

Job 7

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[0 : 00] It depends what page I'm on. It's Job 7. All right, let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for the day.

We praise you for the opportunity of gathering together! and so thankful for your word and pray that you be with us as we open it up. And Lord, that the truth of scripture would resonate within us and Lord, around us, that as we see it, we would come to understand more and more of who you are and more and more of the cares and concerns and the weight of who we are.

And so, Father, I pray that we would draw closer to you through our study of it. Just be glorified in our time together and we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Put it in context, Job 7, we know follows Job 6, but Job 6 and 7 are Job's response to Eliphaz the Temnite. So, they are coupled together as two chapters of being his response to Eliphaz's argument that surely Job has done something wrong, that things that are happening in his life are a result of his sin or his deeds or misbehavior.

We've said this before. Eliphaz is speaking with something called conventional wisdom. And conventional wisdom is simply a good way of saying that if you do good, good things will happen to you. If you do bad, bad things will happen to you.

[1 : 28] And therefore, if bad things are happening to you, it is because you have done something bad. Eliphaz is from Timon. Timon is known as the region of wisdom during the time of the patriarchs.

It is declared, I believe it is in the book of Jeremiah, that it is a land from which wisdom comes. So, he is speaking of the wisdom of the day, the wisdom that really just says that we reap what we sow. That if we do right, we can expect good things to come. And if we do wrong, we can expect wrong and bad things to happen to us. And therefore, we can base our circumstances, our circumstances can dictate to us what is going on in our life.

There's still being something that is proposed today, that if you see someone that is suffering or see pain and misery in their life and you see things that are going wrong, this surely is a result of some type of sin.

And that is exactly what Eliphaz has declared to Job. And the reason he said it in such terminology was because Job had cried out in the third chapter, despairing even of his life.

[2 : 34] Job said, I wish that I was dead. All these things that happened to me, I wish that I was not even alive. And I wish that everything would just come to an end. And Eliphaz says, you're just being foolish. And you've helped other people.

Why not help yourself? So we say all of that because it helps us get it into context. We always want to take things in context because when we open up a chapter in Job, we're really just kind of interjecting ourself midway through a conversation, if you will.

It's like walking up on someone, having a conversation. And if you don't know the setting and you don't know the context, then it can be misconstrued or misunderstood. And we want to be able to understand it properly.

Job has began to respond to this conventional wisdom, still declaring his own righteousness, still declaring his own sinlessness, as far as he knows, in the sixth chapter.

He has opened himself up for the possibility of sin. And he kind of ended the sixth chapter by saying to Eliphaz and to his friends, he said, listen, if I've done wrong, tell me the wrong that I have done.

[3 : 35] Don't come and speak to me in generalities and saying, well, you must have sin in your life. He said, tell me the sin. Acknowledge it to my face. Look at me as an individual, because then by disclosing my sin, then I can repent.

And so we've kind of seen that challenge in our own lives that we ought to be those who can lovingly, truthfully expose things in other people's lives. But if there is not a clear revealed sin, then we dare not jump to the consequence of thinking, well, this man was born blind because his parents sinned.

We don't want to be those who make those accusations so quickly. The focus of Job shifts in the seventh chapter. And in the seventh chapter, he is not addressing his friends, but rather he now shifts his focus and again addresses the Lord God.

And what I want you to see, Job is an interesting case study. He's an interesting case study, and we have the ability of looking at him like this, that surely his integrity is held fast, and he is a man of completeness.

But he's a man of completeness in his time. Okay? He's a man of completeness in his time. He's still offering sacrifices to consecrate his children and all of those things up until the day of destruction.

[5 : 03] But he does not know anything of Christ. In his time, he knows nothing of the sacrificial lamb of atonement on the day of atonement, for the law has not been given yet.

He does not know anything of the altar, and the burnt altar, and the laver, and the candlesticks, or the tabernacle, or the temple. None of those things have been given yet. He doesn't know anything about the law.

He doesn't know anything about the cross. He doesn't know the gospel. And so really, it's very raw in his humanity. If we want to understand what he does know, then we read the book of Genesis.

He knew that God created man in his image. He created them. Male and female, he created them. And he created them to rule and subdue over the earth. That was what was taught. And then that man rebelled against that, and man was put out of the garden.

And that God atoned for that by slaughtering an animal, and skinning the animal, and clothing man. And so he expected a blood sacrifice. We see that with Cain and Abel. Those things, those matters had been passed along.

[6 : 04] But the rest of it, the law, and the expectation, and all of the things, and even the hope that comes from that understanding, is really veiled to Job.

