

Weekly Devotion #7 | *Job's Final Stand* | Job 29-31

Day 1: "When will we get there?" Read Job 29

- Quotes/References:
 - "The prolonged lament and grief in the book of Job is not wasted manuscript. It's a compassionate reflection for people whose own suffering is also prolonged, whose own suffering is filled with questions, and whose own suffering seems like it's just not going to end." *Jeff Purswell*
- Questions to Consider:
 - Seasons of suffering often seem to last for such a long time. The illustration of the kids in car ride calling out, "When will we get there?" humorously captures what is actually a painful reality. When you have experienced times like these, what tends to characterize your thoughts toward God? Confusion? Hope? Fear?
 - What truths about God and the gospel have the power to sustain you through such lengthy seasons?
- Prayer Recommendations:
 - Pray through Lamentations 3:22-24. Pray that at those times when you grow discouraged in your seasons of suffering, the Spirit of God would remind you that the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, and that God's mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning.
 - Pray through Exodus 3:7-8 for your community group. Pray that God would remind you all of his continual watchfulness and concern over the sufferings of his people, even when it seems to last forever.

Day 2: Job's nostalgia over a lost past. Read Job 29.

- Quotes/References:
 - "This is perhaps the most pathetic of all Job's poems of grief and a fitting finish to all his earlier ones. It is more subdued, more reflective, less defiant. It shows Job in his weakness no longer able to cope; no longer able to hope for even one touch of friendliness from men or God." *Frances Anderson*
- Questions to Consider:
 - Job had what every man in his day could want; livestock, respect, wisdom, power, friends, and family. Yet when all that was taken from him, it was his friendship with God that he missed the most. Why would he cherish his intimacy with God in this way? What did he experience and know to be true in his relationship with God?
 - Job recounted, "the months of old, as in the days when God watched over me." (v.2) What are your "good old days" that you are tempted to long for? What have you lost that was dear to you? What experience or circumstances do your thoughts drift to the most?
- Prayer recommendations:
 - Pray through Psalm 25:14 for your own soul. Pray for a closeness of relationship with the Lord that resembles Job's and David's friendships with God.
 - Psalm 34:18 for our church. Pray that the Holy Spirit would remind all of us that God is always *near* and *compassionate* to his children; and that this truth would comfort, sustain, and strengthen us in our suffering.
 - Pray through Psalm 119:92, 2 Corinthians 4:8; and Psalm 27:13 for yourself. Reflect on the importance of leaning into God's word, especially his promises, during prolonged seasons of affliction.

Day 3: “Job’s Grief over a bitter present.” Read Job 30.

- Quotes/References:
 - “This isn’t the careful formulation of a theologian. It’s the anguished cry of a godly sufferer. Its not nuanced prose, its emotive poetry. It’s a man trying to understand what’s happened to his world. It’s a man who knows that God is good, wise, and compassionate, and just. But then he looks at himself and his life and his circumstances. They just don’t add up.” *Jeff Purswell*
 - “The author in a world wracked with sin, a created order distorted by all the disfiguring effects of human rebellion, but one in which the Creator is at work to save and restore and purify, and to set right. In that kind of world, Job tells us once again, that a genuine believer—a Christian—may well be taken by a loving God into deep waters and dark despair and painful loss and severe suffering and not know why...But because its God who takes us through, though we may not fathom the reason, we do know there is a purpose. And that makes all the difference.” *Jeff Purswell*
- Questions to Consider:
 - For the first time in these chapters, Job turns to God in prayer. In the midst of his confusion and wrong conclusions about God, he’s still holding onto God. How can you take steps to cultivate an honest and faithful prayer life in the midst of your adversity?
- Prayer recommendations:
 - Read Psalm 23.4 and declare your confidence that he is with you even through the valley of dark despair and painful loss.

Day 4: “Job’s Longing for a Future Set Right.” Read Job 31.

- Quotes/References:
 - In a final dramatic move, its like he brings together his legal brief and lays it before the table before God and God alone for judgement. Its time to judge God, here’s my case...And he does this by swearing out an oath of innocence before God.” *Jeff Purswell*
 - Job is in effect saying, “I want it to be known I am right with God. Because everyone thinks I’m not. And I’ve got questions myself...He’s desperate to be found right with God.” *Jeff Purswell*
- Questions to Consider:
 - Job’s final case before God, at first, appears to be based on his long list of righteous deeds. But in recalling Job’s sacrifices in chapter 1, this is clearly not a self-righteous man, but a man trusting in God and his grace. Job’s confidence is not in his righteousness before God but in his relationship with God.
 - In truth, Job is casting his fate upon the gracious character of God—a God who justifies. How does Job’s faith foreshadow and prefigure our own? Read through Romans 4.1-4 and consider, “How do sinners like Job and us get right with God?”
- Prayer recommendations:
 - Pray through Romans 4:1-4 for your community group. Pray that the Holy Spirit would freshly remind each of you that the ultimate resolution to our pain is the grace of God, and a confidence in the love and character of God. In this Job provides a compelling example.
 - In 31.35-37, Job again cries out for an Advocate to stand on his behalf before God. The Scriptures point numerous times to men and women who similarly cast themselves on God for mercy. In Luke 18.9-14 (the tax collector) and in Luke 24.39-43, (the thief on the Cross), two men model prayers for mercy. Both men received justification before God and relationship with God. Spend time thanking God for his mercies in Christ.

Day 5: The Legacy of Job. Read Job 31.35-37.

- Quotes/References:
 - “The book of Job isn’t primarily for our instruction. Job prepares us for what to look for. Job gets us ready for Jesus.” *Jeff Purswell*
 - “God promises forgiveness and even *himself* to all those who will cast themselves on him.” *Jeff Purswell*
- Questions to Consider:
 - Job entrusted all of himself to his gracious God. As we will see in the coming weeks, this ultimately leads to his redemption. On the cross, Jesus also entrusted his spirit to the gracious hands of the Father. Read 2 Cor. 5.21. Whose redemption did this amazing act of faith secure? How?
- Prayer recommendations:
 - Pray through Isaiah 53:11. As you meditate, pray that God will give you a fresh sense of joyful awe at what Jesus accomplished on the cross. Pray that God will strengthen you in this joy, so that you may persevere in your suffering.
 - Pray through Romans 8:18-25. Pray that God will strengthen your patience and hope in his wise plan by giving you greater joy and longing for the surpassing glory that awaits us because of Jesus’ sacrifice.