

NOT YOUR AVERAGE JOES

A study of the lives of Joseph, Jonah, and Job

Job - Chapters 15-18

Lesson 6

"How rarely we weigh our neighbor in the same balance in which we weigh ourselves." – Thomas a Kempis. During this second round of speeches, the fire becomes hotter as the three friends focus more on proving Job wrong than on giving Job help. We find Job stating that he is giving up, yet we find him still hoping for an answer beyond Himself. Praise God that He has provided that answer as we hope in Jesus.

OBSERVATION: Read Job 15

1. Read Job 15 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God* and *Job*.

Key Words: *God*, *Job*, and words that relate to Job's friends

READ JOB 15

1. This chapter begins with Eliphaz's second response. He first attacked Job's words. Using verses 2-6, share how Eliphaz described Job's speech.
 - a. Not only was Eliphaz critical of Job's words, his own words were full of assumptions about Job. What were they?
 - 1.) Although God certainly had not accused Job of *restraining prayer*, Eliphaz did. Explain the idea of *restraining prayer* and its disadvantages.

2.) Read Jeremiah 2:5-6 and comment on God's observation of Israel's lack of seeking Him.

a.) Why do you think God's people do this?

2. Job 15:7-14 expose a series of questions posed by Eliphaz to Job. Consider his question in verse 11. Eliphaz viewed his words and the words of his friends as those of God. In what ways can Christians make that same mistake today?

a. What are some verses in the Bible that truly represent the *consolation of God* to you?

b. What do we need to remember if we are to truly *console* someone as God does?

3. The remaining verses of Job 15 deal with Eliphaz's words regarding the suffering and judgment of the wicked. List a few of his statements.

a. Reflect upon the statement of verse 31. What are examples of *futile things*?

1.) Using synonyms define the word *futile*.

2.) In what ways does *trusting in futile things* lead to *futility*?

OBSERVATION: Read Job 16

1. Read Job 16 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?

2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God* and *Job*.

Key Words: *God*, *Job*, and words that relate to Job's friends

3. The contrasting word *but* is used three times in Job 16. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.

Read Job 16

1. Job countered the words of his friends in Job 16. He called them *miserable comforters*. What are some components of *miserable comfort*?
2. Job told them that *if your soul were in my soul's place* he could have responded to them similarly (verse 4). *But*, according to verse 5, what did he say he would do instead?
 - a. What *strengthening words* do you look for in times of distress?
3. In his confusion, Job believed that God had *worn him out*. In his pain, Job made several observations of what he believed to be God's role in his *grief*. Using verses 8-14, list some of Job's expressed impressions.
 - a. What characteristics of God do you think Job did not understand or had forgotten?
Challenge: Use Scripture to support your answer.
4. Verses 15-20 reflect Job's pain. They also reflect statements that refute Eliphaz's accusation that Job had *restrained prayer*. What are those statements?
5. Notice Job's plea in verse 21. How does a man plead for *his neighbor* (or someone he loves)?
 - a. How has Jesus met Job's need?

OBSERVATION: Read Job 17

1. Read Job 17 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God* and *Job*.
Key Words: *God* and *Job*
3. The contrasting words *but* and *yet* occur three times in Job 17. Mark the words. Choose one instance of their use and record what is being contrasted.

Read Job 17

1. In chapter 17, Job directed his complaint both toward earth and heaven. Consider the question in verse two ...*does not my eye dwell on their provocation?* What are some ways we let statements made by others get to us?
 - a. Read Luke 23:35-37. What was Jesus' response to *provocation*? Luke 23:34
 - 1.) Do you think it would be too much to ask Job to respond as Jesus did? Why or why not?
2. The NIV translation of Job 17:3 is helpful: *Give me, O God, the pledge You demand. Who else will put up security for me?* The idea is that Job cried out to God and said, "You will have to set this right God; it is beyond me to do it." This is especially meaningful in light of the main idea of Job's friends, that it was *his* responsibility to repent and set things right between himself and God. What have you learned about your inability to make things right with God?
3. In verses 6-9 we see a faint glimmer in Job's hope. What two truths did he declare in verse 9?
 - a. What have you personally discovered to be the benefits of:
holding on (endurance)

choosing to be *clean* (choosing righteousness)

4. The chapter closes with Job's expressions of despair, once again longing for death. Still, the *hope of the grave* did not sit well with Job. What question did he ask in the beginning of verse 15?

a. What is your *hope* when you are hurting?

