

**International Sunday School Lesson**  
**Study Notes**  
**October 26, 2014**

**Lesson Text: Job 42:1-10**  
**Lesson Title: Hope Satisfies**

**Introduction**

At the end of chapter thirty-one of Job, the long debate between Job and his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar comes to an end. Job does not speak again until chapter forty. From chapter thirty-two to chapter thirty-seven Job will listen to a fourth individual by the name of Elihu. It appears that Elihu has sat silently and listened to the debate between Job and his three friends. Elihu must have been a polite individual as he respectfully waited for the older men to speak first (Job 32:4). But when the time came he spoke his piece.

Elihu didn't think much of the counsel Job's friends had given him (Job 32:3). He also thinks Job has come across as self-righteous in his defense (Job 32:2). Elihu doesn't take sides with Job or his friends; he goes after all of them. Elihu is less condemning than Job's friends in suggesting that Job's suffering is a divine discipline rather than judgment for personal sin (Job 32-37).

Job doesn't speak after Elihu's speech. It is possible that Elihu's words caused Job to pause and think more deeply about God and His purposes for allowing him to suffer.

After Job had listened to all human opinions and suggestions as to why he was suffering, God speak in Job 38. Why God waited this long to speak is another mystery in the story of Job. God always has a purpose in what He says, what He does, and when all of that takes place. Whatever the reason for God not speaking up until this point, God now has the floor in chapters 38 and 39. And, ironically, it won't take near as long or require near as many words for God to speak as it did all of Job's friends.

God's words to Job turn his thoughts away from his personal suffering to God's greatness and plan. Through a series of rhetorical questions, God accused Job of lacking knowledge (Job 38:1-3). God waited for Job to answer his questions but Job refused citing his unworthiness (Job 40:1-5). God wouldn't let Job get off that easy and demanded a real answer from Job (Job 40:6-14). Job 42 is Job's response.

**Job's Confession (Job 42:1-6)**

Verse 1-2

“Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.”

As Job answers “the LORD,” he says, “I know that thou canst do every thing.” “Know” is a word of certainty. Although Job had previously questioned God’s inactivity in administering justice, he confesses that Jehovah has unlimited power and a purpose in all He does. “No thought can be withholden from thee” is Job’s confession that no one can upset or stop God’s plans from being fulfilled. Job confesses that God can achieve all that He plans, and that He plans knowing that He can do all things.

### Verse 3

“Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.”

“Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge” is a paraphrase of God’s own question to Job in Job 38:1-2, “*Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?*” Job is confessing to God, “I’m the one who kept things stirred up. It was me who was muddying the waters. I’m the one who has been way out of line.”

“Therefore have I uttered that I understood not” is Job’s confession that he has been talking about things he doesn’t know anything about. The word “understood” means “the ability to separate things mentally, too discern.” The “things” Job had spoken about are now confessed by Job to be “too wonderful for me.” The word “wonderful” means “separate or difficult.” Job is not saying that his friends were right because they were not. He is saying although his friends were wrong to conclude that he was suffering because of sin, he had no right or knowledge to assume he knew God’s purposes and plans. No matter what any of us know about God, we don’t know it all!

### Verse 4

“Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.”

In this verse, Job is again quoting God from the beginning of God’s second speech to Job recorded in Job 40:7, “*Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*” It seems that the words of God to Job and God’s requirement that Job “declare” or answer His questions is lingering on Job’s mind. In other words, God’s words to Job are echoing in his conscious and Job is repeating them out loud as he confesses before God.

When God originally told Job, “*Gird up thy loins now like a man...*” (Job 40:7) Job was apparently battling pride and presumption. The same thought is in the words of verse 4, “Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak.” Job was just too proud to listen to what God had to say. The words “...I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me” expresses God’s judicial authority to get answers from Job. After all, Job had accused God and God wants an answer.

#### Verse 5

“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.”

“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear” means Job had always had a knowledge of God, “but now,” or after all he has been through, “mine eye seeth thee.” Job is no longer a person who has just heard about God. Now he knows has grasped the greatness, wisdom, and sovereignty of God!

God doesn’t just want you to know about Him. He wants you to know Him. That is the heart of the prayer of the Apostle Paul when he prayed, “*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death*” (Philippians 3:10). Paul didn’t want anything to keep him from knowing Christ more deeply and intensely. And although Job is limited in what he knows about the Lord he confesses he now “sees” the Lord in a new light.

#### Verse 6

“Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

All that is left for Job to do is “repent in dust and ashes.” Job’s statement “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” reflects an ancient Israelite way of expressing sincere humility. The word “repent” in this verse is the Hebrew word *naham* {naw-ham}. The word has two basic meanings: 1) to breathe heavily, to grieve or to be sorry for some action; or 2) to give out a sigh of relief and be comforted.

Job is not repenting of some sin or moral failure as his friends and Satan had suggested. Job is sorry for his distrust of God’s faithfulness. Job is sorry for his presumption and accusations of unfairness from the Almighty. Job is sorry for the way he has responded to God’s trust in him and he shows it by brokenness and contrition.

The psalmist said, “*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*” (Psalm 51:17).

#### **Job’s Restoration (Job 42:7-10)**

## Verse 7

“And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.”

