

NOT YOUR AVERAGE JOES

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

Job - Chapters 28-31

Lesson 9

These chapters reflect Job's final discourse. In them we see his search for *wisdom and understanding*; we see his longing for the joys and honor of his past life; we see his lamenting of his losses; we see his desire to be declared innocent. At this point Job had no idea that God would soon appear and reveal Himself. Oh, how like Job we can often be – so stuck in the present, that we do not allow ourselves to consider that God just might not be done with us and His good purposes in the trial we are facing.

OBSERVATION: Read Job 28

1. Read Job 28 using the Observation Worksheet. 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 man.

Key Words: *God, man, wisdom/understanding* (and all words that relate to them; i.e. it or its)
3. The contrasting word *but* is used in twice in Job 28. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.

READ JOB 28

1. Scan Job 28 and record the questions Job asked about *wisdom* and *understanding*. (verses 12,20)
2. In Job 28, Job provided 3 answers to his questions:
 - a. **Wisdom cannot be mined** (verses 1-11) According to these verses, what is man capable of finding?

- 1.) Consider all the work man puts into finding earthly treasures. He often applies the same thinking regarding wisdom – it is obtainable through hard work or even studying. How have you discovered any kind of work to be futile in obtaining *wisdom*?

- 2.) Compare the value of material wealth to *wisdom*.

- b. **Wisdom cannot be bought** (verses 12-19). *The deep says, 'It is not in me'; and the sea says, 'It is not with me'.* Where are some places man looks to to find *wisdom* and *understanding*?
 - 1.) Scan the chapter and record the references that state the *value* of *wisdom* and *understanding*.
 - a.) Why do you think *wisdom* and *understanding* are so *valuable*?

- c. **Wisdom comes from God** (verses 20-28). From whom or what is *wisdom* hidden?
 - 1.) If *wisdom* is hidden from the eyes of all living, according to 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, how can we have *wisdom*?

 - 2.) According to Job 28:27, God *saw wisdom*. What other three things did God do with *wisdom*?

 - 3.) Write the words of Job 28:28.
 - a.) Read Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, and Proverbs 9:10; summarize their message in your own words.

3. Given the answers from the question above, how would you answer Job's question, *Where can wisdom be found*?

4. Job asked, *Where can wisdom be found?* How would you answer this question: What is *wisdom*?

OBSERVATION: Read Job 29

1. Read Job 29 using the Observation Worksheet. 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*

Read Job 29

1. Job 29 records Job's reflections of his life before the calamities struck. He first remembers his relationship with the Lord. Using verses 1-6, what did Job miss?
 - a. Consider the benefits Job had experienced that he felt were gone. Notice the phrase in verse 3: *and when by His light I walked through darkness*. Job wrote that while he was in *darkness*. Why do we sometimes feel like we will not see light again, when life seems *dark*?
 - 1.) In what ways do the following verses encourage you when you feel like it is *dark* all around you?

Psalm 18:28

Psalm 27:1

Psalm 84:11

John 8:12
2. Job 29:7-11 and 21-25 record Job's remembrance of his relationship with others before the calamities struck. What were some of the statements Job made?
 - a. Job enjoyed the respect of many people. Yet this respect was not a result of Job's ambition, popularity, or self-interest. Using verses 12-18, list some of the deeds Job did that enjoined the respect of others.
 - 1.) What are the qualities or actions of people you respect?

3. Before the calamities, Job thought he would die in prosperity and peace (verses 18-20). Life had surely taken a sudden turn for Job. Yet, Job was lamenting his life as if it were now over. What is wrong with that perspective?
4. Job was a great example of how a wealthy and respected man should use his resources and live his life. Share one thing about Job's life, as recorded in this chapter, that challenged you.
5. Job 29 closes with Job's statement that he was once *one who comforts mourners*. In light of Job's experience, what do you think he thought of the *comfort* of his friends?

OBSERVATION: Read Job 30

1. Read Job 30 using the Observation Worksheet. 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*, *Job*, and *the men that mock at Job*.

Key Words: *God*, *Job*, and words that relate to *the men that mock at Job*.
3. The contrasting word *but* occurs five times in Job 30. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.

Read Job 30

1. Job 30 begins with the contrasting words, *But now*, as Job turned from his past life to his present life. Job reflected upon the low character of those who mocked him. What did he say about them in verses 1-8?
2. What did Job call himself in verse 9?
 - a. What is the error of allowing man to determine our status or value?
3. The mocking continued in verses 10-15. Contemplate the place Job was in. What are your thoughts?
 - a. Using synonyms, define the word *mock*.

- 1.) What are some antonyms of the word *mock*?

- b. Hebrews 12:3 calls us to *consider* Jesus. What does this verse say?
 - 1.) What *mockings* was Jesus exposed to?
 - a.) How does it help you when people speak ill of you to *consider Jesus*?

4. Job, in his anguish, described the many ways that he felt God was against Him. Scan through the remaining verses; choose a few of Job's statements and comment on them.
 - a. If you were one of Job's *comforters*, what do you think you might have said to Job in response to those statements?

