

Job 9

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[0 : 00] Job is indeed a challenging book. It stretches the mind and stretches the study. I was telling Carrie earlier today it is challenging preaching through it.

! I'm thankful for it though. I'm thankful for the opportunity to really be pushed to study Job and not just to read it, to look at it. There are times I feel much like the old Jerry Clowers joke concerning the chauffeur. I don't know if you remember that. The chauffeur that heard the man give the speech so many times and said he could give the speech.

And he stood up and gave the speech and during the Q&A; someone asked a question and he said that question is so unfavorable. It is such an ignorant question.

I'm going to let my chauffeur answer it and the chauffeur was the professor, the true teacher. That's what I feel like sometimes when I stand up preaching Job is I want to go, who wants to give the answer of why this means what it means? Because it can get very deep. But yeah, it is challenging for sure because as we have said, there's so much we read in here.

Yeah, that's absolutely true. And then it seems as if the very next verse challenges what we just affirmed. But yet, it is very beneficial. One thing that we keep in mind as we turn to Job 9 and Job begins to respond to the further accusations of his friend is that Job's worldview and their worldview is very much the same.

[1 : 27] During that period of time before the sacrificial system, before the tabernacle, before the temple, before the priesthood of individuals.

And it was man seeking to know the Lord God and walk in fellowship. And it is in history progressing in revelation. So they knew enough to know they were wrong.

They knew enough to know they had fallen. They had understood that. They knew the judgment of God. The days of Noah had declared the judgment of God. They knew acceptable sacrifices.

They don't look any further than Cain and Abel. They knew that without the shedding of blood, there was no appeasement of a holy God. So the holiness of God in those matters was very much undisputed.

And their worldview was around kind of how life had lived. That God blessed the righteous and those who did right. And that God judged the wicked. And if you think about when you read the early pages of Scripture and you read in particular the book of Genesis.

[2 : 32] And you see that in the days of Noah, man did whatever he wanted to. And then a great flood comes. And so God judges the wicked. But yet there's Noah who found favor before God.

So God blesses and prospers. Now, if we were to read a little bit further in the story of Noah, we know that Noah is not exactly, everything's not always great later on. Even after they come out of the ark and after all of those realities.

But it is during that period and that time frame in which their perception or perspective of what it looks like to live with a holy God is formed.

Job's mind frame and worldview is the same as his friends. The difference is Job goes a little deeper into his knowledge of who the Lord God is.

He goes a little further. And he gives room for the what ifs that we find in Scripture. And he gives room for the mystery. Not saying that I've got it all figured out.

[3 : 35] That I know exactly how to live with this God. It is really, in Job we find the same wrestling that is present in every man and every woman.

And it is the wrestling of how then shall I live? How shall I live before my God? How shall I behave? What does it take? And this chapter begins really to ask those questions and expound that.

And we will see that as we get into it. But before we read it, let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for this day. We thank you for the opportunity. For it is that.

It is a glorious opportunity to read a portion of the Word of God. And so as we do, we ask that you would move in our hearts and minds. We ask that you give us understanding.

Lord, when we come to difficult passages, we know that it is your Word. So we look to you for the interpretation and the application thereof. So Father, we cry out and say that unless you illuminate the Word, then we would not understand it.

[4 : 41] So give us understanding. Lord, may that understanding lead to application. And as always, may it lead to a greater forming and shaping and molding of who we are to become more like you, Lord Jesus.

We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. The Word of God says, Then Job answered. So this is his reply to Bildad, who has called him a windbag and told him that, you know, his sons died because of their sins and that if Job would repent.

Bildad holds the most rigid double retribution theology of all the friends. That is, that God destroys the wicked and he prospers the righteous. That those who do wrong get bad things.

Those who do right get good things. And there's no deviation in the thinking of Bildad. And this is how Job answers. Then Job answered, In truth, I know that this is so.

But how can a man be in the right before God? If one wished to dispute with him, he could not answer him once in a thousand times. Wise in heart and mighty in strength.

