

Having begun to consider Job's response to Bildad last week (ch.9), we come to finish that response in chapter 10. Within this chapter Job continues his complaints to God. We learned last week Job lost sight of his Savior. It's for this reason, he spoke of God as if they were unreconciled. Job felt as if he were in a storm and was unable to see God as reconciled.

The primary lesson I sought to underscore was this: even the best Christian, can for a season, become disoriented and lose sight of his Savior. I suggested three possible causes of this condition (all of which were true of Job). First, sudden or severe affliction; second, Satanic oppression; third, Fatherly chastisement.

These combined to create, what Job called in 9:17 a "tempest" or "severe storm"—it was as if he were in the middle of a tornado. Thus, it's important to keep in mind, that in chapter 10, Job is still in the midst of that storm. He's still confused. He's still trying to find his way out. And this is essential to keep in mind, otherwise what he says in this chapter will make no sense to us. What he says only makes sense, if we understand his present dilemma. He's in the midst of the storm. He's in the eye of the tornado and he's unable to make sense of things.

And so, what Job does in chapter 10 is, he complains to God about three things. He complains he is mortal (vv1-13); he complains he is miserable (vv14-17); he complains he is momentary (vv18-22). Thus, my goal this morning is to rather briefly explain each section, suggesting several practical observations from each.

I. He is Mortal (vv1-13)

II. He is Miserable (vv14-17)

III. He is Momentary (vv18-22)

I. He is Mortal (vv1-13)

1. The term "mortality" can be understood in a few different ways—at its very heart is the idea of being human.
2. Taken in this most basic sense, it's the opposite of divinity—man is mortal and only God is immortal.
3. Perhaps another way to speak of mortality is creatureliness—to be mortal is to be a human or a creature.
4. Thus, throughout this first section (vv1-13), Job stresses the difference between his mortality and God's immortality.
5. And he does so for two reasons: first, to remind God he is but a creature; second, to remind God he is His creature.
6. (1) He complains to God (vv1-2)—"My soul loathes my life; I will give free course to my complaint, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul."
7. There is a sense in which, everything throughout the entire chapter, is one extended complaint from Job.
8. V2—"I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me; show me why You contend with me'"—there are two important words that need explaining.
9. The first word is "condemn" which means "to sentence" and the second word is "contend" which means "oppose."
10. Job felt as if God was opposing him by condemning him—he felt as if God were his opponent or judge.
11. Job was curious why God was condemning him—why God was opposing him—this was his perception.

12. (2) He questions God (vv3-7)—these verses contain two related rhetorical questions Job levels at God (the first deals with His justice, the other with His knowledge).
13. (a) His justice, v3—"Does it seem good to You that You should oppress, that You should despise the work of Your hands, and smile on the counsel of the wicked."
14. This obviously is a very foolish question—Job felt as if God was frowning on the righteous and smiling on the wicked.
15. Again, this is merely the perception of Job as he is in the storm—as he is unable to see things clearly.
16. (b) His knowledge, vv4-7—"Do You have eyes of flesh? Or do You see as man sees? Are Your days like the days of a mortal man? Are Your years like the days of a might man."
17. In other words—"Are You limited in your ability to see and know—Do You see and know as a mere man?"
18. Vv6-17—"That You should seek for my iniquity and search out my sin, although You know that I am not wicked, and there is no one who can deliver from Your hand?"
19. That is—"Why do you continue to search out my sin, when You know full-well, I am not a wicked man?"
20. Job is simply asking God—"Why are you pursuing me, when you already know everything about me?"
21. "You are God—all-knowing and all-powerful—I in contrast am a man—limited and powerless"—he's complaining of his mortality.
22. (3) He reminds God (vv8-13)—within these verses, Job reminds God, He has created and cared for him.
23. Verses 8-13 are one of the clearest passages in the entire Bible, on God forming His people in the womb.
24. V8—"Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate unity"—that is, a complex being (creature).
25. Job was fashioned as body and soul—and yet, these two aspects of human nature form an intricate unity.
26. V8—"Yet You would destroy me"—"If I'm the work of Your hand, then why is Your hand against me?"
27. V9—"Remember, I pray, that You have made me like clay. And will You turn me into dust again?"—the imagery is that of a potter and his clay.
28. "Remember my weakness—I am but clay"—he felt as if were being crushed beneath God's mighty hand.
29. Verses 10 is a figurative way to describe the formation of his human nature within the darkness of the womb.
30. The farmer pours out the milk and churns it until it thickens—you start with milk and end with cheese.
31. V11 says the same thing with a different imagery—"clothe me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews."
32. The imagery is sewing—God knit him together within his mother's womb, clothing him with skin and flesh.
33. Verse 12 is without doubt a happy contrast to the overall tenor of the chapter—it's a very bright verse.
34. V12—"You have granted me life and favor, and Your care has preserved my spirit"—by "life" is likely meant physical life (though by inference spiritual life is included).
35. V12—"And Your care has preserved my spirit"—this refers to God's kind, gracious, and tender providence.

