

JOB: Man Of God
Jan. 15, 2006
Message 13
Scripture reading Job 42:7-17

INTRO: We have come through an amazing account, an account found in possibly the oldest book in the Bible. In the last two messages we have dealt with the issue of pride. The Lord challenged Job that if he could humble proud and wicked people, then He, God would confess to Job that he could save himself.

In my interpretation of the book, the heart of it is found in 40:8-14 (read). The Lord challenges Job to humble proud people. The Lord then uses two huge animals, behemoth (40:15-24), and leviathan (41:1-34) to give Job an understandable picture of how much energy it takes to humble proud and wicked people. The Lord compares pride to these two huge creatures. Basically, I reduce these sections to this: Job, if you can catch behemoth when he is watching, or if you can catch leviathan with a fishing hook, then you stand a good chance at humbling proud people. And it is here that Job finally comes to the point God has been seeking all along to bring him (read 42:1-6).

And now, God will mop up the mess, bless Job, and Job will live happily ever after as we saw in the verses that were read for us (42:7-17). And so, we are ready to consider this section.

II. THE TRIUMPH OF JOB (42:7-17)

A. Mop Up (42:7-9)

Now in 42:7, a new section begins. Job's testing is over. It is mission accomplished. But there is a matter to take care of, and that is Job's comforters must give account for their part in the whole thing (read verse 7). The Lord addresses Eliphaz, who was the main character, probably the one who got the other two to come with him. And God says, "My wrath is aroused against you..." It is not a light thing to counsel others, because I become accountable before God for the counsel I give. But I want us to notice something. The Lord said, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends." That is significant.

Let me raise a question here that was given to me some months ago. You see, there were four people who counseled Job. There was first Eliphaz, and then his two friends. But after these, when Job had silenced them, another man spoke up. His name was Elihu. The question was raised because of the book by Henry Morris called, "For Time and Forever." The question is, was Elihu a good man or a bad man? Was he like Job's other friends?

Well, some, like Morris (who by the way is a great and godly Christian writer) say that Elihu was a bad man. Others say he was a good man and said what was right. Listen to one writer who says, "...Elihu is a mighty good man! He holds Job to the very highest.. He plays for keeps and carries only one measuring tool—*God's glory*. He is real" (Marvin L. Fieldhouse, page 356).

Morris, on the other hand, writes, "Eventually the three friends gave up and quit arguing. But Satan had one more stratagem. A young religionist named Elihu had been listening to all the arguments, waiting for an opportunity to inject his own opinion into the debate. He did have considerable knowledge of spiritual matters, but was also quite arrogant and proud."

Morris's comment comes on Job 38:2. Elihu has spoken for six straight chapters, and here is what Morris says, "Elihu's harangue contined through six chapters (32-37), and Job remained silent. He knew Elihu's charges were false, but Elihu was claiming to be speaking for God, and Job did not know how to answer. God did know how to answer, however, finally breaking His long silence. 'Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge.'"

Now scholars are somewhat divided over who 38:2 is addressed to (read). Is it addressed to Job or to Elihu? I have no doubt that it is NOT Elihu, but Job.

Let me give you the reasoning. The first reason is that 38:1 says, "Then the Lord answered Job.." not Elihu. One would think that if verse 2 was addressed

to Elihu, verse 1 would say, "Then the Lord answered Elihu."

Second, in 40:8 God says to Job, "Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?" It appears to have been Job that darkened counsel by words without knowledge.

The third reason why I believe 38:2 is addressed to Job is that in 42:3, Job says, "You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Then Job admits, "Therefore I uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not know." Job indicates that in 38:2 God was speaking to him and here he answers.

But the greatest evidence lies in 42:7-9. Here God turns to those who have counseled Job, but have been wrong. And Elihu is not in the list. He is not even mentioned! And why not? Because he was right in his conclusion about Job's testings. If Elihu had been wrong, God would have dealt with him here too.

Now I want us to notice something about these three friends. In the last message I said man could be humbled in one of two ways. He can be humbled by somebody else, or he can humble himself. There is voluntary humbling, and involuntary humbling. Involuntary humbling, man can do to man. The Lord brings about voluntary humbling. It is voluntary humbling that the kind Lord looks for.