[5 : 47] Who has defied him without harm? It is God who removes the mountains they know not how. When he overturns them in his anger. Who shakes the earth out of its place and its pillars tremble.

Who commands the sun not to shine and sets a seal upon the stars. Who alone stretches out the heavens and tramples down the waves of the sea. Who makes the bear Orion and pleads and the chambers of the south.

Who does great things unfathomable and wondrous works without number. Were he to pass by me, I would not see him. Were he to move past me, I would not perceive him.

Were he to snatch away, who could restrain him. Who could say to him, what are you doing? God would not turn back his anger. Beneath him crouched the helpers of Rahab.

How then can I answer him and choose my words before him? For though I were right, I could not answer. I would have to implore the mercy of my judge.

[6 : 46] If I called and he answered me, I could not believe that he was listening to my voice. For he bruises me with the tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause. He will not allow me to get my breath, but saturates me with bitterness.

If it is a matter of power, behold, he is the strong one. And if it is a matter of justice, who can summon him? Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me. Though I am guiltless, he will declare me guilty.

I am guiltless. I do not take notice of myself. I despise my life. It is all one. Therefore, I say, he destroys the guiltless and the wicked. If the scourge kills suddenly, he mocks the despair of the innocent.

The earth is given to the hand of the wicked. He covers the face of its judges. If it is not he, then who is it? Now my days are swifter than a runner. They flee away.

They see no good. They slip by like reed boats, like an eagle that swoops on its prey. Though I say I will forget my complaint. I will leave off my sad countenance and be cheerful. I am afraid of all my pains.

[7 : 49] I know that you will not equip me. I am accounted wicked. Why then should I toil in vain? If I should wash myself with snow and cleanse my hands with lie, yet you would plunge me into the pit.

And my own clothes would abhor me. For he is not a man as I am that I may answer him that we may go to court together.

There is no umpire between us who may lay his hand upon us both. Let him remove his rod from me and let not dread of him terrify me.

Then I would speak and not fear him. But I am not like that in myself. I want you to see from Job chapter 9, man before his God.

One of the benefits we get from reading and studying the writing of the book of Job is that we are seeing mankind struggle from ages gone past.

[8 : 55] It is a struggle that is evident even before God chooses a man named Abram out of the land of the Ur of the Chaldeans. Or about the time that God chooses a man named Abram out of the land of the Ur of the Chaldeans.

It is that intermittent time, if you will, that is lost to us at times in scripture. Because it is easy to turn from Genesis 11 to Genesis 12 and think, oh, well that was amazing.

Because in Genesis 11 you have the Tower of Babel and the dispersion of mankind. And then in Genesis 12 you have God calling Abram from the land of the Ur of the Chaldeans and rising a nation out of that man.

And really it is, if we read Job in context between Genesis 11 and 12. That is somewhere between the dispersion of man at the Tower of Babel. And the choosing of man from the land of Ur.

Then we see why God did such a thing. Why was it necessary for God to choose a man to raise up a nation to be a nation of priests?

[9 : 59] The whole intended purpose of the nation of Israel would be that they would represent to a world what it looks like to live in a holy communion with a holy God.

It is the purpose and the design of the church to be a visible representation to the world what it is to live in a covenant relationship with a holy God.

And the reason, the motivation, if we have to have one, for God to do such a thing is that man has always wrestled with what it looks like to be before God.

It is not something new. It is actually something that is as ancient as the fall of man. Man has tried to figure out, how do I live before this God?

How do I live in this life before this God? And how then shall I have any hope of living after this life before this God? What must I do to be reconciled?

[11 : 00] What must I do to be accepted? Are the events of my life the testimony of the wrong that I have done? Or are the events of my life just the testimony of the wrong world in which I live?

It is something that we even wrestle with today. Do bad things happen to me because I'm a bad person? Or do bad things happen to me because we live in a fallen world? Sometimes it is because we make bad choices.

You know, make dumb decisions, get dumb results. We understand that. Sometimes we make a bad choice. We call that sin and we reap the rewards of the sin. But the reality is, is that none of us have ever reaped the fullness of the sin seed that we have sown.

