

From Bad to Worse

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[0 : 00] Well, happy Father's Day. It's good to see all of you this morning.

And I just want to begin by just saying thank you to all of you for your prayers! And for your interest in our family and interest in me particularly as I had surgery and recovery and all of that, I can tell you that you have been an encouragement. I have been blessed because of being part of Maranatha and I'm grateful for every one of you. Thank you for the way that you have prayed for us, encouraged us, blessed us, not just me but my family.

And so it's great to be back with you this morning. The other joy of what we got to experience the last six weeks is the ministry of the Word by capable men who brought the Word to us and helped to emphasize the power of the Word over a particular speaker. And that, of course, is a blessing too. So I'm grateful to be at Maranatha where we have so many gifted men who can preach the Word and encourage us in the Scriptures every week. I want you to know that that is unique. That is special about this church and I'm grateful for all of the investment that's happened through the years and the way that God has drawn certain individuals to our fellowship and the way that they are able to apply the Scriptures to our hearts. What a blessing it is to be here.

So it is Father's Day and it just reminded me this past week during the soccer camp that moms and dads are different. Even in how they drop off their kids. It was very interesting to me.

You know, the moms tended, and by the way, I'm generalizing here. Not every mom or every dad was this way. But moms tended actually to park a ways away. And I think partly because they didn't want to hit any kids as they were driving up closer. It was easier for them to walk. But it also gave them space. So the kids could pile out of the cars. They could spray them down with the bug spray.

[2 : 20] They could tie their shoes. They could make sure their shorts were straight. Their jersey was on. Their hair was put up. And they had the sunscreen on. And when everyone was ready and the hugs were given, they could finally make their way up to the sign-in station. Now dads, efficiency is a little bit more important to us. Okay? So we tend, as dads, we kind of park up close. And the kids hop out of the car.

And we make our way directly to the registration. And when it's finished, we turn around and we go back. Mission complete. Job done. And what was even kind of interesting, sometimes a mom and a dad of the same family would drop off their kids. And it was, you know, kind of the alternate days.

The dad left the other kids in the car because it just wasn't efficient to get them out of their seat and to take them with. But mom made sure to bring the kids when she dropped off. It was just, it was fascinating to me the way that God has made moms and dads different. And by the way, that's by design. Praise the Lord for moms and dads. Praise the Lord for God's design for families.

And that's another joy of being here at Maranatha is the joy of seeing strong, healthy, godly families, moms and dads that are modeling Christ for their kids. And what a blessing that is.

Well, this morning, I want to just draw your attention. We're back in the book of Job. And if you're using the Pew Bible, I would encourage you to turn with us there. If you're using the Pew Bible, I believe it's on page 417. We're going to pick it up in chapter 2 today. There's so much to say about moms and dads, but I want to draw attention to fathers because dads, you have a unique responsibility. A unique responsibility of modeling God to your family, of representing God to your family.

[4 : 34] It is not a mistake that you're called a father and that God is father. That is by design. And you have a unique and special role. A great burden of responsibility in your life to reflect God appropriately, accurately, and faithfully. Now, of course, we're not going to do that perfectly, right?

We make mistakes, but hopefully in humility, we fess up to those mistakes. We call attention to them. And there's humility that goes along with it. But what a unique responsibility that we have as dads to represent God, the father, to our families. But it doesn't end there. It's interesting that we also represent God in Christ to show Christ's love to the church. And husbands, your responsibility to show Christ to your wife in the same way. You show the father, you show the son, of course, through the power of the spirit who is helping to fashion those fruits of the spirit in your life and empowering you to do what only God can accomplish in your life. And so we come to Job, okay? And what struck me this past week in my study of the book of Job is that the commendation we're going to see in chapter 2, chapter 2, verse 3. Just look at there briefly with me. God is calling out Job, and this is what he says.

Have you considered my servant Job? There is none like him on the earth. None like him on the earth. And then he kind of fills that out. A blameless man, upright, fears God, turns away from evil. And by the way, that includes Job's fathering and includes Job's husbanding. Job was an exemplary man in every way.

