

Discussion Questions

1. Read Job 2:11-2:13

Have you ever just simply sat with someone while they were suffering? Did you see any benefit to that? Did they?

2. Have you ever felt speechless? Like you didn't know what to say to someone who was suffering? Did you try to muster up some wisdom anyway? How did that go?

3. Throughout these chapters, Job continues to assert his innocence. And his friends continue to assert his guilt. Were his friends correct? Have you ever had someone give you advice that you felt was completely off base? How did you respond?

4. David had a friend who called him to the carpet. After David's incident with Bathsheba, Nathan pointed out David's sin...and David was cut to the core. Have you ever had a friend point out a sin in your life? What was your response?

5. I wonder at what point Job realized that this tragedy wasn't going to be over very quickly. That he was going to have to settle in for a long period of suffering. Because it's one thing to experience a sudden, tragic loss...and another to realize that this suffering will be prolonged.

Do you believe that there's a way to find joy in suffering? In light of your past difficulties, have you found that to be true? (reference: Job 5:17)

6. Do you have any friends who will stick with you through thick and thin? Good and bad? Who's **really** with you? Maybe not beside you right now...but with you?

7. If you had friends who truly had your best interest at heart, who encouraged you, and longed to see you grow closer to God...would that make life a little easier to navigate? What's stopping you from seeking those types of friendships out?

Prayer

How can the group partner with you, and help share your burdens? Write down others requests so you can keep up with them, and be reminded to pray for them throughout the week.

You can use the following to help in your study of the book of Job:

Comparison of Each Friend's Response to Job

Eliphaz: His ideas are based on a "spiritual experience" he had one night. (4:12-16)

| 1 st Response | 2 nd Response | 3 rd Response |
|--|--|--|
| 4:1-11 4:7 God does not make the innocent suffer | 15:1-6 15:4 Your irreverence blinds you to the truth | 22:1-11 22:4,10-11 Your darkness in knowing "why" is the evidence of your wickedness |
| 4:12-21 4:17-18 No one can stand up to God | 15:7-11 15:9 What makes you better/smarter than any of us? | 22:12-20 22:15 Your path leads to the same end to which the wicked always come |
| 5:1-7 5:6 Trouble doesn't come from nowhere. (You're in denial.) | 15:12-16 15:12-13 You're speaking out of anger | 22:21-30 22:21-22 Stop struggling with the Lord's discipline and return to Him and be restored |
| 5:8-16 5:8 Seek God | 15:17-35 15:17-18 You can't explain away all the circumstantial evidence against you | |
| 5:17-27 5:17 God disciplines you for your own good | | |

Summary: *The circumstances clearly indicate that the Lord is disciplining you for your own good.*

Bildad: A "traditionalist" who tries to build a case based on "wise sayings".

| 1 st Response | 2 nd Response | 3 rd Response |
|--|--|--|
| 8:1-7 8:3 You are getting what you deserve | 18:1-4 18:2 You're just trying to talk your way out of your predicament | 25:1-6 25:4 No one can be justified before God |
| 8:8-22 8:8 History has proven time and again that God punishes evil and rewards good | 18:5-21 18:18 The wicked live in darkness and are trapped by their incomprehension | |

Summary: *The circumstances clearly indicate that you have turned your back on the Lord.*

Zophar: Very dogmatic and quite certain he knows more about God than anyone else.

| 1 st Response | 2 nd Response |
|---|---|
| 11:1-6 11:6 Your spirit is in the wrong place | 20:1-11 20:5 The wicked's prosperity is short-lived (You reap what you sow.) |
| 11:7-12 11:7 Your mind is in the wrong place | 20:12-19 20:18 The wicked's prosperity will consume him (You reap what you sow.) |
| 11:13-20 11:13 Your heart is in the wrong place | 20:20-29 20:26 The wicked's "reward" is darkness and destruction (You reap what you sow.) |

This chart attempts to boil down the major points of each friends' response to see not just the nature of their arguments but why Job senses they are attacking him personally. It's interesting to note that each of their responses get shorter and shorter while Job's counter-responses grow longer.

Summary: *The circumstances clearly indicate that you are reaping what you have sown, or, The truth has now come out that you've been living a lie all this time.*