Praise be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. For the wages of sin is death. And so that in any moment, the moment we sinned, we were deserving of death. And we have never yet reaped the full wages of what we have sown.

But sometimes the bad things that happen are just a result of living in a fallen world. It is a result of living in a world in rebellion that is crying out until the day of redemption for restoration.

[12 : 12] As Paul would say in the book of Romans, that all of creation cries until the day of redemption. And as it spirals down, times get worse. And so it is no wonder that when we see Job just a little further along away from the garden, a little further down the spiral, the downward spiral, that Job and his friends are beginning to wrestle with what does it look like to live as a man before God.

If they were to consult the ages that went before them, as Bildad had said, they would be looking back closer to the garden. And the closer you get to the garden, the easier it was.

The further you get from the garden, the harder it is. And it is here that we begin to see why God must choose a nation to rise up a billboard for us to understand.

Job does not have that benefit. Many around the world, even today, do not know the benefit that we know, and that is the fullness of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

There are many today who still live in the state of Job, knowing that there is indeed a God, most of the times with a lowercase g, with whom they must deal with, and how then shall they live in light of this reality?

[13 : 29] There has yet to be discovered a people group anywhere in the world that does not believe in a higher power somehow, that does not at least acknowledge some form of worship.

Maybe worship is a worship of self. Maybe it's a worship of creation. Maybe it's a worship of animals. Maybe it's a worship of the constellations and the sun and the moon and the stars. But there's always this innate desire in man to worship, to try to reconcile.

How then shall I live? And it is here that Job is posing those questions where a lot of people around him thought they had it figured out. Job, you do right, you get right.

You do wrong, you get wrong. But Job says, but there's no wrong that I know that I have done.

They do not believe him, but yet Job is wrestling with this reality. And we notice in our text before us that while Job says he affirms this mindset, he says, in truth, I know that this is so.

So he looks at Eliphaz and Bildad and he says, everything you've said is true. In truth, surely God blesses the righteous and God condemns the wicked.

[14 : 43] That's a great truth. But then Job poses a question. And it is the question that has plagued mankind from the very beginning.

If it is true that God blesses the righteous, and if it is true that God condemns the wicked, then we must face ourselves this question that Job poses.

But how can a man be in the right before God? There's the question. If God blesses the righteous, those who are in a right standing with him, and if God condemns the wicked, those who are not in a right standing with him, and if in theory that is true, with a question that has plagued mankind from the very beginning of the fall, how then can I be right?

Is it by behavior that determines that I am in the right? Is it the decisions that determine that I am in the right? What is it that makes sure that I am in the right, as it says, before God?

And Job asked that question. And it's the one that man has wrestled with, and it is the reason that we find the very existence of religion on the face of the earth today.

[16 : 18] Every religion, every world religion, if you were to study them, have one aim, how to make sure that you are right before God. You'll either appease him through your self-sacrifice, you'll appease him through your efforts and works and labors, you'll appease him through this, or you'll appease him through that, but they all seek to answer this one question, how can a man be right?

Because man knows innately that God blesses the rights, and God condemns the wrong. That's a truth beyond dispute. But here's the question that we don't know how to answer.

Then how can I be right? And who better to ask that question than Job? One that God declares he was a man of integrity, a man of completeness.

That does not mean he was perfect. That means he was the same person publicly as he was privately. There are no private sins of Job that we are made aware of. Publicly, he was serving and helping and ministering.

Even his friends acknowledge he was helping the orphan. He was raising up the hungry. He was clothing the naked. He was ministering to his own children. He was sanctifying and setting them apart as a faithful priest of his own home.

[17 : 35] He was the same privately and publicly. And yet the question that bothers his heart is, if these aren't doing it, then how can man be right? Are we right by the keeping of the Ten Commandments?

No, for none of us can keep them perfectly. Because Jesus says that if you've ever thought of these things, of breaking these things, and you've set your heart against them, then you've broken them. How can a man be right? And it is the question that plagues mankind, and it has been plaguing mankind ever since he took the knowledge of the good and evil from his wife.