Now, we say that because, even in particular in this chapter, we're going to see some things that we're like, well, that doesn't seem quite right. And Job, are we sure that he's walking in integrity? Well, God himself says he's a man of integrity, so we want to hold on to that. But we also understand that he is a man confined to his day and time. And because of that, this is why, I know this is Sunday night, and I know some of you don't want to think this much, but we will think this much.

This is why we have to affirm Scripture is progressive in its revelation. That is, the more we read, the more we understand. And so, it progresses as we study it.

When we read Job, we don't expect to find the truth of heaven that we know about in the New Testament.

[7 : 18] And you'll see why I say that in just a moment. We know that there's a longing that's built into his heart, and we find that later on, where he says, I know that I will see my Redeemer in the land of the living.

We know that. Now there's this built anticipation. But we're at the forefront of this suffering now. And so, what he's wanting is just to all end. And when it ends, it's done.

And it's over. And it's stopped. And so, as we come to the seventh chapter, and we still see Job with no known sin, but yet it's kind of plunging the depths of humanity's crisis here, I want you to see the lies that suffering tends to breed in the life of the individual.

The lies of suffering, the things that tend to speak to us, because the enemy is testing and sifting Job, much like he did with Peter and the disciples.

And part of that sifting is the suffering. Satan himself, the adversary, had said that flesh for flesh, if you attack his bones, he will curse you to your face. And so, he's testing the integrity of Job and therefore, using the instrument, one of the greatest instruments of the enemy, are the lies that are born and bred in those moments of misery and suffering.

[8 : 43] The lies that people believe. This is why propaganda has been utilized so often among nations when people are uncomfortable and propaganda has begun to breed these lies.

The enemy does the same thing. He speaks in propaganda and he brings about lies that seem to speak to the mind and the soul and its point of misery and suffering and there are things that too often we hold on to and even in today's time you will see that.

So, we see it here in Job 7. It says, Is not man forced to labor on the earth and are not his days like the days of a hired man as a slave who pants for the shade and as a hired man who eagerly waits for his wages so am I allotted months of vanity and nights of trouble are appointed me.

When I lie down I say, When shall I rise? But the night continues and I am continually tossing until dawn. My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt.

My skin hardens and runs. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and come to an end without hope. Remember that my life is but breath. My eye will not again see good.

[9 : 53] The eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer. Your eyes will be on me but I will not be. When a cloud vanishes it is gone. So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up.

He will not return again to his house nor will his place know him anymore. Therefore I will not restrain my mouth. I will speak in the anguish of my spirit.

I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Am I the sea or the sea monster that you set a guard over me? If I say my bed will comfort me my couch will ease my complaint then you frighten me with dreams and terrify me by visions so that my soul would choose suffocation death rather than my pains.

I waste away. I will not live forever. Leave me alone for my days are but a breath. What is man that you magnify him and that you are concerned about him that you examine him every morning and try him every moment.

Will you never turn your gaze away from me nor let me alone until I swallow my spittle? Have I sinned? What have I done to you O watcher of men? Why have you set me as your target so that I am a burden to myself?

[11 : 06] Why then do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust and you will seek me but I will not be. I want you to see here as Job responds to his friends and now is even crying out to God the lies that suffering too often breed and it is the lies that speak into our hearts and minds and cause mankind to live with despair.

It are lies that at times creep into the heart and mind even of the believer and we notice that they come because of the misery.

He says I am speaking and crying out from my suffering and my despair and we do not belittle that. We see not only the physical loss and the physical pain and the financial loss and everything compounded and happening in a moment with the loss of all of his livestock the loss of all of his children the loss of his health the loss and the brokenness of his relationship with his wife though I do not believe that they are eternally lost they will be restored that marriage will be restored there are some that will teach that Job divorced his wife I don't think that's the case at all there will be a restoration there later on but at that moment when his wife said why don't you curse God and die the brokenness of harmony in the home and all of this misery and the sores that afflicts his being he says here that his skin is crusted over but running with sores and oozing out of it and filled with worms and it is really just a horrendous sight when we begin to see the suffering that is upon him a suffering that is so astounding that his friends when they came together and they sat around him were in fear he says in the 6th chapter that they had failed to offer wise counsel because they were afraid of his suffering and it is that that Satan is using now to begin to speak lies into the heart and mind of Job lies that if God does not intervene at the end of the book that would take deep root in his soul and destroy the remainder of his days

