

Title: In the Courtroom with God (Part 3)

Number: 0920Job10.1-22(14)

Text: Job 10:1-22

Central Idea: *The windy words of a sufferer won't leave the believer condemned in the courtroom of God*

Date: September 6, 2020

{Read Passage / Opening Prayer} / NASB95

{read 9:32-10:3}

[i] Bible Reading in Jeremiah . . .

In yearly read thru t/Bible I found myself in t/O.T. book of Jer. last wk

I thot of t/BOJ while reading in chapt. 2 of Jer.

Writing to an apostate Judah, God, thru t/prophet, warns ==>

Jer. 2:9 “Therefore I will yet contend with you,” declares the LORD,
“And with your sons’ sons I will contend.

God asks in 2:29 “Why do you contend with Me? You have all
transgressed against Me,” declares the LORD.

Lang. of a courtroom—

In spite of her sin Judah felt she could bring charges against God—an
ironic reversal of 2:9 where God brought charges against Judah.

Sim. thing here in Job chapt. 9&10.

Same Heb. word (*rib*) is used in both places, 2x in Job 9/10 ==>

Job 9:3 “If one wished to dispute (*rib*) with Him, He could not answer Him once in a thousand times. IOW . . .

10:2 “I will say to God . . . Let me know why You contend with me.”

An apocryphal story about the legendary lawyer Clarence Darrow that used to circulate among law students. Darrow had to defend an especially reprehensible client. This was a hard case to make. As the prosecutor ranted and raved to the jury about the heinous nature of the crime and the suffering victims, Darrow paid him close and courteous attention, puffing distractedly on a large cigar. The ash grew, an eighth of an inch, a half, an inch, two inches, and more--yet the ash did not fall. Darrow didn't seem to notice. He just politely concentrated on the prosecutor's words. But the jury noticed. Instead of paying full attention to the prosecutor, they were drawn again and again to remarkably long ash on Darrow's cigar. It grew and grew, yet refused to fall. That was by design: Darrow had secretly inserted a thin piece of wire into the cigar before he lit it!

I. In the Courtroom With God: How Can Job Possibly Be Exonerated? (9:1-35)

The windy words of a sufferer won't leave the believer condemned in the courtroom of God.

A. Job's Agreement: I Know This is So! (1-2a)

1 Then Job answered, 2a “In truth I know that this is so . . .

1. Job affirms that God is perfectly righteous

a. Goes back to what we called “Bildad’s Axiom”

8:3 “Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert what is right?”

1 Then Job answered, 2a “In truth I know that this is so . . .

But he can’t understand how this truth/axiom fits in with his own suffering . . .

We go from ==>

A. Job’s Agreement: I Know This is So! (1-2a)

To 2d point that covers t/bulk of chapt. 9. ==>

B. Job’s Argument: How Can Anyone Dispute with God? (2b-24)

IOW - “I know G. is righteous & sov. But why am I being punished? Job figuratively takes God to court. Job plays t/role of Plaintiff, G. t/defendant. But Job knows that he can’t win against God ==>

2b But how can a man be in the right before God?

3 “If one wished to dispute with Him, he could not answer Him once in a thousand times.

4 “Wise in heart and mighty in strength, Who has defied Him without harm?

[He] shakes the earth (v. 6)

“Were He to snatch away, who could restrain Him? (v. 12)

14 “How then can I answer Him . . .

15 . . . I would have to [beg for His] mercy . . .

19 “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?”

A. Job's Agreement: I Know This is So! (1-2a)

{restate}

B. Job's Argument: How Can Anyone Dispute with God? (2b-24)

{restate}

Last time ==>

C. Job's Affliction: I Am Most Miserable (25-35)

1. Hopeless Days (25-26)

25 "Now my days are swifter than a runner; They flee away, they see no good. 26 "They slip by like reed boats, Like an eagle that swoops on its prey.

b. Three images of speed: land, water and air

2. Meaningless Existence (27-29)

a. Three difficult verses (27-29)

27 "Though I say, 'I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my sad countenance and be cheerful,' 28 I am afraid of all my pains, I know that You will not acquit me. 29 "I am accounted wicked, Why then should I toil in vain?

"Even if I forget my misery and put on a happy face, new sufferings will arrive at my feet because G. won't acquit me. So why bother?"