He took it from Eve, and ever since then, man's been asking the question, how can I be right? Cain and Abel sought to answer the question through sacrifices. One was accepted. Did that mean he was right before God?

No, it means that sacrifice was accepted before God. But how can he be made right? What made Noah right? What made Moses right?

[18 : 40] What makes David right? How can any man be right, or any woman be right, before his God? Friend, only Christianity has the answer to that question.

Because Christianity alone does not diminish the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, the justice of God, and bring about the sinfulness of man in a way that meets all three.

That the holiness of God requires a perfect sacrifice of man, for man has sinned, and Jesus Christ is fully man. That the righteousness of God implies that there must be one who is absolutely incorrect standing with God, and Jesus' righteousness has been imputed to us.

And the justice of God, it says the wages of sin is death, someone had to die. And Jesus died. He answers every question that has plagued mankind from the very beginning, and he alone.

For how can a man be right? Job is not arguing the principle. Job is arguing the application.

[19 : 56] The moment that we say, well, the good get good, and the bad get bad, we have to ask the question, but who determines who is good and who is bad? Do you and I determine that?

No, because our standard of measurement is only as deep as we are. Who are we to say that this one is good and this one is bad? It is the question that mankind has wrestled with, and Job says, in theory and in truth, I know this.

And the reason he poses this question is because he is struck by the wonder and power of God. Look at what the text says. As soon as he asks the question, how can a man be in the right before God?

He says, if one wished to dispute with him, he could not answer him once in a thousand times. Why? Because it's a look at the wonder and power, wise in heart, mighty in strength, who has defied him without harm.

It is God who removes the mountains. They know not how. When he overturns them in his anger, who shakes the earth out of its place and its pillars tremble, who commands the sun not to shine and sets a seal upon the stars, who alone stretches out the heavens.

[21 : 02] By the way, it's a good place to stop right here just for just a moment. The oldest book in the Bible says God stretches out the heavens, stretches out the heavens. Scientists just a few years ago determined that the heavens are being stretched out.

Wow. I'm glad science caught up with scripture. They say the heavens are expanding. Well, yeah, we could have figured that out years ago because it says he stretches out the heavens.

Thank you for getting on board is what we ought to say. Anyway, who alone stretches out the heavens and tramples down the waves of the sea. Do you know what the Egyptian hieroglyph for doing the impossible is? You read Egyptian hieroglyphs, right?

I don't either, but I read this somewhere. It's really cool. The Egyptian hieroglyph for doing the impossible is a picture of a man walking on water. Ha ha. Christ walked on water.

But you know, before Christ walked on water, Job says that he tramples on the waves of the sea. So by the way, if you ever want another picture of the deity of Christ, when you read him walking on the water in the New Testament, then come back to the book of Job and see that Job says God tramples down the waves of the sea.

[22 : 21] Job said God did that and then Jesus did it. That's amazing, isn't it? Look at the wonder of his power who makes the bear of Ryan and the pleas and the chambers of the south who does great things, unfathomable and wondrous works without number.

He says he's so grand and so great. Were he to pass by me, I would not see him. Were he to move past me, I would not perceive him. How many of us look up at the stars of the heavens and say, wow, look at creation and the glory of God is passing by, yet we do not see him.

Astounded by the works of the Almighty but never perceiving him, only seeing his works. He says, were he to snatch away who could restrain him?

Who could say to him, what are you doing? This creation song, as it is called, declares the power of God. And Job here is stretching his understanding.

His friends have God figured out. God is a God who blesses me when I do good and he's a God who judges me when I do bad. But then Job says, but he's a little bit more than that.

[23 : 36] He's a little bit more. He's a God who does things that we know not about. He's a God that passes by and we don't even see him. He's a God that is so powerful we can't fit him into a box.

And he is struck by the wonder and power of God. And this is why we have to ask the question, who can be right before him? How can we?