He was a dad who loved his kids. You see that show up in his family. And I promise you that with this kind of commendation, he was also the kind of husband that loved and cared for, nurtured, supported, and led his wife. He did that faithfully. So that's going to be important for us as we make our way through this study this morning. And I want to draw attention, not so much to Job himself, but I want you to understand, and you already know this. I'm just reminding you of what you already know. When we look at Job this morning, we're looking at God's work in the life of Job, okay? So when we draw attention to his character, it's because of God's work in Job that we see these things. But as dads, as husbands, as men, whether you're married or single, young or old, I believe God has called us to this kind of life. This is the kind of life that God takes notice of. And so this is the kind of life that every man and every woman should aspire to, okay? That's just kind of what I want to encourage us with as we start this study, okay? We're going to look at, first of all, Job, who was a man of integrity. Job, a man of integrity. It's another word for blamelessness. We see that in the first several verses. Chapter 2, join me with, there with me at verses 1 to 6. It says this,

Again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. And Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. The Lord said to Satan, From wherever you come? Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro on the earth and from walking up and down on it. And the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job?

[8 : 41] There is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still holds fast his integrity. Although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason. Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Skin for skin, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse you to your face.

And the Lord said to Satan, Behold, he is in your hand only. Spare his life. A man of integrity. And we're going to see here at the very beginning God's commendation of Job's life, his character, his integrity. That God himself will highlight and feature the integrity of Job. We find this formula here even at the beginning of this chapter. Again, there was a day. And it reminds us of kind of what we've seen up to this point, right? This transition between a man and a day that we've seen here since chapter 1. It begins in chapter 1 verse 1, there was a man. And then in verse 6, that there was a day. And then we're going to find again here in chapter 2 verse 1, there again, there was a day.

This transition that's taking place. And right at the outset, and now we've seen this for the third time, that the writer to, of this book of Job, wants us to understand something about his integrity.

If you go back to chapter 1, beginning there in verse 1, there was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. And that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. We don't even get to the story. We don't even know what's going to happen. But the author wants us to know something about Job's integrity, his character. I appreciated what Pastor Paul Boothby said last week in kind of alliterating this for us. He talked about Job's faith. He was blameless. He was upright. He feared God. He turned away from evil. It spoke of the faith that he had.

We learned about his family. He's got seven sons and three daughters. For anyone living at that time, that was a mark of a blessed life. Someone who had enjoyed the benefits of God's goodness to them.

[11:21] We saw his fortune. 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen and donkeys. And then in today's estimate, as we found out last week, somewhere between \$50 million and \$200 million, this guy had it all.

We learned about his fame, that he was the greatest man in the East. We learned about his friends. We'll learn about them more today. And as we move our way through this study, the friends of Job, particularly Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. But we come to this new day. And what I love about the book of Job is like no other book that you will find in the scripture, there's this uniqueness about God kind of pulling the curtain back and giving you a peek into the heaven's court and seeing what's happening there.

Like, wow, that's really happening, that Satan is standing before God and there's accountability. That's how this is explained and this is how it works out. Of course, it reminds us of what Paul says to the church of Ephesus in Ephesians 6, 12, when he says, we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. And while the conflicts that you have may seem very physical, God wants us to understand there is a supernatural force behind them.

And here in chapter 2, we find another day, another day of accounting. And the repetition here, it's fascinating that the description and the words that are used in chapter 2 are almost identical to the Hebrew phrases that we find in chapter 1. And you're like, why bother going through all the same stuff? And of course, no word is wasted in the scriptures. So it's here for a reason. And I believe the reason that it's here is to help us understand, emphasize once again, God is in control. God's authority is on display. That the supernatural powers and in the future, all of human powers are subject to his divine authority. And just to help you know that this isn't just a one-time thing taking place in chapter 1. It's repeated for us in chapter 2 to assure our hearts and encourage us, God is in control.

You can trust him. God is ultimate in authority. He's over his creation. So we can rest in the fact that God's supreme, that nothing happens in this life. And as we continue to work our way through this passage, nothing happens in this life that he doesn't know about. And he hasn't at least given permission to take place. God says to Satan, have you considered? Have you considered? Literally, this is, have you set your heart on him? Have you made him the focus of your attention? Have you looked at his life? Have you zeroed your focus, narrowed your focus? Have you understood that there's something unique about his life? And of course, Satan had taken notice. And God draws attention to him as being a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. And the commendation, there is none like him on the earth. Wow! Can you even imagine that? I can think very easily, even in this fellowship, the number of people that are more godly and more mature spiritually than I am. And yet, Job himself, God draws attention to everybody on the earth. Nobody like this guy. Nobody. Not one person.

[15:34] He calls attention to his blamelessness, which speaks of his standing before the Lord. God. And blamelessness, of course, isn't perfection. But blamelessness is sincerity. It's authenticity.