God never answers the question why is Job suffering but God does answer a lot of the lies that Job is kind of compelled to believe in the midst of his suffering God does answer that with the reality of who he is and his presence he begins to speak in time after time again to the lies that are afflicting him and we see here that as suffering begins to take root in an individual's life the first thing that is questioned is the very purpose of life itself Job begins to question the reality and the purpose that he has he declares that life is one that has kind of been drafted or conscripted into the army he says is not man forced to lay labor on the earth he speaks of mankind as being one who are compelled to labor against their will or against their desires and that his days are like the days of a hired man and they are drudgery and they are miserable and they are terrible but yet we know scripture teaches us from the very beginning that man is not drafted into service or even a hired individual but rather man is entrusted with the ability to be a steward of creation and it is the stewardship of

creation which is a blessing not only to creation but to man himself that is a willing adventure and it is a high calling of man to be entrusted with that by the creator but it is the misery and the suffering in this life that takes that high calling and brings it down to a place of misery and begin to doubt really the purpose of life why am I even here why does this even exist this is just like someone who just wants to be done with it rather than seeing it as a stewardship entrusted and seeing it as a responsibility granted he sees life now in the midst of pain and suffering as something to be endured something to be longing for an end to come he says he is one who eagerly waits for his wages or longs for the passing of the shade that his months are of vanity and his nights are trouble it is the lie that begins to proclaim that life is vain now we do know that when we get to the song of Solomon his vanity of vanity not the song of Solomon

Ecclesiastes his vanity of vanities all of life is vain but that vanity is the pursuit of material possessions and the pursuit of pleasure and the pursuit of everything in this world but he does in the book of Ecclesiastes the preacher ends by saying that the purpose of life is to seek the Lord God in the days of your youth and to know him and to understand him and to grow in that relationship to him but it is in that suffering that man begins to doubt the purpose of life itself and it is one of the tools of the enemy to cause man mankind to doubt the reason of their own existence because if man was reminded of the reality that they had been entrusted with a responsibility and that indeed was a gift then life is no longer a burden but rather it becomes a blessing because it is an opportunity to serve the creator amongst his creation and it is not something we have to do but rather it is something we get to do sure there are toils and strife and labor and there are things that we must press forward through but it is the result of the sin that has been inherited in the world because of our fall but too often the miserable condition of suffering that is brought upon the people of the world

[16:59] Satan uses to lead them to doubt the very purpose of life itself why am I even here and when we lose purpose we lose reason and we know that God has called us as his people to be those who labor among his creation for his good and his glory and that's not drudgery no matter how comfortable it may feel no matter how pleasant it may be in that moment it is an opportunity that we get to have not that we are compelled to have be careful what we let define the purpose of the life God has entrusted to us for if we let our circumstances dictate our purpose then too often we will think that it is like a hired servant who has been compelled to do something but rather there is a greater definition of purpose and it is God who has given it to us in his word and he declares to us that we ought to do it but it is hard to hold on to that in the midst of suffering it is astounding isn't it that the first thing the enemy attacks is purpose what is the purpose why am I doing this purpose is the first thing lost in any church that fails to exist purpose is the first thing missed in any marriage that begins to break down purpose is the first thing missed in any organization that begins to falter why are we doing what we do what is the purpose it is the first thing that is attacked by the enemy in the midst of suffering and is the first lie whispered into the life of an individual why are you even here and this is the thing that Job is suffering with it is the purpose of life and when we begin to doubt the purpose of life then the second lie that we have mentioned for us here in our text is that promise of eternity

Job is existent before the hope of eternity has come to fruition salvation but yet we do know that Ecclesiastes 3 tells us that God has set eternity in the heart of every man and I believe that it is absolute truth that our life is but a vapor it is but a breath it is fleeting and it is passing and it quickly goes by no matter how long our days may be it is but a breath in the light of eternity but we know the truth of the gospel is that that breath once it is passed now becomes an eternal life that there is a secondary step to that this life is passing the next one is enduring

Job does not have that hope he says the eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer your eyes will be on me but I will not be he speaks of the finality of death as if it will be a time of cessation that in the end he just will not be and he is hoping for that and longing for that and what has been told him in his ear in the midst of suffering it would be better to just die and be over than to continue to live eternally for this and it is that promise of eternity that begins to escape the reality in the midst of the suffering he says that when the cloud vanishes and is gone so is he who goes down to Sheol he does not come up again Sheol in the Old Testament is much like Abaddon it is just a place of the departed spirits it is a place neither hell nor heaven it is just seen as a place of the departed spirits and as Job refers to it here he says he'll go and just never come back again it's just it's just over it's just done for there is no longing and he does not want to have a longing for if all

he knows is misery why would he be longing for an eternal misery but we know that in Christ that the departed spirits do indeed rise again they are risen and joined together with our bodies and meet him in the air 1st corinthians 15 we see the reality of this found in Christ we have the hope of this in our own life it is the!

of the gospel as scripture continuously reveals to us the reality that the longing of man is that it would live eternally but the suffering of man removes the promise of eternity but the son of man restores the hope of eternity within our hearts we know that we were created for something that's why sheo is even in existence!