36. He not only cared for him while in the womb, but He's cared for him ever since—He has kept his spirit (his life).
37. V13—"And these things You have hidden in Your heart; I know that this was with You"—by "these things" is meant all that's come before.
38. By "hiding these things in His heart" Job means God has concealed them—they are His hidden purposes.
39. This is another way of referring to His sovereign and mysterious purposes—His hidden or secret will.
40. Thus, Eph.3:9 says the mystery of God's purposes have been "from the beginning of the ages hidden in God."
41. Earlier in Eph.1:9 Paul described God's eternal decree as "purposed in Himself"—that is, hidden in God.
42. God's eternal purposes, His sovereign decree is hidden from our eyes—it's the secret things that belong to God.
43. Thus, by "these things" is not only meant his creation and formation (v12), but his troubles and afflictions.
44. Everything that God was presently enduring, all of the "things" mentioned in the chapter, were hidden in God.
45. Thus, before I move on to our second heading, let me first pause and suggest a few things from vv1-13.
46. If you recall, Job is in the midst of the storm—he's confused and lost—he's unable to make sense of things.
47. I want to suggest three helps for those who find themselves, regardless of degree, in a similar condition (sudden or sever affliction; Satanic oppression; fatherly chastisement).
48. Help 1—Pour out your heart before God—we have to remember this entire chapter is one long prayer.
49. In fact, I suggest to you that it's a very profound prayer—a prayer of deep emotion, anguish, and distress.
50. It reminds us, that foundational to prayer, is the outpouring of the heart to God—the soul's cry to God.
51. Job refers to this prayer as a complaint—"I will give free course to my complaint, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul."
52. I will speak from a bitter soul—a soul that's overwhelmed with distress and misery—burdened with pain.
53. Chapter 10 is best described as "cries or complaints from the tempest"—Job is calling out to God in the eye of the tornado.
54. I want to say something that may be misunderstood—I fear we at times may not be honest in our prayers.
55. Yes, our prayers need to be respectful and reverent, but they must also be honest and forthright with God.
56. Simply put, the tone of our prayers should reflect the condition of our heart, and if our hearts are heavy with sorrow or bitterness, they will take the form of a cry or complaint.
57. It's for this reason, there's great variety in the Psalms—at one time he's filled with joy and praise, and then a later on (often in the same Psalm) he's filled with sorrow and bitterness.
58. If this is true, then our prayers will rarely sound the same—they will be filled with joy and they will be filled with sorrow.
59. Help 2—Remind yourself and God who you are—throughout this section Job reminds God he is the work of His hands.

60. Now, obviously when I say we're to remind God of who we are, I mean that in a very qualified sense.
61. God never forgets anything and He certainly never forgets His beloved people especially in times of trouble.
62. Thus, ultimately speaking, in reminding God something, we are in fact actually reminding ourselves.
63. (a) He was created by God, v8—"Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate (complex) unity."
64. What a wonderful statement! I am the produce of God's hands! He has made and fashioned me in my mother's womb!
65. And He's made me "an intricate unity"—He's made me body and soul—He's made me physical and spiritual!
66. And he does so for two reasons: first, to remind God he is but a creature; second, to remind God he is His creature.
67. (b) He was recreated by God, v7—"Although You know that I am not wicked"—I have been recreated.
68. God knew he wasn't wicked—God knows all things—but Job needed to hear these words for himself.
69. Notice, Job doesn't say he's not a sinner—no Job was a sinner by nature, and he remained one in part.
70. But he was not wicked—he had been saved and changed—he was not the same man as he was born.
71. The NT speaks of this change as a new creation, 2Cor.5:17—"If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creation."
72. And again, it matters little if you were converted young or old, out of gross sin or a God-fearing home.
73. A wicked person has no concern for God or His law and lives for himself—and you know this is not you.
74. Help 3—Cling to the eternal and unchanging plan of God—here I am especially thinking of vv12-13.
75. God has not only created us and cared for us, but all of this in perfect fulfillment to His hidden purposes.
76. V13—"And I know that this was with You"—what is meant by "this" but Job's creation and suffering.
77. All of "these things" were with God from eternity—everything that befalls me is but God's hidden purposes.

II. He is Miserable (vv14-17)

1. Verses 14-15—"If I sin, then You mark me, and will not acquit me of my iniquity. If I am wicked, woe to me; even if I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head. I am full of disgrace; see my misery!"
2. The first parts of these verses are easy to understand—"God knows if I am sinning or if I am wicked."
3. The next phrase, "even if I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head" is less clear—it likely refers to pride.
4. "Even if I were righteous" I would not be able to take credit for it—"I am full of disgrace; see my misery!"
5. The word rendered "disgrace" by the NKJ, refers to a confusion caused by shame—"I am full of disgrace."