Job knows that he has done nothing quote unquote sinful. But yet the question remains, but look who God is.

How can I be right before him? And in reality and in the light of his power, he responds with his own insufficiency.

And it is the insufficiency of self that we see being reiterated here because after declaring the power of God, he says, because that's who he is, if we're talking about God blessing the righteous, then how can I be righteous?

[24 : 41] And if this is the God that I have to be righteous before, can I be righteous on my own? Is this something that I can work out on my own? Do I just need to clean up my ways and make myself a better person?

Do I need to offer more sacrifices for my children? Bildad has said, repent and turn and God will bless you. And Job is asking, but how? In what way?
What do I need to change? I love this and it is something we don't need to miss. Job's friends speak in generalities. Job is concerned about the specifics. They say, well, if you repent and turn from your wicked ways, and Job says, what wicked ways?
What do I need to change? What can I do to be right before God? Don't tell me I should. Tell me what. What do I need to give up?
What should I start doing? What should I quit doing? It's the same thing we have today when we tell people they need to be in a right standing before God. The question that is pondered on every man or woman's heart, the one that everyone is wrestling with, someone please tell me what to do.
[25 : 46] I'll never forget. I've had a number of meetings and people just sit across from me and people say, Pastor, I need you to tell me what to do so that I know I'm saved and not say none of those things.

And they would bring a list and they say, well, what should I do? Should I do this, this, this, this, this? I said, no, none of that will work. What did I need to give up this, this? I said, well, that might be a good thing to give up, but it's never going to make sure that you're right. You need to give it up just because you need to give it up, right?

It's just not healthy. You don't need to do that. You need to get rid of that. Well, is this going to give me security? No. Well, then tell me what I should do. I'll never forget one individual.

I said, trust Jesus Christ. Turn your life over to him. Oh, that can't be possible. That's too easy. I said, I know. But that's all you can do because there's nothing you can do.

I can't tell you what to give up. I can't tell you what to start doing. I can't tell you what to change because I'm still figuring that out on my own. Every day there's something new I have to give up.

[26 : 43] Every day there's something I have to change. Every day there's a new movement I need to move. That's why we call living by faith and not by sight. There's no supernatural list. I have not found a checklist in the Bible yet.

The only checklist I have found or referred to is the law and then I have found that Christ has already fulfilled that checklist and so I'm no longer bound by it. And so I'm like, oh, great. There's the list. I can't hold on to anymore.

So then Christ is trusting me, not the list, right? And there's all these lists and people want to know I can put a check mark here and then I know I'm right. And Job wrestled with that a long time ago. He said, tell me which one.

Because God is bigger than any list I create. God is bigger than anything I can imagine. And what I find is no matter how many lists I write down, no matter how many rules, I am insufficient in myself to meet them.

Because Job says, God will not turn back his anger beneath him. And Crouch, the helpers of Rahab, that's just a way of saying everything that creates disorder and chaos. Rahab is a term used for that throughout the Old Testament.

[27 : 45] How then can I answer him and choose my words before him? Look at this. For though I were right, I could not answer. He says, even if I were right, I could not answer.

I would have to implore the mercy of my judge. He said, in myself, the only hope I would have was to beg of mercy. I would implore his mercy because there's nothing I can do.

There's no way I can answer. There's no way I can find out. If I called and he answered me, look at this. I could not believe that he was listening to my voice. Have you ever thought about that?

Have you ever thought about what the response would be if you said, Oh Father? And he said, Yes. I mean audibly. Spoke to you. We'd be astounded, right?

I could not believe that he was listening to me. We would be in wonder of it. For he bruises me with the tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause.

[28 : 49] He would not allow me to get my breath but saturates me with bitterness. If it is a matter of power, behold, he's the strong one and if it is a matter of justice, who can summon him? He is just. I love what verse 20 says, Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me.

This is what he says, Though I know I'm innocent, if you let me speak long enough, I'll condemn myself. What does the word of God say in a multitude of words of sin is found?