[21 : 46] because man could never define this cessation it was hard to convince it has to be something else it can't be just over right the older I get the more I understand that I had an individual I remember several years ago now I mean I was probably 21 21 22 we were playing a church volleyball game and he was standing beside me and he was much closer to my age than I am now a little bit older than me and I remember as we were playing volleyball, he said, you know, in my mind, I'm 16, but my body keeps reminding my mind that it's not 16 anymore. And I had no idea what he was talking about. Now that I'm getting closer to the age he was, in my mind, I'm still 16. Something innately inside of us says it can't just stop. The body says, I want to stop, but something inside of us says, but that just doesn't feel right. And so in the Old Testament, they had to come up with shield, the place of the departed spirits. We don't know what happens then, but it's just, they have to go somewhere. Christ brings to us the hope of eternity, which restores the promise that is the longing of the heart.

In the midst of suffering, man says, it's just going to be over. And Satan tries to remove that promise as he speaks into the heart and mind of the individual. And too many times in misery and in pain and in suffering, man has denounced it, saying, I just want it to end. It is that promise of eternity that is restored in Christ. It's really highlighted in Christ, and it is something that was set in the heart of every man, for man was made in his image. That is made man in our image, an eternal being. In the beginning was the word, right? He is eternal. And in that image we have been created. And because we begin to doubt and diminish the promise of eternity, it naturally leads to the same outcome that Job had, and that is the reality of God's personal concern for us. The personal concern of God. Job says something here that elsewhere in scripture is attributed as a good quality of God, and here he declares it to be an unwelcomed quality of God.

And it is the fact that God is ever watching him. Elsewhere in scripture we counted is what is man that you take notice of him, that you would set your mind upon him, that you would exalt him and raise him up as the psalmist cries out. What is man, this lowly being? Job cries out and says, who am I that you would continuously look at me, just look away from me? Because in his suffering and in his misery he begins to doubt the personal concern of God. He says, therefore I will not restrain my mouth. I will speak in the anguish of my spirit. I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Am I the sea or the sea monster that you set a guard over me? If I say my bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint. Then you frighten me with dreams and terrify me by visions so that my soul would choose suffocation, death rather than pains. I waste away. I will not live forever. Look at here. He says, leave me alone for my days are but a breath. What is man that you magnify him or that you set your face upon him and that you are concerned about him? Here's the question Job is asking in his suffering. Why am I so important that you're paying attention to me? And the suffering has lied to Job to tell him it would be better if God would remove his face from him. Job is unaware of the reality that a loving holy God is looking upon him with compassion. He will restore him in the end.

But in the midst of that suffering, he cannot see that. He is one that will attribute the fact that all things come to us by way of God, that God is indeed in control. And therefore, since he sees these matters arriving from God, he would rather God just leave him alone. Now we, in truthfulness, never do want God to turn his face away from us. If we want to see what that looks like, then all we have to see is when Christ is on the cross and he is forsaken by the Father. That literally means that God turned his back upon the Son. And the weight of our sin rested upon him. And God's face was no longer set upon him, for he bore our guilt and our shame. But here in this text, Job is crying out, what am I that you pay so much attention to me that you continuously afflict me? It tells us in the word of God, be not deceived, all good things come from the Father. We understand that. But we also have to affirm the reality that the difficult things also pass before the Father. They do not come from him, but they pass before him.

[26 : 50] Sometimes it is moments of testing. Sometimes it's moments of trial. Sometimes it's moments of sowing what we have reaped, sure. But the reality is, is that we would be far worse if he would remove his face from us. And the question is, what is man that you would set your face or that you are concerned about him to us brings great comfort? But in suffering, it could bring great discomfort.

Why are you so concerned about me that you want to afflict me this way? And this is exactly the lie that Satan is hoping to implant and impart into Job's heart. Job, wouldn't it be better for you if God would just turn away from you? Wouldn't it be better for you if God would just forget about you? And this is a lie that Satan is attempting to sow. Thankfully, God will call him back to himself, will remind him of his greatness and his splendor and his glory. It would display to him the goodness that it is that God has set his face upon him as he begins to restore and renew him. But still, we are astounded that even Job knew that man was before the face of God because we asked the question, what is man that you magnify him and that you are concerned about him? We ask it on the other side of that. Who am I that God would be concerned about me? But who am I if God is not concerned about me?