3. Helpless Cleansing (30-31)

30 "If I should wash myself with snow And cleanse my hands with lye,

I can wash my maggot-infested body clean, but (v. 31) ==>

31 Yet You would plunge me into the pit, And my own clothes would abhor me.

4. Nameless Mediator (32-33)

Job, in t/courtroom w/God, knows that he must have miraculous mediation if he is to find peace. But that mediator, for him, is elusive; He is nameless.

a. Look closely at verses 32 & 33 . . .

32 “For He is not a man as I am that I may answer Him, That we may go to court together.

33 “There is no umpire between us, Who may lay his hand upon us both.

b. Job turns from speaking to God to addressing his friends

32 “[God] is not a man as I am that I may answer Him, That we may go to court together.

(1) 1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

(2) That’s the Gospel!

JC is t/One who can “lay his hands on us both.” As G. He represents t/Godhead; as Man He represents sinful men; as t/sinless God-Man He alone could be t/perfect, eternal, final sacrifice for sin.

5. Relentless Discipline (34-35)

What Job thought to be discipline.

a. Pleads to his 3 friends in v. 34 ==>

34 **“Let Him remove His rod from me, And let not dread of Him terrify me.**

b. Then the last verse of the chapter

35 **“Then [once G. removes his hand of discipline] I would speak and not fear Him . . .** [“fear” in the sense of being “terrified” v. 34]

I. In the Courtroom With God: How Can Job Possibly Be Exonerated? (9:1-35)

II. In the Courtroom With God: Job Resigns Himself to a Sentence of Death (10:1-22)

Job seemingly gives up . . . He’s at the end of his proverbial rope.

Rem point #1 [^] . . .

Pessimism . . . We tend toward thinking the worst, don’t we?

I don’t read articles about symptoms of deadly disease . . . if there are 5 symptoms, I’m sure to have at least 3 of them (if not all 5).

Sev. yrs ago I was contacted by a seminary professor who taught homiletics. He was listening to GIG & wanted me to guest lecture in his class. I thot t/worst & asked for assurance that he didn’t want me to come as an example of how not to prepare/preach expository sermons!

Job has become t/consummate pessimist. See this esp. in chapt. 10.

We're going to look at this chapter from t/other side of t/coin: Job speaks & thinks negatively, falsely. Don't be like Job.

Be like Mike . . .

"Be Like Mike" is a Gatorade commercial featuring professional basketball player Michael Jordan that originally aired in 1992. (I'm almost the exact same age) . . . millions of dollars for Gatoraid.

You may want to be like Mike, but as it relates to chap. 10 in partic. You don't want to be like Job!

4 points of t/despairing suffer not to emulate (I've fallen prey to all of these)

A. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Complain (1-2)

1 **"I loathe my own life; I will give full vent to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.**

2 **"I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me; Let me know why You contend with me. 3 'Is it right for You indeed to oppress, To reject the labor of Your hands, And to look favorably on the schemes of the wicked?"**

1. Lament vs. Complaint

a. Job chapter three: a lament

Lament: a word we're not so familiar with. Don't tend to use it.

We are more familiar w/the word “complaint.” While lament is a complaint, it’s more that a “mere complaint” (as in “complaining”).

Philippians 2:14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing;

We’re not to be complainers // grumblers . . . (malcontents)

b. There is a type of complaint, specifically a lament, that is very Christian

Biblical lament is a complaint of faith that moves one from despair to hope. Being real w/G. Expressing your pain, frustrations, hopes.

Someone suggest that “Lament” stands in the gap between pain and promise. [Mark Vroegop, Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy, 26]

(1) We have an entire book of godly complaint: Lamentations

(2) The Psalms — filled with Laments (category of Lament Psalms)

Psalm 10:1 Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?

Psalm 44:23 Arouse Yourself, why do You sleep, O Lord? Awake, do not reject us forever.

Psalm 74:1 O God, why have You rejected us forever? Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?

Psalm 88:14 O LORD, why do You reject my soul? Why do You hide Your face from me?

(3) One common feature of lament is the word “why?”

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

Job 3:20 “Why is light given to him who suffers, And life to the bitter of soul,

It takes an act of faith to lament. Lament is brutal and honest.