1.) Record the words of David in Psalm 62:5.

a.) *Expectation* is another word for hope. How does *hoping in God* change your perspective?

OBSERVATION: Read Job 18

1. Read Job 18 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?

2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God* and *Job*.

Key Words: *God* and *Job* (*you, your, and yourself*)

Read Job 18

1. Chapter 18 records Bildad's second retort. He began by rebuking Job for his low opinion of his friends. What did he say? verses 1-3

a. Why are neither defensive words or offensive words beneficial?

2. In the remainder of the chapter, Bildad addressed the fate of the *wicked* in different ways. What did Bildad say about their:

light verses 5,6

steps verses 7-10

miserable life verses 11-15

destiny verses 16-21

- a. Although Bildad is mistakenly referring to Job as *wicked*, what benefit might these words have in your life if you had chosen the path of the *wicked*?

REVIEW: Job 15-18

1. What lesson did you learn from:

Job 15

Job 16

Job 17

Job 18

2. In what ways do these chapters encourage you to have a correct perspective of God?

3. In what ways had Job lost perspective?

4. In what ways had Job's friends lost perspective?

*But the path of the just is like the shining sun,
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

- Proverbs 4:18

Observation Worksheet

Job 15

¹ Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: ² "Should a wise man answer with empty knowledge, and fill himself with the east wind? ³ Should he reason with unprofitable talk, or by speeches with which he can do no good? ⁴ Yes, you cast off fear, and restrain prayer before God. ⁵ For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty. ⁶ Your own mouth condemns you, and not I; yes, your own lips testify against you. ⁷ "Are you the first man who was born? Or were you made before the hills? ⁸ Have you heard the counsel of God? Do you limit wisdom to yourself? ⁹ What do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that is not in us? ¹⁰ Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, much older than your father. ¹¹ Are the consolations of God too small for you, and the word spoken gently with you? ¹² Why does your heart carry you away, and what do your eyes wink at, ¹³ that you turn your spirit against God, and let such words go out of your mouth? ¹⁴ "What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous? ¹⁵ If God puts no trust in His saints, and the heavens are not pure in His sight, ¹⁶ how much less man, who is abominable and filthy, who drinks iniquity like water! ¹⁷ "I will tell you, hear me; what I have seen I will declare, ¹⁸ what wise men have told, not hiding anything received from their fathers, ¹⁹ to whom alone the land was given, and no alien passed among them: ²⁰ The wicked man writhes with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden from the oppressor. ²¹ Dreadful sounds are in his ears; in prosperity the destroyer comes upon him. ²² He does not believe that he will return from darkness, for a sword is waiting for him. ²³ He wanders about for bread, saying, 'Where is it?' He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his hand. ²⁴ Trouble and anguish make him afraid; they overpower him, like a king ready for battle. ²⁵ For he stretches out his hand against God, and acts defiantly against the Almighty, ²⁶ running stubbornly against Him with his strong, embossed shield. ²⁷ "Though he has covered his face with his fatness, and made his waist heavy with fat, ²⁸ he dwells in desolate cities, in houses which no one inhabits, which are destined to become ruins. ²⁹ He will not be rich, nor will his wealth continue, nor will his possessions overspread the earth. ³⁰ He will not depart from darkness; the flame will dry out his branches, and by the breath of His mouth he will go away. ³¹ Let him not trust in futile things, deceiving himself, for futility will be his reward. ³² It will be accomplished before his time, and his branch will not be green. ³³ He will shake off his unripe grape like a vine, and cast off his blossom like an olive tree. ³⁴ For the company of hypocrites will be barren, and fire will consume the tents of bribery. ³⁵ They conceive trouble and bring forth futility; their womb prepares deceit."

