

Character Study: Job
Part 2 – Job Speaks with His Friends
Job 3-28

What's happening?

- Job had experienced some of the worst tragedies imaginable. Following seven days of morning, his silence was broken as he cursed the day he was born. Job felt it would have been better never to have been born than to experience the suffering he was going through. (3:1-26)
- Job's friends give their thoughts on his situation. Eliphaz insisted the innocent do not suffer like that, so Job must be guilty of sin (4:7-9; 5:17). Bildad claimed God's justice is clearly being carried out, and that Job needed to plead for mercy (8:3-6). Zophar went even further and said that God had taken it easy on Job based on what he probably really deserved (11:4-6).
- Job defended his innocence, which made the conversation with his friends more of a debate. Each person took turns speaking in three separate rounds of conversation (Round 1: chapters 4-14; Round 2: chapters 15-21; Round 3: chapters 22-28). Each round grew more intense as Job's friends felt that Job was stubborn and unwilling to listen to their counsel (15:5-6; 18:3).
- Job exposed the fact that his friends were horrible comforters (13:3-4; 16:2). He was hurting (7:7; 17:1) and confused as to why he was suffering (10:2), but he continued to defend his innocence despite his friend's accusations (13:18; 27:5). He wished so badly that he could just speak to God and get the answers he was looking for (23:3-7).

What's God doing?

> God remained silent through the debate and allowed the men to wrestle through the reasons behind the difficult issues of life. Though God did not provide any answers at this point, the truth Job did have provided him hope (19:23-26; 13:15a).

What's to learn?

- The attitudes of Job's friends remind us that it is easy to be judgmental. Do not make false assumptions about issues you do not understand!
- The whole world may be against you (see 19:13-19) and calamity may befall you, but there is peace when you know you are right with God. Above all, believers can cling to the great truth of Romans 8:1!

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