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Job's Intense Struggle

JOB 3:1-26

Introduction

1. Tonight, we are entering what is perhaps the darkest part of all the book of Job.
2. As you may remember, Job, by God's own declaration was a man who "was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil" (Job 1:2).
3. It was also God who told Satan, "there is no one like him on the earth" (Job 1:8).
4. In addition to being a godly individual, we are told that he was "the greatest of all the men of the east" with "7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys and very many servants" (Job 1:3).
5. We might also add that he had been blessed with a large family — "seven sons and three daughters" (Job 1:2).
6. However, Satan told God that if all this was taken away, he would curse God to His face (Job 1:11).
7. God allowed Satan to carry out his plan and in one day it was all taken away from him by either being killed or stolen.

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8. However, instead of cursing God, Job said, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21b, NASB95).
9. God pointed out to Satan that in spite of all this, Job still held to his integrity (Job 2:3).
10. Satan, always the accuser, issued another challenge — "put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face" (Job 2:5).

11. So, Satan afflicted Job “with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head” (Job 2:7).

12. At this point, Job’s wife said to her husband, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9).

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13. Job responded to her, “Shall we indeed accept good from God and not adversity?” (Job 2:10)

14. “In all this” we are told, “Job did not sin with his lips” (Job 2:10).

15. In our last lesson, we read of Job’s three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, coming to sympathize with Job and comfort him (Job 2:11).

16. For seven days and seven nights they sat on the ground with him and no one said a word.

17. Finally, Job speaks, but the words which come from his lips are harsh, not toward his friends, but toward his situation.

18. Here in chapter three, we find Job desiring three things:

- a. Regretting he was ever been born (vv. 1-10)
- b. Wishing he had died at birth (vv. 11-19)
- c. Longing to die (vv. 20-26)

19. What does God do?

20. What should we do?

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I. Job’s Lament

A. JOB’S CURSING THE DAY OF HIS BIRTH (VV. 1-10)

- 1. While Job “cursed the day of his birth,” he did not curse God, something which Satan was sure Job would do.

2. Fourteen times in our English translations we find the word “Let” and once the word “May,” indicating something which Job wished might happen.
3. Job wanted the day of his birth to be wiped from the calendar.
4. He even wanted the night of his conception to be erased as well.
5. Whereas, in the beginning, God had declared, “Let there be light” (Genesis 1:3), Job wished the day of his birth would become “darkness,” a day for which God did not care (v. 4).
6. He wanted “darkness” to “claim it” (v. 5a) and “seize it” (v. 6a).
7. He wished that it had never been included in “the days of the year” or “the number of the months” (v. 6).
8. He wished there had been no shout because a boy had been born (v. 7).
9. He desired that “its morning stars become dark” — a reference to the planets Venus and Mercury which are easily seen at dawn because of their brilliance (v. 9).
10. He wished that he had never been conceived in his mother’s womb. At least then he would not have seen trouble in this life.

Slide 4**B. JOB’S WISH THAT HE HAD DIED AT BIRTH (VV. 11-19)**

1. Since his first wish was not fulfilled, Job now turns to his second desire — longing to have been stillborn.
2. “Why did the knees receive me” (v. 12).
 - a. Joseph’s great grandsons were born on his knees (Genesis 50:23).
 - b. They were placed on his knees after their births and recognized as his descendants.
 - c. Job reasons that if he had died at birth, this never would have happened.
3. If only his mother had not nursed him, he would have died (v. 12b).

4. At least then, he could have “lain down and been quiet,” he could have “slept” and “been at rest” (v. 13).
5. In death he would have been with “kings” and “counselors” and “princes” who had themselves passed on.
6. In death he wouldn’t have to experience the raging of the wicked, because “the weary are at rest” (v. 17).
7. In death “the prisoners are at ease together” because “they do not hear the voice of the taskmaster” (v. 18) and there “the slave is free from his master” (v. 19).

Slide 5**C. JOB’S LONGING TO DIE (VV. 20-26)**

1. For the fourth of five times in this lament, Job asked, “Why? (Cf. Vv. 11-12, 16, 23).

“Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire?” (Job 3:11, NASB95)

“Why did the knees receive me, and why the breasts, that I should suck?” (Job 3:12, NASB95)

“Or why was I not as a hidden stillborn child, as infants who never see the light?” (Job 3:16, ESV)

“Why is light given to him who suffers, and life to the bitter of soul,” (Job 3:20, NASB95)

“Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in?” (Job 3:23, NASB95)
2. Since he was conceived and since he did not die at birth, Job now longs to die as an adult.
3. He asked, “Why is light given to him who suffers, and life to the bitter of soul,

who long for death, but there is none (it does not come, ESV) (3:20-21).

4. In verse 23, he asks again, “Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in?”
 - a. Satan had used the word “hedge” to refer to God’s protection of Job (Job 1:10).
 - b. Here, however, Job uses it to indicate that God has through all of his suffering restricted him and limited his freedom of movement.

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5. Job’s worst fears had now been realized — “For what I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me” (Job 3:25).
6. Because of this, Job ends his lament, speaking not to the injustice of his situation but to the intensity of it:

“I am not at ease, nor am I quiet,
And I am not at rest, but turmoil comes.”
(Job 3:26, NASB95)

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II. Responding To The Tragedies In Life

A. OUR RESPONSE TO THEM

1. In Job 5:7, we find Eliphaz saying to Job, “For man is born for trouble as sparks fly upward.”
2. In Job 14:1, it is Job who says, “Man who is born of woman, is short-lived and full of turmoil.”

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3. In Psalm 13:1, we find David calling out to God,
“How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?”

How long will You hide Your face from me?”
“How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?”
(Psalm 13:1-2, NASB95)

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4. In Psalm 22:1-2, we find David crying out to God,

“My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?
Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.
O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer;
And by night, but I have no rest.”
(Psalm 22:1-2, NASB95)

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B. GOD'S RESPONSE TO US

1. “Do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, surely I will help you,
Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”
(Isaiah 41:10, NASB95)

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2. “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,
nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor
any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God,
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39, NASB95)

Conclusion

1. Are you carrying a burden tonight that is too difficult to bear?

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2. Jesus calls you to come to Him.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.
Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”
(Matthew 11:28–30, NASB95)