Job 16

¹ Then Job answered and said: ² "I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all! ³ Shall words of wind have an end? Or what provokes you that you answer? ⁴ I also could speak as you do, if your soul were in my soul's place. I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you; ⁵ but I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the comfort of my lips would relieve your grief. ⁶ "Though I speak, my grief is not relieved; and if I remain silent, how am I eased? ⁷ But now He has worn me out; You have made desolate all my company. ⁸ You have shriveled me up, and it is a witness against me; my leanness rises up against me and bears witness to my face. ⁹ He tears me in His wrath, and hates me; He gnashes at me with His teeth; my adversary sharpens His gaze on me. ¹⁰ They gape at me with their mouth, they strike me reproachfully on the cheek, they gather together against me. ¹¹ God has delivered me to the

ungodly, and turned me over to the hands of the wicked. ¹² I was at ease, but He has shattered me; He also has taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces; He has set me up for His target, ¹³ His archers surround me. He pierces my heart and does not pity; He pours out my gall on the ground. ¹⁴ He breaks me with wound upon wound; He runs at me like a warrior. ¹⁵ "I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, and laid my head in the dust. ¹⁶ My face is flushed from weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death; ¹⁷ although no violence is in my hands, and my prayer is pure. ¹⁸ "O earth, do not cover my blood, and let my cry have no resting place! ¹⁹ Surely even now my witness is in heaven, and my evidence is on high. ²⁰ My friends scorn me; my eyes pour out tears to God. ²¹ Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor! ²² For when a few years are finished, I shall go the way of no return.

Job 17

¹ "My spirit is broken, my days are extinguished, the grave is ready for me. ² Are not mockers with me? And does not my eye dwell on their provocation? ³ "Now put down a pledge for me with Yourself. Who is he who will shake hands with me? ⁴ For You have hidden their heart from understanding; therefore You will not exalt them. ⁵ He who speaks flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children will fail. ⁶ "But He has made me a byword of the people, and I have become one in whose face men spit. ⁷ My eye has also grown dim because of sorrow, and all my members are like shadows. ⁸ Upright men are astonished at this, and the innocent stirs himself up against the hypocrite. ⁹ Yet the righteous will hold to his way, and he who has clean hands will be stronger and stronger. ¹⁰ "But please, come back again, all of you, for I shall not find one wise man among you. ¹¹ My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart. ¹² They change the night into day; 'The light is near,' they say, in the face of darkness. ¹³ If I wait for the grave as my house, if I make my bed in the darkness, ¹⁴ if I say to corruption, 'You are my father,' and to the worm, 'You are my mother and my sister,' ¹⁵ where then is my hope? As for my hope, who can see it? ¹⁶ Will they go down to the gates of Sheol? Shall we have rest together in the dust?"

Job 18

¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said: ² "How long till you put an end to words? Gain understanding, and afterward we will speak. ³ Why are we counted as beasts, and regarded as stupid in your sight? ⁴ You who tear yourself in anger, shall the earth be forsaken for you? Or shall the rock be removed from its place? ⁵ "The light of the wicked indeed goes out, and the flame of his fire does not shine. ⁶ The light is dark in his tent, and his lamp beside him is put out. ⁷ The steps of his strength are shortened, and his own counsel casts him down. ⁸ For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walks into a snare. ⁹ The net takes him by the heel, and a snare lays hold of him. ¹⁰ A noose is hidden for him on the ground, and a trap for him in the road. ¹¹ Terrors frighten him on every side, and drive him to his feet. ¹² His strength is starved, and destruction is ready at his side. ¹³ It devours patches of his skin; the firstborn of death devours his limbs. ¹⁴ He is uprooted from the shelter of his tent, and they parade him before the king of terrors. ¹⁵ They dwell in his tent who are none of his; brimstone is scattered on his dwelling. ¹⁶ His roots are dried out below, and his branch withers above. ¹⁷ The memory of him perishes from the earth, and he has no name among the renowned. ¹⁸ He is driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world. ¹⁹ He has neither son nor posterity among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings. ²⁰ Those in the west are astonished at his day, as those in the east are frightened. ²¹ Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him who does not know God."