I want us to go back to Luke 14:7-11 for a moment (read). The man who took the best seat, and then someone more important came and he was asked to take a lower seat was humbled involuntarily. You see, this kind of humbling man can inflict on man. It is not the kind of humbling the Lord looks for. The man who took the lowest seat and was later bidden to come up higher, humbled himself. That is the kind of humility the Lord is looking for. The Bible principle set out in this passage is, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself, will be exalted."

I want us to see that principle at work in our passage. In Job 42:1-6, Job humbles himself. God has brought about the circumstances that were intended

for this result, and Job responded. He humbled himself.

But, in the contrast we have Job's three friends. They set themselves up as Job's counselors. They exalted themselves over Job. And so, true to the Biblical principle, they are then humble. They are just like the person invited to the wedding and he took one of the best seats. But later a man more important than himself came and he was given the good seat and the man who seated himself in the good place was humbled by having to take a lower seat. Job's three friends set themselves up over Job, and now they are humbled (read 7-9).

Well, you have to picture the outcome of these verses. These three friends now go and get seven bulls and seven rams. Then they come to Job. What do you think Job thought when he saw Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar coming down the lane with fourteen animals and a bunch of wood?

Well, they arrive and Job comes out and they sheepishly say, "The Lord spoke to us about how we talked to you. He said we were to bring these seven bullocks and seven rams, and to offer them up for ourselves. And then the Lord asked us to ask you if you would pray for us." You talk about being humbled.

Let me raise one more question from these verses and seek to answer it (read verse 8). In this verse, the Lord says that Job's three friends have not spoken what is right about God, and Job has. What is it that the Lord is referring to? Well, there are various opinions. I believe it is this. Job's friends have said, "If you live right you will prosper and if you live wrong, God will afflict you. If you are suffering, it is evidence that you have lived wrong." Job, on the other hand said that you cannot prove a man's righteousness by whether he is suffering or not because the wicked prosper as well. I think that is what the Lord is referring to here.

I wonder, what do you suppose these men talked about when they went home?

B. Blessing (42:10-17)

(Read 42:10.) Let me make a point here once more, lest we make the mistake of Job's friends. Since I have made this point in an earlier message, permit me to quote from it: "In Hebrews 11 we have a host of victorious Christians who conquered by faith and lived to enjoy the victories. But in the last part of the chapter it gives a number of others who did not accept deliverance and died by faith that they might inherit a better resurrection. It says some were stoned and some were sawn in two. Their life of faith ended by faith.

"I want to give you an example of that, and why do I do this? Because, not every story ends like Job. Yours might not. Mine might not. Just because one lives right does not mean God is obligated to have us live happily ever after. We have proof of that from the life of John the Baptist, who lived a godly life of self sacrifice. He sacrificed a normal married life. He sacrificed the comforts of life. He sacrificed making friends with men like Herod, by making an enemy out of him by confronting him with the truth. And then one day he was thrown in prison."

Now I'd like to go to that account to show you something beautiful (read Luke 7:18-23). So John is in prison for confronting Herod about his illegal wife, and Herod has him put in prison. And in prison John sends his disciples to Jesus. He had preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and now, here, instead of being appointed some high post in the kingdom of God, he is in prison. So it seems he began to doubt who this Jesus is anyway. Is He truly the Messiah? So he sends to question Jesus.

Notice in verse 22 what Jesus tells them to tell John (read). What Jesus is saying by this is, "The very things I do prove I am the Messiah." Then in verse 23 He says this, "And oh, by the way, tell John, 'Blessed is the man who is not offended in Me.'" Was John a godly man? Did he live right? Did he do all that the Lord desired of him? The answer is yes to every question. So why was he in prison? Now let me ask you a question: Have you done the best you knew how? And yet, circumstances are tough? Do your tough circumstances indicate that you are not living

right? No. And the Lord is saying here, I think, "If I allow hard things into your life for no apparent reason, blessed is are you if you are not offended in me."

Now let me take you a little further (read Matt. 14:1-12). Well, John continued in prison. And then one day footsteps approach down the corridors of the prison. Maybe they will finally will let him go. But no, it is soldiers, and something is obviously very wrong. And the next thing he knows, the sword is aimed at his neck and he is gone.

You see, Job was a godly man who had bad circumstances allowed into his life, but he ended up living happily ever after. John the Baptist was a godly man who had bad circumstances allowed into his life, and he died. Maybe I should say it gently like this, for those of you who are familiar with the prayer of Jabez: The prayer of Jabez is not for all. If the Lord has chosen that you or I will die of cancer, and he doesn't enlarge our borders, blessed is the man who is not offended in Him.