Because we understand then that if he was to remove his current concern from us, then we would be in most miserable condition indeed. Finally, from our text, we see the lie that is whispered through pain and suffering is the lie that dispels the provision of forgiveness.

It is the lie that dispels the provision of forgiveness. Job asked the question in verse 20, have I sinned? Now, we know this is a reality because Job has already said, if you know my sins, he said this to his friends, then tell me how I have sinned. And now Job seems to be asking God the same question. So again, Job has not removed the possibility of sin from his thinking. He is just not aware of any sin. Now we know because we have seen the courtroom of heaven being opened up to us, that none of these matters are happening to Job because of sin. These are not matters of displeasure of God. These are not matters of chastisement from God. Rather, these are matters of testing from Satan. But Job asked a good question. He says, have I sinned? And he is wanting God to answer him in this sin. He says, what have I done to you, a watcher of men? Again, by the way, [29 : 37] I love that title, a watcher of men, because if we were to consider that more often, that God is the watcher of men, maybe it would help us to watch what we do as men, right? If we understood the reality that he is a watcher of men. What have I done to you? And why have you set your target on me so that I am a burden to myself? So here he's asking the question, and I believe he's asking it with all sincerity and truth, saying, God, show me. But then he asked the question that is the longing of every heart. Why then do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?

For now I will lie down in the dust, and you will seek me, but I will not be. So Job asked the question, have I sinned? And then he asked the follow-up question, and if I have sinned, then God, why will you not pardon me? Job knows no offering nor sacrifice to give for the atonement of a sin that he does not know about. And yet here we know that the only one who can provide that atonement is the Lord God himself. This question is answered in Christ. We know that. It is continuously pointing us to Jesus Christ. God does pardon sin and take away iniquity, and he does it through Jesus Christ.

We have indeed all sinned. It is the provision of forgiveness. But in the moment of suffering, Job doubts the provision of that forgiveness. He is here even doubting his own sacrifices that he has offered, serving as the priest of his home, consecrating or setting apart for holy service his own children. He knows that there is nothing that he could do to atone for the sin that he is unaware of. And his heart cried, God, is God, if I have sinned, then why don't you forgive me? Why don't you atone it? Why don't you remove my guilt from me? And the answer to that we find later on in scripture, God says, yes, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But he has atoned for that sin for whosoever believes in Jesus Christ will be saved. The atonement and the forgiveness is there.

It is the reality, the provision of forgiveness for indeed we have all sinned, and we are all deserving of everything that happened to Job and then some, for the wages of sin is death. Even if there's no specific sin to bring about that pain and suffering, it is the reality of our sin nature that that we know that we are deserving of death. We have rejected a holy God. And yet in his love and concern and personal care for us, he has forgiven us of our sins. He has made atonement and provisions for that. And he has made it in the person of Jesus Christ. But yet in the midst of suffering, there are

lies that are being whispered by the enemy. And we must be careful how much we base our life upon the lies that are whispered. Because in the heart of Job, these lies were becoming a reality. Sure, his friends were not a help at all. Thankfully, the fourth one to speak will begin to point them all in the right direction. And then God himself will speak and restore and renew all things.

[32 : 54] We've got a lot of bickering and arguing before we can get to that. Because conventional wisdom still says, sure, Job is wrong. These things must be his fault. We just have to find out what he has done.

And really, the friends aren't concerned about finding out what he's done. They're just rather concerned about finding out that he knows he's done something wrong. But yet we see Job is crying out, just tell me what I have done and tell me how I can be forgiven. That's the heart cry of every man.

How have I fallen? And how can I be forgiven? And that answer is found in Jesus Christ. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the day. We thank you for your word. We thank you for the opportunity we have to be together to look at it. And Lord, we are reminded that you are a very present God.

You take notice of each one of us. And we, contrary to Job, we cry out and say, God, who are we that you would notice us? And Lord, we say, please do not turn your face from us.

Lord, I know there are great needs that are present among our fellowship of believers. And we ask that you would move accordingly. You would be glorified in the manner in which you work.

[34 : 07] And in those moments where we're not sure what's going on, we're not certain why suffering is present and why things are happening to those around us. May we be those who walk with the certainty of who you are, that you're still on the throne, you're still in control, and you still care. Lord, help us to lift up the name of Jesus Christ to all we come into contact with. And we ask it all in your sweet and precious name. Amen. Thank you, guys.