That's not something real comforting to read as a pastor, by the way. It tells us that when we speak much, we end up sinning much. And this is exactly what Job is saying.

If God said, Okay, Job, present your case before me. Job says, Though I'm righteous, given the chance, and I was to represent myself, and speaking of myself, eventually that would bring self-condemnation.

You don't know this, but there have been two times when your pastor has represented himself in a court of law. Two times. Some of you are like, Pastor, you've been taking the court? Yes.

[29 : 51] A couple of times. One was a speeding ticket I got while doing pastorally duties. He's not here as a pastor, but pastor of another church. So it was really, I was delivering food to a shelter that took care of underprivileged children, and I was going a little faster than I should have through a 30-mile-an-hour speed limit zone in Murfreesboro, and I got pulled over, and I got a ticket.

So I went to court, and I remember, I represent, of course, you always represent yourself in traffic court, and I was standing there, and the judge said, how you plead? I said, guilty. And he was so taken aback by the fact that I said guilty. I said, judge, I was going, whatever you say, I was going, he said, I can't believe you said guilty, so I'm throwing it out.

I said, praise be to God. You know, I mean, he said, you're the first one that has stood before me today that said you were guilty. I said, well, given enough time and I talk enough, I will be guilty. And so the only other time that I have done it was as a matter of insurance, Carrie and I were going through some stuff with the state and said, if you want to, if you want to go to court with this, we'll do it.

And I said, yes, I want to go to court. They said, you know you're going to lose, right? I said, I don't care, I want to go to court. And so they said, well, we'll do it over the phone. So I did a phone call. It was really, it was really cool. That was recently, by the way, so I was your pastor then. And I said, I'm going to represent myself.

So I was actually filthy, dirty, muddy, and we were working outside and our court time came, a court appointment came, against the law.

[31 : 12] I just want to put that out there. Okay. It was anyway, I can explain in more detail later if you want to. And they said, it wasn't how do you plead? They said, do you, you said you wanted to contest this ruling?

I said, yes. And they went on and I said, okay, you want to call any witnesses? I said, I'm also going to call myself. And I told the judge on the phone and the lawyer, I said, listen, I agree with your interpretation of the law and I know that I'm not going to win this case.

I just want you to hear my side. I said, because I think special circumstances apply. So I admitted guilt from the very beginning. And then for the next 20 minutes or so, I defended why I thought that though I was guilty according to the state of law, not guilty, but though we were having this service taken away because of the letter of the law and they were right in their interpretation of the law, I contested it for the next 20 minutes and then I hung up.

The judge said, okay, I'll make a ruling later. You know, something astounded. I had to leave. I had to leave after I hung up the phone. I had somewhere to go. Something amazing happened after that. I don't know if I'm at liberty to say this.

I know I was not at liberty to publicly say it at that time. The state's attorney that had called me at the very first and said, you know you're going to lose, right?

[32 : 31] I said, I know I'm going to lose. I'm still going to contest it. The state's attorney called Carrie back as soon as the judge hung up and said, this is off the record. You're going to lose this benefit you have, but let me tell you another way you can get it back because I admitted that they were right, but special circumstances applied.

I didn't try to make myself appear right in either one of those cases. I didn't try because I knew in a multitude of words self-condemnation. There was no grounds, no self involved in that.

It was understanding that by the letter of the law, yes, I'm guilty. Listen, this is what Job is saying. If God was to call me to court and I was to stand before him, I would have to say I am guilty because of who you are.

I am absolutely guilty and I am insufficient in myself to defend myself and this is why he says, I am guiltless.

I do not take notice of myself. I despise my life. It is all one. Therefore, I say he destroys the guiltless and the wicked. What he says, when I look around, everybody dies. Everybody dies and so in their world, view, if you were right, you were blessed but eventually everybody was dying and so God in his sovereignty, the one thing that everybody dreaded was happening to everyone and so in his sovereignty, death was coming and he says that the earth is given into the hand of the wicked,

that God is so sovereign and Job acknowledges that the wicked are ruling and God has covered the face of the judges and if it is not he, then who has done it?