“It is better to ask them [hard questions of God] than not to ask them, because asking them sharpens the issue and pushes us toward the right, positive response.” [James M. Boice]

It’s okay to sing in t/minor key. That’s where we often live our lives.

We are real people who not only rejoice; we also weep.

T/CH ought to be a place where you feel safe when your life hurts.

To lament is to express real pain // honest before G. // act of faith // acknowledges G’s sov. role in suffering // In pursuit of truth & righte.

With those things in mind you can see the distinction between complaints that are God-honoring and those that are not.

2. Job moves in chapter 10 away from lament to faithless complaint

Again, Job doesn’t understand what’s going on. He lives in that cause & effect world of t/day where you attribute bad things to bad behaviors. That is, when bad things happen you must have done something to deserve it.

A. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Complain (1-2)

a. Hurting people say hurtful things (“windy words”)

Job 6:26 “. . . the words of one in despair belong to the wind?”

(1) C.S. Lewis is a controversial figure in Reformational Christianity

Often said he was a better philosopher than he was a theologian.

Was a gifted thinker. Arguably a literary genius.

I found his books helpful during my darkest hours following the death of our daughter.

I appreciated his frankness (what many have said they appreciate about me). He lays it out there.

The love of his life was a woman by the name of Joy Davidman. They married and were knit together in common intellectual pursuit.

Lewis's brother Warren wrote about their relationship ==>

". . . the attraction was at first undoubtedly intellectual. Joy was the only woman whom he had met ... who had a brain which matched his own in suppleness, in width of interest, and in analytical grasp, and above all in humor and a sense of fun."

Sometime in the late 1950s, after complaining of a painful hip, she was diagnosed with terminal bone cancer.

T/cancer went into remission & they thought that, through the prayers of the saints, she had been healed. Suddenly the disease came back with a vengeance. She died on July 13, 1960.

Lewis went into a spiritual tailspin. As he would describe it, he practically lost his faith.

In painful honesty he writes these words in his book “A Grief Observed:”

“This is one of the most disquieting symptoms [of loss]. When you are happy, so happy that you have no sense of needing [God]. . . . If you remember yourself and turn to Him with gratitude and praise, you will be—or so it feels—welcomed with open arms. But go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face and the sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence. You may as well turn away. The longer you wait, the more emphatic the silence will become. There are no lights in the windows. It might be an empty house. Was it ever inhabited? It seemed so once.

In words relevant to Job’s judicial battle w/G. in chaps. 9 & 10 ==>

“God has not been trying an experiment on my faith or love in order to find out their quality. He knew it already. It was I who didn’t. In this trial He makes us occupy the dock, the witness box, and the bench all at once. He always knew that my temple was a house of cards. His only way of making me realize the fact was to knock it down.”

The windy words of a sufferer won't leave the believer condemned in the courtroom of God.

B. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Question God's Purposes (3-12)

Same Job who declared in 9:1 "I know this is so" (God does not pervert justice) asks in 10:3 ==>

3 'Is it right for You indeed to oppress, To reject the labor of Your hands, And to look favorably on the schemes of the wicked?

1. Word "Favorably" translates a verb meaning "to have a glowing face, to be radiant or to smile"

Job accuses G. of oppressing His own while smiling down on t/evil plots of t/wicked.

2. Many are Familiar with Jeremiah 29:11

Often Xns cite it as a "life verse" (I don't have a 'LV' - I have a 'LB')

Jer. 29:11 wasn't written specifically to Xns - it was a promise of restoration given to Israel ==>

'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'

a. Can that be applied to believers today?

I think so. God has plans for his elect. Plans for your ultimate welfare. You have a future & a hope (future hope).

This all speaks to God's purposes for the life of t/believer.

When you suffer affliction, when tragedy strikes, it's easy to ? what God is doing. Job...

4 **'Have You eyes of flesh? Or do You see as a man sees?** 5 **'Are Your days as the days of a mortal, Or Your years as man's years,**
6 **That You should seek for my guilt And search after my sin?**
7 **'According to Your knowledge I am indeed not guilty, Yet there is no deliverance from Your hand.**

Words reminiscent of chapt. 7 ==>

20 "Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target . . ."

