Job explains his understanding of God’s ways.

2. All creation knows the power of God as he claims in verses (7-12) Job makes the remark that what his friends say about God is so elementary that even the animals know it. Good come back for Job... “If you want to know the ways of the Lord, says Job, just look around you. You can be as theological as you want, but if your theories do not mesh with the nature of things as they are, then what good are such theories? Even a dog has more knowledge of God than you do! Job concludes his ridicule in verse 12 by saying, “Wisdom is with aged men, and with length of days, understanding. No one really likes growing older, but the Bible gives us a direct benefit to the aging process right here.

3. In verses (13-25) Job describes the great power of God. In this section, Job rebuked the previous speech of Zophar especially where Zophar criticized Job for not knowing God and likened him to an empty-headed man as we say last time basically called him idiotic. Here Job showed that he did indeed know that God was great in wisdom and strength, and that He was mighty in counsel and understanding.

II Chapter 13 - Job's challenge his critics vv. (1-12).

1. Job's has strong rebuke for his friends. He complained against the claim of superior knowledge on the part of his friends. To them – especially perhaps to Zophar – the situation seemed so simple; therefore Job must be somewhat ignorant to see what they believed was so easy to see. In verse **three** Job said, **I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God:** Job here developed a theme that would end with a virtual demand that God make sense of his suffering. God's responds to Job's demand is in chapters 38-42 of the book. We will begin this section in April after a sweeping summary of the chapters prior as they are repeats of speeches.

2. We sense the deep frustration in Job that prompted this plea, **“I desire to reason with God.”** It was bad enough when he could make no sense of his situation; but it was worse when his friends persistently insisted on their own wrong answer to Job's crisis. As much as anything, it was their insistence that prompted Job to demand an answer and vindication from God

3. In verse (13-19) Job's declares his confidence in God and his own integrity. --In this Job is a remarkable example of a man who will not forfeit what he knows to be true in the midst of the storm. This is actually an area of great difficulty; because these kinds of storms are unquestionably helpful in shaking us from wrong beliefs and behavior. Job didn't question the concept of truth or his ability to know it; he knew that God himself would agree that Job's disaster did not come upon him because of special or severe sin; he knew God himself would agree that Job was a blameless and upright man. This is evident verse 15 and a great Bible verse... **Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.**

If I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost OR *If now I hold my tongue, I perish* (19): In one sense, it seems that Job felt that this determined connection to truth and reality was *all he had*. He had lost everything, including his sense of spiritual well-being. All he had was the truth, and he felt that if he let go of that to simply stop the argument or to please his friends, he would perish.

4. Job's appeal to God in verses (20-27) Job asks God to tell him if sin is indeed the cause of his suffering. This shows that at least in a small sense, Job understood that God's hand was sustaining him in the midst of this great trial. He is sustaining you too. When you say I can't go on admit that to God but have Him know you can do all things through Christ---Phil. 4:13! We understand his *feeling* of abandonment; yet Job can grudgingly admit that God's hand has been with him in the fire of affliction.

5. Finally in chapter 13 and verse 28 Job grieves the frailty of man. Job basically agreed with Zophar's understanding of the depravity of man, his disagreement was with Zophar's application of that doctrine to Job's circumstance. Like a garment that is moth-eaten: Job's statement was more than a poetic description of the depravity of man in general; it was a discouraged sigh over his own condition. *Job* was the one decaying like a rotten thing; *Job* was like a garment that is moth-eaten. Zophar could talk about it; Job was *living it*.

III. Job 14 – Job's Grievance Over the Brevity of Life (Job 14:1-2)

1. Job considers the grave and the afterlife. He considers that the days of man on this earth are short and often full of trouble (3-6) Job's prayer: "Consider how frail man is and have mercy on him." In order to get his message across, Job uses some picturesque metaphors about life.

Man is like a flower that is a cut flower (job 14:1—2a) "he comes forth like a flower and fades away" (verse 2a) like a flower, life is beautiful; but it is short and fades away before you know it. Man is like a shadow (job 14:2b) "he flees like a shadow and does not continue" (verse 2b). Shadows disappear just as quickly as they appear. Man is like a servant/laborer (job 14:5-6) "like a hired man he finishes his day" (verse 6). Life is like going to work in the morning and coming home at night.

2. Job in verses (7-12) considers the idea that man does not live beyond the grave. Job longs for the grave and hopes for something beyond (13-17). Realizing how brief life is, job asks this question: If a man die, shall he live *again*? Job didn't know much about the condition of man after death, but he supposed – **perhaps hoped** – that it was better than his current misery. Yet Job's general uncertainty is reflected in his question, "If a man dies, shall he live again?" Job was wrong in his understanding of the afterlife.

3. Job considers the limitless power of God – and despairs in verses **(18-22)**. In the middle of the poem he gives his glorious confidence in the resurrection; yet the poem ends back in despair. That is human nature we can know the truth but be so depressed that we fall back to our depressed state. This is the struggle of the human condition.

Conclusion:

The truth is that everyone will live somewhere forever. We don't die and go in the grave and cease to exist. Your soul and spirit are eternal. If you put your trust in Jesus Christ, when you die you will be alive in the presence of Almighty God. But if you don't put your trust in Jesus Christ, when you die you will be painfully alive outside of the presence of God, in the place the Bible speaks of as hell. God loves you and never prepare hell for man. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: John 14 state he prepare a place for you with him.