It's that Job was the same person on the inside as he was on the outside. What you saw in Job is what you got. And there was purity about him. There was this integrity about his life. Authenticity.

You knew what to expect. You knew the kind of person he was. He wasn't two-faced. He wasn't something over here and something different over there. The posture of his standing before the Lord.

But not only that, but also he was upright, which speaks of his standing before men. Shifts its focus a little bit so that we understand there wasn't just a vertical relationship with God that was in line, but it transcended to this horizontal relationship with others that was also in line. That Job treated others with respect and kindness and also with the kind of compassion and tenderness that you would expect. He dealt with them fairly, but he feared God.

And the reverence that is expressed here is his posture towards God himself. Turning to him. Respecting him. And you get the sense of this real presence that Job was aware of God's presence to such a degree that he couldn't even imagine himself doing the wrong thing because he knew God was there and he feared how God would respond.

[17:20] So he feared God. He worshipped God. He was devoted to God. But he also turned away from evil. And that was kind of the response, the other reaction. So he's turning to God. Turning away from evil.

And he's holding fast. He's holding fast when things are really, really hard. And we got a sense of how hard things were in the first chapter.

Wave upon wave upon wave of tragedy that crashes down on his life. He hears one word of tragedy and losing the things that God has blessed him with.

And before he can catch his breath, before he can get his bearings, it crashes down again with another wave upon his life. Losing his sheep.

Silence that followed instead of an interruption. And that was by design as well. The trouble and difficulty and confusion of this scenario must have been challenging for Job because whether it was coming from a human standpoint or whether it was coming from a divine standpoint, like this fire of God that came down on his sheep, consumed them, there was nothing left.

[19:12] And then the wind that comes and hits the four corners of the house. And by the way, those of you who know wind, wind doesn't do that.

Wind strikes a side of the house, not the corners, and all the way around. This was by design meant to showcase or at least confuse Job, deceive him into thinking, this is from God.

God's responsible. And so since God is responsible, you must have done something to show that God is now against you. So God's commendation.

And then we move to Satan's accusation in verses 4 and 5. Satan answered the Lord and said, skin for skin. All that a man has, he will give for his life.

But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face. We've heard that before. Satan demands that God removes now all the boundaries.

[20 : 16] He's demanded that God remove boundaries in chapter 1. And God has graciously removed some of those boundaries. But this is the one boundary that was left. We see that in chapter 1, verse 12.

It says, So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. And so now Satan demands that this last boundary, this last obstacle, this last barrier is removed so he can have all of Job for himself.

Satan's accusation to God is, you are still holding out. You are still holding back. You are still buying him off. This is all of your fault.

You're just trying to insulate him from the inevitable. You take this away, and he's going to curse you to your face. But you know that, so you're not going to remove that barrier.

And so in his manipulating, accusatory tactics, Satan is actually accusing God of wrong. God, you're not pure.

[21 : 24] You're not righteous. And you remove this edge, it'll be all over. Satan's accusation. He is now pulling out all the stops.

He unloads his entire arsenal against him. And by the way, don't be misled to think that what we're going to see here is just a physical trauma on Job's life.

It is total. It's comprehensive. Yes, it is physical. But there is emotional trauma. There is spiritual trauma. There is psychological trauma.

There is relational trauma. He's going to experience it all because let me tell you, God giving permission to Satan to do whatever he wants, just don't take his life, that's the only boundary.

You can better believe Satan is going to do everything that's in his power. I am going to bring him down. Just you watch. That was Satan's accusation.

[22 : 25] And so he says, skin for skin. Let me touch his body. And then we'll see how much he loves you. Yeah. And those of you who know a little bit about having a skin disease or know somebody with a skin disease, even for just a little bit, you know that the things that happen outside of you, however difficult they might be, those things that are loss of family, loss of job, loss of income, all those things, they're hard.

They're devastating, but they can be covered up. You can find an escape for those things, but when it is your life, when it is your body, there is no relief.

And then it becomes very personal and very hard. This is what we're talking about. And so Satan is interested in bringing Job down.

And so he will do whatever it takes. He's going to say, let him suffer in this way and he will curse you to your face.

And by the way, this is an interesting word in the Hebrew and I want to spend a whole lot of time here, but the word curse is the word barak, which is also the word for bless. We have now seen this for the fifth time in this passage, okay?

[23:54] So bless and curse, they're used interchangeably already throughout the first chapter. Let me just give you a couple examples. Job 1, 5, okay?