[34 : 21] God is in control so Job is acknowledging God's control but Job is also acknowledging something that his friends never did that when you look around, everybody dies. So there's got to be something greater than just being blessed now and that brings us to the last thing, that persistent need that is before us that Job never figures out until God answers him and he really doesn't even figure it out then that we know but it's this persistent need.

He says, now my days are swifter than a runner. They flee away. They see no good as a good way of saying that though I want to act like I'm not going to die, every day I feel like it's getting closer and every day is getting closer and though I say I will forget my complaint and leave off my sad countenance and be cheerful, he says, though I want to act like these things don't bother me, though I want to act like I can just move on and say, well, this is life, I have to deal with it, there's still this nagging feeling that something's wrong.

I know that God is great, I know that God is big and powerful and magnificent and I know in the end everyone dies and though I want to just say, well, okay, well, that's just how it is, there's something that just keeps nagging me, right?

There's something, this is why man never can really, really accept that in the end it just all ends. Man has got this persistent nagging within him.

It is, as Ecclesiastes 3 says, eternity is set in the heart of every man. It leaves a longing and sin. The end just can't be it. The concept of eternal nothingness takes more faith to believe than anything else.

[36 : 03] To tell me that when I close my eyes for the last time then it's just nothing, that it just ends. there is just something doggedly persistent inside every one of us that says, that can't be it.

It can't be. That's not the end. It is the soul of man that cries out and Job says, though I say I will forget my complaint, I can't.

I am accounted wicked. Why then should I toil in vain? Why do I keep working? Why do I keep striving? If it's just going to end one day, why not just give up? He says, but there's something persistent there. If I should wash myself with snow and cleanse my hands with life, it doesn't matter. No matter, I can't clean myself up. Yet you would plunge me into the pit and my own clothes would have borne me. For he is not a man that I may answer him that we can go to court together. There is no umpire between us who may lay his hands upon both of us.

There's no one who can intercede and interject. There's no one who can be there to reconcile. Job hasn't seen him yet. He says, let him remove his rod from me and let not the dread of him terrify me.

[37 : 09] This is what Job is saying. If you want me to have peace, then let God remove his rod from me and let not the dread of him terrify me. Let me know something more about God than his power, than his wonder, than that he does the impossible.

He says, then I would speak and not fear him. Look at this last phrase, but I am not like that in myself. Natural man does not know the love of God.

Natural man knows the power of God, the wonder of God. Natural man can perceive of the justice of God that everyone does. Natural man knows not the love of God.

The fact that this God who is just and righteous and holy also loves us. that is a revelation found in Jesus Christ and Jesus alone.

Job says, I'm not like that in myself. This is why man is forever trying to answer that question, how can I be right? Because man knows there is someone I am accountable to, though they may not be able to define him or describe him.

[38 : 21] There's someone or something I am accountable to, and I know that he must be one who I have to deal with for everyone around me dies. And if I could just find a way to approach him, though within me I have no way of doing it.

Natural man knows not the love of God. We have to have one represent that for us as Jesus Christ did as he walked on the waves of the sea and yet touched the unclean, walked with the broken, ministered to the unwelcomed, raised up the unlikely, displayed the love of the Father like no one else.

See, Job is wrestling with the same thing that multitudes around us are wrestling with. How does man live before his God? For naturally, we know not that God loves us.

That only comes by divine revelation through the power and presence of Jesus Christ as we say, this one I lived before loves me so. This is the truth that we have.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this day and we thank you for your word. We thank you that your word challenges us but Lord, we also thank you that your word answers every question we ask.

[39 : 47] Much like Job, we can ask the question, how then can we be in the right before you but we read a little further and we find that we have that righteousness imputed towards us in Christ Jesus.

Jesus, we cannot thank you enough nor praise you enough nor love you enough for the work that you have done in our hearts and minds and may we live eternally grateful molding and shaping our lives according to your calling to be used by you for your purposes.

Be with us as we leave here and may you lead us as you see fit. We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.