5. In spite of feeling forsaken, unheard, and targeted by God, Job continued to cry out to Him (verse 20). Why do you think Job persisted in this way to seek God's help and intervention?

OBSERVATION: Read Job 31

1. Read Job 31 using the Observation Worksheet. 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 word *but* occurs twice in Job 31. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.

Read Job 31

1. Job 31 is occupied with Job's claim of innocence. He was not guilty of lust (verses 1-4). According to verse 1, what did Job say he had done?
 - a. In practical terms, what does it mean to *make a covenant with your eyes*?
 - b. How does it help to understand that lusting after/desiring the wrong person is not God's *allotment* or choice for you?
2. Scanning through the chapter, what other sins did Job claim to be innocent of?
 - a. What are some statements Job made about those sins?
 - b. What are some of the punishments Job called upon himself, if he was found guilty of committing those sins?
3. Consider your own life. Even if it is as *blameless* as Job's, there are still many sins you have committed. What are your thoughts as you consider the fact that you do not have to prove your righteousness, but rather lean on the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus shed for you on the cross?

REVIEW: Job 28-31

1. What lesson did you learn from:

Job 28

Job 29

Job 30

Job 31

...The words of Job are ended.
- Job 31:40

Observation Worksheet

Job 28

¹ "Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place where gold is refined. ² Iron is taken from the earth, and copper is smelted from ore. ³ Man puts an end to darkness, and searches every recess for ore in the darkness and the shadow of death. ⁴ He breaks open a shaft away from people; in places forgotten by feet they hang far away from men; they swing to and fro. ⁵ As for the earth, from it comes bread, but underneath it is turned up as by fire; ⁶ its stones are the source of sapphires, and it contains gold dust. ⁷ That path no bird knows, nor has the falcon's eye seen it. ⁸ The proud lions have not trodden it, nor has the fierce lion passed over it. ⁹ He puts his hand on the flint; he overturns the mountains at the roots. ¹⁰ He cuts out channels in the rocks, and his eye sees every precious thing. ¹¹ He dams up the streams from trickling; what is hidden he brings forth to light. ¹² "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? ¹³ Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living. ¹⁴ The deep says, 'It is not in me'; and the sea says, 'It is not with me.' ¹⁵ It cannot be purchased for gold, nor can silver be weighed for its price. ¹⁶ It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, in precious onyx or sapphire. ¹⁷ Neither gold nor crystal can equal it, nor can it be exchanged for jewelry of fine gold. ¹⁸ No mention shall be made of coral or quartz, for the price of wisdom is above rubies. ¹⁹ The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor can it be valued in pure gold. ²⁰ "From where then does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? ²¹ It is hidden from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air. ²² Destruction and Death say, 'We have heard a report about it with our ears.' ²³ God understands its way, and He knows its place. ²⁴ For He looks to the ends of the earth, and sees under the whole heavens, ²⁵ to establish a weight for the wind, and apportion the waters by measure. ²⁶ When He made a law for the rain, and a path for the thunderbolt, ²⁷ then He saw wisdom and declared it; He prepared it, indeed, He searched it out. ²⁸ And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.' "

Job 29

¹ Job further continued his discourse, and said: ² "Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God watched over me; ³ when His lamp shone upon my head, and when by His light I walked through darkness; ⁴ just as I was in the days of my prime, when the friendly counsel of God was over my tent; ⁵ when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were around me; ⁶ when my steps were bathed with cream, and the rock poured out rivers of oil for me! ⁷ "When I went out to the gate by the city, when I took my seat in the open square, ⁸ the young men saw me and hid, and the aged arose and stood; ⁹ the princes refrained from talking, and put their hand on their mouth; ¹⁰ the voice of nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth. ¹¹ When the ear heard, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw, then it approved me; ¹² because I delivered the poor who cried out, the fatherless and the one who had no helper. ¹³ The blessing of a perishing man came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. ¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and

a turban. ¹⁵ I was eyes to the blind, and I was feet to the lame. ¹⁶ I was a father to the poor, and I searched out the case that I did not know. ¹⁷ I broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the victim from his teeth. ¹⁸ "Then I said, 'I shall die in my nest, and multiply my days as the sand. ¹⁹ My root is spread out to the waters, and the dew lies all night on my branch. ²⁰ My glory is fresh within me, and my bow is renewed in my hand.' ²¹ "Men listened to me and waited, and kept silence for my counsel. ²² After my words they did not speak again, and my speech settled on them as dew. ²³ They waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide as for the spring rain. ²⁴ If I mocked at them, they did not believe it, and the light of my countenance they did not cast down. ²⁵ I chose the way for them, and sat as chief; so I dwelt as a king in the army, as one who comforts mourners.