Consider now verse 11 (read). Job's fair weather friends are back. The money is back, and so are the friends. You say, "How do we know they are fair weather friends? Look back with me to 19:13-22 (read).

Now in verse 12 Job's possessions are mentioned. In verse 10 we were told that the Lord gave Job twice as much as before. Before his troubles, Job had 7 thousand sheep. Now he has 14 thousand. Before he had three thousand camels and now he has six thousand. Before he had 500 yoke of oxen, and now he has a thousand. Before he had 500 female donkeys and now he has a thousand. He is twice as wealthy.

His family was replaced to the exact size it was before. He had seven sons and three daughters. His daughters were ladies of exceptional beauty and their names are given (read 13-15).

Verse 16 tells us that after this he lived 140 years. We do not know if his years were doubled like his wealth was; but if so, and the Jewish sages speculate

it was so, then his final age would have been 210 years. This fits well with the view that Job lived around or shortly after the time of Noah.

And so, after losing everything, he still became a great, great grandfather. I do not know what it is like to be a great grandfather, no pun intended. I know what it is like to be a grandfather. I know what the couple meant who said, "If we had known grandchildren would be so much fun, we would have had them first."

And so, we can truly say that after all his trials, Job lived happily ever after.

CONCL: So let us conclude. Let us do so by summarizing the whole account of the life of Job in brief. There was in the land of Uz a man by name or Job. He was upright and blameless and feared God and avoided evil. And then Satan presented himself before God and God said, "Have you considered MY servant Job? Is he not an incredible man?" And Satan said, "Oh sure. Don't boast about him to me. If you didn't give him everything he wanted, he would not be so great. Just touch his possessions, and he will drop you like a hot potatoe."

And God said, "Oh, that is how you feel about him? Well, then all he has is in your power. Do as you want with it." And Satan did. In one day Job lost it all. But God was right and Satan wrong and again one day Satan came before God. And God said, "Oh, by the way. How did it go with Job?" And Satan said, "Ok, I was wrong about him, but I'll tell you one thing. Touch his health and you will find out I was right after all." And God said, "Hmmm. Find it hard to admit defeat? Well, his health is in your hand, only you may not take his life." And so Satan smote Job with from head to foot.

Well, Job's wife told him to give up and die. Then his three friends came and they thought they would straighten out Job's theology, get him to confess his sins and then they would be greater than Job, who had been very prominent for a long time.

Argument passed to argument. Job argued against them and they argued against him. "Come on Job. Admit it. If you hadn't committed great sin, this would not have come upon

you." But one by one, Job out-argued them all and they fell silent until Scripture says this: "So these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes."

And so when these three had been silenced, a younger man entered the scene. His name was Elihu. Let me summarize his message like this: Job, I have waited with speaking until now. I thought that age should speak first. But I want you to listen to my opinion as well. God allows things like have happened to you in order to get men to listen and instruct them. He does this in order to turn man from his deed and conceal pride from man. And in this way, he keeps his soul back from the Pit, and his life from perishing by the sword."

When Elihu was done, Job was silent. He had no more arguments. It is then that God begins to speak with Job. And he says, "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you and you shall answer me." So God asks him question after question about inanimate creation. And when that is done He asks more questions on animate creation. And when He is done He says, "Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God (Job), let him answer Him."

And Job says, "Behold I am vile. I have nothing to say." Then God says again, "Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you and you shall answer Me: Would you indeed annul my judgement? Would you condemn me that you might be justified? I'll make you a proposition Job: You make proud and wicked people humble and I will acknowledge to you that you do not need me anymore. You can save yourself. Let me show you how much energy it takes to humble proud and wicked people. If you can take behemoth when he is watching, or if you can catch leviathan with a fishhook, then you might well make proud and wicked people humble."

And then Job said, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Now I really and truly know You. And for this reason, I abhor myself, and I repent in dust and ashes."

And from there Job went on to live happily ever after. He got his sons and daughters back, beautiful daughters too.

And the Lord doubled his possessions. The Lord has taken
and the Lord has given, blessed be the name of the Lord!

For most of us, we are familiar with Job chapters 1-2, but
now you know the rest of the story.