After Job’s confession, God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar for presenting Job with a distorted picture of God. Elihu isn’t mentioned, possibly because he came closer to an accurate assessment of Job’s situation than did the other three.

“After the LORD had spoken these words unto Job” is a reference to God’s words to Job recorded in Job 38-41. After God was finished speaking with Job, He now turns his attention to “Eliphaz the Temanite” and the other “two friends.” “Eliphaz” is addressed by God because he is most likely the eldest and the leader of the “two friends.” Although “Eliphaz” knew some things about God he was wrong in concluding that Job was suffering because of sin.

God’s “wrath” was “kindled against Eliphaz” and his “two friends” because they had “not spoken of me the thing that is right.” This does not mean that everything Job’s friends said about him was wrong but that they had made wrong statements about the character of God. The accusations which they had leveled at Job was nothing more than feeble attempts to defend their opinions and beliefs at the expense of God’s character.

The word “right” means “established, fixed, or determined.” Job’s friends based their arguments upon ancient beliefs and logical conclusions. The only problem is that ancient beliefs and logical conclusions are not always “right.” That means they are not always “established” or “determined” by God.

“As my servant Job hath” means Job’s friends had not been honest about God as Job had been. Job was not right in everything he said about God but he never spoke against God’s character. God gets angry when people misrepresent Him. You would think people would know that by now but it seems most people pay no attention to that truth. The Apostle Paul said, *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness”* (Romans 1:18). It’s even dangerous to mean well but say things about God that are not correct. Again, the Apostle Paul said, *“For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”* (Romans 10:2-3).

## Verse 8

“Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.”

It is not enough for Job’s friends to come and apologize to Job; they must show by their actions that he was right and they were wrong. The sin of Job’s three friends was so great that God demanded a sacrificial “burnt offering” of “seven bullocks and seven rams.” While the normal sacrifice for a “burnt offering” was a single male animal (Leviticus 1), the number “seven” was a common number in offering animals for sacrifice because it denoted completeness (Leviticus 23:18; Numbers 29:32).

Job’s friends were to take their “seven bullocks and seven rams” and go to God’s long-suffering “servant Job.” As God had been patient and gracious with Job, so He was to his friends by means of sacrifice and prayer. Even before the Levitical priesthood, family heads acted as priests, offering sacrifices and mediating through prayer. Just as Job sacrificed for his own children in Job 1:2-5, he would “pray” for his friends because God would “accept” Job’s prayers and sacrificial offering. Because of Job’s tested righteousness his prayer and presence would be a blessing for his three shamed and guilty friends. God will “accept” Job’s sacrifice as appeasement for His wrath against Job’s three friends.

“Lest I deal with you after your folly” is literally “not to disgrace you.” If Job’s friends would take their offering and allow Job to sacrifice for them they would not be punished as they deserved.

As you read this verse you are reminded that sin requires a sacrifice. This picture of Job’s friends coming to him with a sacrifice points all sinners to Jesus Christ who is the sacrifice and offering for the sin of mankind. The Apostle Paul told the young preacher Timothy, “*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*” (1 Timothy 2:5).

### Verse 9

“So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

Job’s friends were not too proud to do as God commanded. God has spoken to them and they have obeyed. That is always wise (1 Samuel 15:22). God also “accepted Job” as he said in verse 8. The words “accept him” means “God accepted Job’s prayers and offerings in behalf of his friends.” This could never

have happened with the obedience of Job's friends and Job's righteous character.

### Verse 10

"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before."

"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job" are gracious and glorious words indeed. God is restoring to Job everything he has lost during his days of pain and suffering. What God restored is described in Job 42:11-17. It is important not to miss the connection of Job's restoration to his praying for his friends. Instead of taking the "I told you so approach" or "I was right and you were wrong" attitude, Job prayed and sacrificed for the men who had been a thorn in his side. Job now has a new relationship with his friends and with God. And God restores Job by giving him "twice as much as he had before."

The words, "twice as much as he had before" means God doubled it! For those who point out that God gave Job the same amount of sons and daughters as he previously had (Job 1:2, 42:13) which means God didn't give Job "twice as" many children, don't forget the original "*seven sons and three daughters*" are in heaven. So actually, Job had fourteen sons, and six daughters, ten in heaven and ten new children on earth!

There is no mention of God healing Job's sickness and restoring his body, although it obviously happened (Job 42:16-17). Job never changed his manner of life as his friends suggested, yet God restored him and blessed him. This proves their conclusions were wrong. Hope does satisfy!

### **Conclusion**

There are many lessons to learn from the life of Job. First, you should never think that you know everything there is to know about God or that you understand his ways. Although people often think they have figured God out or know why He does what He does, they are usually proven to be wrong, or at least not completely accurate. Second, Job teaches us that forever and always, God will do right. Whether He allows us to prosper or suffer He is just and right in all He does. Time may conceal that truth but eternal will fully reveal it.

Take time today and this week to think about God's sovereignty and purposes in your life. Ask the Lord to forgive all your self-righteous attitudes or motives. Thank God privately for His wisdom in dealing with you. Praise Him for His works and worship Him for Who He is!

Amen.