Job 30

¹ "But now they mock at me, men younger than I, whose fathers I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock. ² Indeed, what profit is the strength of their hands to me? Their vigor has perished. ³ They are gaunt from want and famine, fleeing late to the wilderness, desolate and waste, ⁴ who pluck mallow by the bushes, and broom tree roots for their food. ⁵ They were driven out from among men, they shouted at them as at a thief. ⁶ They had to live in the clefts of the valleys, in caves of the earth and the rocks. ⁷ Among the bushes they brayed, under the nettles they nestled. ⁸ They were sons of fools, yes, sons of vile men; they were scourged from the land. ⁹ "And now I am their taunting song; yes, I am their byword. ¹⁰ They abhor me, they keep far from me; they do not hesitate to spit in my face. ¹¹ Because He has loosed my bowstring and afflicted me, they have cast off restraint before me. ¹² At my right hand the rabble arises; they push away my feet, and they raise against me their ways of destruction. ¹³ They break up my path, they promote my calamity; they have no helper. ¹⁴ They come as broad breakers; under the ruinous storm they roll along. ¹⁵ Terrors are turned upon me; they pursue my honor as the wind, and my prosperity has passed like a cloud. ¹⁶ "And now my soul is poured out because of my plight; the days of affliction take hold of me. ¹⁷ My bones are pierced in me at night, and my gnawing pains take no rest. ¹⁸ By great force my garment is disfigured; it binds me about as the collar of my coat. ¹⁹ He has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes. ²⁰ "I cry out to You, but You do not answer me; I stand up, and You regard me. ²¹ But You have become cruel to me; with the strength of Your hand You oppose me. ²² You lift me up to the wind and cause me to ride on it; You spoil my success. ²³ For I know that You will bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living. ²⁴ "Surely He would not stretch out His hand against a heap of ruins, if they cry out when He destroys it. ²⁵ Have I not wept for him who was in trouble? Has not my soul grieved for the poor? ²⁶ But when I looked for good, evil came to me; and when I waited for light, then came darkness. ²⁷ My heart is in turmoil and cannot rest; days of affliction confront me. ²⁸ I go about mourning, but not in the sun; I stand up in the assembly and cry out for help. ²⁹ I am a brother of jackals, and a companion of ostriches. ³⁰ My skin grows black and falls from me; my bones burn with fever. ³¹ My harp is turned to mourning, and my flute to the voice of those who weep.

Job 31

¹ "I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman? ² For what is the allotment of God from above, and the inheritance of the Almighty from on high? ³ Is it not destruction for the wicked, and disaster for the workers of iniquity? ⁴ Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps? ⁵ "If I have walked with falsehood, or if my foot has hastened to deceit, ⁶ let me be weighed on honest scales, that God may know my integrity. ⁷ If my step has turned from the way, or my heart walked after my eyes, or if any spot adheres to my hands, ⁸ then let me sow, and another eat; yes, let my harvest be rooted out. ⁹ "If my heart has been enticed by a woman, or if I have lurked at my neighbor's door, ¹⁰ then let my wife grind for another, and let others bow down over her. ¹¹ For that would be wickedness; yes, it would be iniquity deserving of judgment. ¹² For that would be a fire that consumes to destruction, and would root out all my increase. ¹³ "If I have despised the cause of my male or female servant when they complained against me, ¹⁴ what then shall I do when God rises up? When He punishes, how shall I answer Him? ¹⁵ Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? ¹⁶ "If I have kept the poor from their desire, or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, ¹⁷ or eaten my morsel by myself, so that the fatherless could not eat of it ¹⁸ (But from my youth I reared him as a father, and from my mother's womb I guided the widow); ¹⁹ if I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, or any poor man without covering; ²⁰ if his heart has not blessed me, and if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; ²¹ if I have raised my hand against the fatherless, when I saw I had help in the gate; ²² then let my arm fall from my shoulder, let my arm be torn from the socket. ²³ For destruction from God is a terror to me, and because of His magnificence I cannot endure. ²⁴ "If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, 'You are my confidence'; ²⁵ if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gained much; ²⁶ if I have observed the sun when it shines, or the moon moving in brightness, ²⁷ so that my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand; ²⁸ this also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, for I would have denied God who is above. ²⁹ "If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me, or lifted myself up when evil found him ³⁰ (indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin by asking for a curse on his soul); ³¹ if the men of my tent have not said, 'Who is there that has not been satisfied with his meat?' ³² (But no sojourner had to lodge in the street, for I have opened my doors to the traveler); ³³ if I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom, ³⁴ because I feared the great multitude, and dreaded the contempt of families, so that I kept silence and did not go out of the door-- ³⁵ Oh, that I had one to hear me! Here is my mark. Oh, that the Almighty would answer me, that my Prosecutor had written a book! ³⁶ Surely I would carry it on my shoulder, and bind it on me like a crown; ³⁷ I would declare to Him the number of my steps; like a prince I would approach Him. ³⁸ "If my land cries out against me, and its furrows weep together; ³⁹ if I have eaten its fruit without money, or caused its owners to lose their lives; ⁴⁰ then let thistles grow instead of wheat, and weeds instead of barley." The words of Job are ended.