3. Might wonder: "Why doesn't Job see his depravity - that he IS utterly sinful?"

He seems to be looking at YHWH worship as a religion whereby one looks at his outward life and sees no sin.

Like Paul in Phil. 3:6 where he claims his pedigree as an unconverted Jew included t/fact that he was "found blameless" before others as to his law-keeping.

Fav. quote from John Bunyan (Pilgrim's Progress):

"there's enough sin in my best prayer to condemn the entire world."

(1) As I've pondered this, I think t/answer is in t/nature of N.T. salvation

Certainly at times t/O.T. saints saw their depravity (David could claim that he was conceived in sin - he was sinful from his conception).

But t/N.T. believer has a different dynamic w/the indwelling Spirit who “convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness & judgement.”

We also have t/depths of N.T. teaching on t/subject of depravity.

Job is looking more externally: outgoing sin (what he does) rather than indwelling sin (what he is). IOW - while not totally discounting his sinful nature Job is looking for major failures of obedience in his life that would disqualify him from God’s blessing.

“I’ve done nothing to deserve this suffocating tragedy that is my life.”

Speaking of this section, Ash writes: “It is at the same time a beautiful and a pathetic passage.” [Ash, 149]

4. The only purpose Job sees God having for him is destruction

Job Accuses God of Watching Over Him to Destroy Him
[USB Handbook]

a. God created Job and now God is going to destroy him
8 ‘Your hands fashioned and made me altogether, And would You destroy me? 9 ‘Remember now, that You have made me as clay; And would You turn me into dust again?’

Gen. 3:19 God tells Adam “By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

b. Look at how Job describes God's creative act in vv. 10 & 11

10 'Did You not pour me out like milk And curdle me like cheese;

"Curdle" = "coagulate" - trans. "congealed" in Exo. 15:8.

11 Clothe me with skin and flesh, And knit me together with bones and sinews?

Psalm 139:13 . . . You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.

Poetic picture of the creative work of God.

"Just as liquid milk can be made to curdle and turn into cheese, so the semen and the ovum can be, as it were, curdled into a living being and then 'clothed with skin and flesh' (v. 11) on the outside and 'knit . . . together with bones and sinews' on the inside. What a wonderful creative act is each conception, gestation, and birth." [Ash, 149]

12 'You have granted me life and lovingkindness [*Hesed*]; And Your care has preserved my spirit.

(1) Job is looking back to when life was good - before tragedy struck

This is pulling out t/photo book of a smiling Job & his wife surrounded by 10 happy children.

But all of that is gone now.

A few days ago I shared w/the girls t/story of when we pulled a prank on my parents. We secretly traveled to AZ (they didn't know we were there) & parked near their house. I called on my cell phone as if I were still in NY. I told them they had a special package in a large box that was going to arrive that evening — they needed to open it right away. Meanwhile we had this large box & we put Giana in it (she was around 8 at t/time). I had it labeled and we put it by the front door.

I told my mom, go out and check to see if the box has arrived.

She and my dad went outside while I'm standing there around the corner listening. My dad tries to move the box & I hear him yell "this is heavy". They decide to open it there. I had told Giana, "when they open the box don't jump out; you'll give them a heart attack!" —so she patiently waited. My dad pulls the paper away and says, "What is this? A monkey" My mom chimes in, "It's Giana!" (they actually believed for a moment that we shipped her from NY to AZ).

A day ago I reminded Lois of that story & got misty-eyed as I thot about those days b4 t/tragedy struck our family. Giana was still here as was my dad. Little did we know what lie ahead, that she & my dad would both be taken within 10 mos of each other starting in June 2016

12 'You have granted me life and lovingkindness; And Your care has preserved my spirit.

B. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Question God's Purposes (3-12)

Third ==>

C. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Question God's Goodness (13-17)

Those 2 things go together don't they?

When we ? G's purpose we ? His goodness...

1. Verse 13 is the door that opens up to verses 14-17

13 'Yet these things You have concealed in Your heart; I know that this is within You:

a. Verse 13 is difficult (NAS is especially so) [^]

ESV Yet these things you hid in your heart; I know that this was your purpose.

NIV "But this is what you concealed in your heart, and I know that this was in your mind:

HCSB "Yet You concealed these thoughts in Your heart; I know that this was Your hidden plan:

(1) This verse looks forward not backward

Why some transl. put a colon after it.