6. He was overflowing with shame that led to confusion—he was unable to see clearly because of shame.
7. This led to his misery—"see my misery"—behold the affliction of my soul which leads to great misery.
8. V16—"If my head is exalted, You hunt me like a fierce lion, and again You show Yourself awesome against me."
9. That is—"If I exalted myself in pride or self-merit, God hunts me known like a lion and frightens me."
10. V17—"You renew Your witnesses against me, and increase Your indignation toward me"—with new evidence comes increased guilt.
11. Who these witnesses are we are not told—they are either his sins, or else, God's commands that testify of his sins.
12. Job returns to the imagery of a court—God is the Judge and he was the accused, and his sins were witnesses.
13. And so, with the increase of witnesses came the increase of guilt and thus God's indignation against him.
14. The final phrase—"changes and war are ever with me" refers to the ongoing change of troops sent after him.
15. The imagery is as if God is sending fresh troops after him—they come against him wave after wave (NIV).
16. And so, what we find in vv14-17 is a miserable man, who was afflicted with an excessive sense of sin.
17. Here's a blameless and upright man—a man who fears God and shuns evil—a man forgiven and justified in Christ.
18. And yet, here's a confused and miserable man—a man who's lost all sense of his forgiveness and acceptance.
19. Here's a man who has not only lost the joy of his salvation, but has his conscience full of shame and disgrace.
20. And so, I want to address the cause and cure of Job's misery by suggesting three signs of an excessive sense of sin.
21. (1) Our conscious is burdened with shame—now, I need to first clarify—not all shame for sin is bad.
22. There is a healthy kind of shame that's consist with healthy Christin living—when we break God's law.
23. When Christians sin they will be ashamed of their behavior, and they will return to God for forgiveness.
24. But this type of shame should only be experienced to the extent that we've committed unforgiven sin.
25. 1Jn.1:9—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
26. By "unrighteousness" is meant a dirty or unclean conscience—a part of this unrighteousness is shame.
27. The feeling of unrighteousness—to feel dirty, guilty, and shameful—and what is the cure to this shame?
28. Confession (1Jn.1:9) and cleansing (1Jn.1:7)—"the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."
29. My dear friends, there is no guilt, filth, or shame, that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse—it cleanses from ALL SIN.

30. (2) Our God is viewed as a foe and not friend—within this passage Job describes God in three ways.
31. As a strict and unrelenting judge (vv14-16); as a fierce and ferocious lion (v16), and as a mighty and opposing army.
32. My Christian friend—mark it down as a gospel fact—if you view God in any of these ways, you have an excessive sense of sin.
33. Yes, God is a holy judge—Yes, He is our sovereign Creator—but He is also our reconciled Father in Christ.
34. We must never think that God is against or opposes us—even when He chastens us, He's always for us.
35. (3) Our hearts our filled with misery and not joy—this is a necessary result of this excessive sense of sin.

III. He is Momentary (vv18-22)

1. Job finishes his response to Bildad, by returning to the despair that we saw earlier back in chapter 3.
2. He laments he didn't die at birth (vv18-19), and he laments that his life is short and without comfort (vv20-22).
3. (1) He laments he didn't die at birth, vv18-19—"Why then have You brought me out of the womb? Oh, that I had perished and no eye had seen me! I would have been as though I had not been. I would have been carried from the womb to the grave."
4. (2) He laments his life is short, vv20-22—"Are not my days few? Cease! Leave me alone, that I may take a little comfort."
5. It's as if he says—"O God you know live is short, so won't you give me a break? A short respite from my affliction?"
6. He describes death as a "the land of darkness" and "the shadow of death"—"A land as dark as darkness itself, as the shadow of death, without any order, where even the light is like darkness."
7. The point being—he would rather be in the earth than on the earth—he would rather be dead than alive.
8. Why? Because of despair! He feels he can no longer bear under the afflictions and misery he's enduring.
9. A simple definition of despair is hopelessness—to feel as if there's no hope, as if there's no relief in sight.
10. 2Cor.1:8—"We do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life."
11. The troubles they experienced in Asia, were so heavy they despaired of life—he thought he would die.
12. The obvious difference between the apostles and Job being—Job actually desired or preferred death.
13. Thus, Job began his cries from the tempest by saying, v1—"My soul loathes my life"—it's tired of life.
14. But notice he said "my soul loathes MY life"—my soul is tired of MY life—filled with misery and pain.
15. Thus, in closing I want to suggest two simple encouragements, to help those combating Christian despair.
16. (1) Your present affliction is nothing in comparison to the joy that awaits you—even if you go the rest of life with little if any comfort, what is that in comparison to heaven?

17. 2Cor.4:17-18—"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."
18. Let me clarify—it's very unlikely you will continue in this condition for the rest your life—Job didn't.
19. But, and here's my point, even if you did—even if you limped along for the next 50 years, what is that in comparison to eternity.
20. (2) Your present affliction is nothing in comparison to that known by Christ—remember Job shadowed Christ.
21. To the extent that despair is the result of unbelief, we must never ascribe despair to our Savior—He never wavered in faith.
22. But while He never ceased believing, He did for a time, lose the comfort that accompanies that belief.
23. To the degree that He also desired to die—"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death" (Matt.26:38).
24. V20—"Are not my days few? Cease! Leave me alone, that I may take a little comfort"—this sounds like our Savior.