HCSB "Yet You concealed these thoughts in Your heart; I know that this was Your hidden plan:

Job is about to tell openly t/things which G. has been keeping secret.

2. Verses 14-17 outline those things that God had concealed:

14 If I sin, then You would take note of me, And would not acquit me of my guilt.

“You catch me when I sin”

15 ‘If I am wicked, woe to me!

And if I am righteous, I dare not lift up my head. I am sated with disgrace and conscious of my misery. 16 ‘Should my head be lifted up, You would hunt me like a lion; And again You would show Your power against me.

Job pictures himself as t/prey of a lion hiding in t/bush. In hiding he dare not lift up his head.

a. Verse 17 is the capstone

17 ‘You renew Your witnesses against me And increase Your anger toward me; Hardship after hardship is with me.

(1) Note the three aspects of this verse

(a) “Hardship after hardship” = “wave upon wave”

C. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Question God’s Goodness (13-17)

What chokes every prayer and every hope is the memory of all the prayers [we] offered and all the false hopes we had. Not hopes raised merely by our own, wishful thinking; hopes encouraged, even forced upon us, by false diagnoses, by X-ray photographs, by strange remissions, by one temporary recovery that might have ranked as a miracle. Step by step we were "led up the garden path." Time after time when He seemed most gracious He was really preparing the next torture. [C.S. Lewis. *A Grief Observed*, 34-35]

The windy words of a sufferer won't leave the believer condemned in the courtroom of God.

D. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Give Up Hope (18-22)

Hang on to faith; Hang on to X!

1. Job questions why he was ever born (18-19)

18 'Why then have You brought me out of the womb? Would that I had died and no eye had seen me! 19 'I should have been as though I had not been, Carried from womb to tomb.'

a. Job thinks his life was wasted

Nothing that is given to Christ in faith and love is ever wasted. The fragrance of Mary's ointment faded from the scene centuries ago, but the significance of her worship has blessed Christians in every age and continues to do so. Job was bankrupt and sick, and all he could give to the Lord was his suffering by faith; but that is just what God wanted in order to silence the devil.

When William Whiting Borden died in Egypt in 1913 while on his way to the mission field, some people may have asked, "Why this waste?" But God is still using the story of his brief life to challenge people to give Christ their all. . . .

When the five missionaries were martyred in Ecuador at the hands of Auca Indians, some called the event a "tragic waste of manpower." But God thought differently, and the story of these five heroes of faith has been ministering to the church ever since.

Job asked, “Why was I born?” In the light of his losses and his personal suffering, it all seemed such a waste! But God knew what He was doing then, and He knows what He is doing now. [Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient, “Be” Commentary Series* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 42–43]

2. Job wants God to leave him alone do die (20-22)

20 “Would He not let my few days alone? Withdraw from me that I may have a little cheer 21 Before I go—and I shall not return— To the land of darkness and deep shadow, 22 The land of utter gloom as darkness itself, Of deep shadow without order, And which shines as the darkness.”

II. In the Courtroom With God: Job Resigns Himself to a Sentence of Death (10:1-22)

A. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Complain (1-2)

B. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Question God's Purposes (3-12)

C. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Question God's Goodness (13-17)

D. When Suffering Resist the Temptation to Give Up Hope (18-22)

Know what? When we suffer we will fail to do these things.

The windy words of a sufferer won't leave the believer condemned in the courtroom of God.

bc of JC.

Life is hard. There's so much suffering out there. Unavoidable.

“Daily there have to be many troubles and trials in every house, city, and country. No station in life is free of suffering and pain, both from your own, like your wife or children or household help or subjects, and from the outside, from your neighbors and all sorts of accidental trouble.” [Martin Luther]

Where does this leave us?

I'll leave you w/what I call “The ‘F’ Factor”

How do you resist the temptation to ==>

- A. . . . *Complain (1-2)***
- B. . . . *Question God's Purposes (3-12)***
- C. . . . *Question God's Goodness (13-17)***
- D. . . . *Give Up Hope (18-22)***

“The ‘F’ Factor is this: “Faith, not Fear”

FAITH / TRUST everyone trusts something. Naturalist; Religionist;
Xn has a sure hope . . .