The very end of the verse, it says, it may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. That's the word barak. That's also the word bless. And then in verse 10 of chapter 1, it says, you have blessed the work of his hands and his possessions have increased in the land.

And then in verse 11, Satan will use the same word barak, only he'll use it in the word, in the sense of to curse. He says this, stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, he will curse you to your face.

And then in Job chapter 1, verse 21, it says, naked I came from my mother's womb, naked I'll return, the Lord gives, the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

That's the same word. What is going on here? I think it's a great reminder for us of how easy it is for us to teeter between blessing and cursing.

[25:01] We know that. James, the half-brother of Jesus, draws attention to that when he talks about the dangers of the tongue. He says, you know, with the mouth we curse and we bless.

How is it possible for sweet water and bitter water to come out of the same place? Why do you allow your tongue to be the source of blessing and cursing?

It shouldn't be. But that is our nature, is it not? We teeter between the two. But dads, you lead with your mouth.

I want you to realize, you lead with your mouth. You lead with the things you say. You lead with the words that either bless or curse.

You lead with the words that are either affirming and encouraging or critical and condemning. You lead with the words that are words of faith, that we believe in God, that he is good, we can trust him.

[26:04] Or you say, oh man, I don't know what we're going to do. The bottom has fallen out. My life is a mess. What will you do with your words to lead your families?

It's so important. The balance beam is so critical. The toggling between blessing and cursing is so delicate in our lives and so important nonetheless.

And Jesus will draw attention to that as he's talking to his audiences. He says to the Pharisees, for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. I know and people can know who you are by the consistent pattern of the words that come out of your mouth, especially your family.

Lead with words. And it will echo the heart of one who loves God, I trust. And that's why the psalmist says this in Psalm 19, 14.

[27:10] He says, let the words of my mouth in the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O God, my strength and my redeemer. Let the consistency, integrity, blamelessness of my heart, may it show up in how I live and how I speak.

May there be consistency between the two. So that people know I'm a person of integrity. How will God respond now? The accusation has flown.

Will you say, no, Satan, I'm sorry. You've had your chance. Or, no, Satan, he belongs to me. He's suffered enough. Let him go. No, actually, God grants permission.

And by the way, God may grant permission to the enemy to allow you to suffer. God grants permission.

We see that in verse 6. The Lord said to Satan, behold, he is in your hand. Only spare his life. Only spare his life.

[28:14] Last week, Pastor Paul made a clear distinction that's worth repeating. He helped us to be reminded of the fact that Satan, while he may have power, he is not all-powerful.

Remember that? And Satan, while he may know some things, he is not all-knowing like our God is. And Satan, while he is present, he is not omnipresent or all-present.

He's limited. And Satan, while he has some measure of power that he can exercise in this world and in this life, it is all under the accountability of God himself.

He answers to God. God grants permission. The Lord said, behold, he is in your hand. only spare his life.

And we see that God not only grants permission, but it helps to provide maybe some answers for verse 3, the last part of verse 3, which may seem a bit confusing to us.

[29:25] It says this, although God says to Satan, you incited me against him to destroy him without reason. What? What does that mean?

You incited me? And I think the challenge is that in our English vocabulary, incite kind of has the idea of force.

You forced me into this. You backed me into a corner. You have manipulated me into doing this. You've influenced me and I could not push back. But that's not the concept that we're talking about here.

It is a concept of accountability. And God is ultimately and supremely in authority over every circumstance. Although he may not be the instrument for pain, the instrument for sin, he is ultimately accountable.

And that raises, too, really encouraging things I want to just draw to your attention before we move on. And that is this. Every trouble you face is under the watchful eye of God.

[30:32] Every trouble you face is under the watchful eye of God. You will not experience anything in this life or the next, by the way, that God hasn't sanctioned or permitted.

Satan does not have unlimited, free access to you. It is all under the authority of God. Under his watchful eye. He knows. He loves.

It's his design. He is able to help. Second, every trouble you face has a way to enjoy and experience the strengthening power of God to endure.

every trouble you face, for lack of a better way to put it, is endurable. Okay? 1 Corinthians 10:13 says this. No temptation has overtaken you that is common to man.

God is faithful. Can you say that with me? God is faithful. He will not let you to be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it.

[31:46] Dads, men, young and old, no pressure that you face is a pressure that you cannot endure with the help and strength of God.

You can do it with God's help. But, here's the thing. Is God, oh, he allows the pressure to come so that we as men can finally say, okay, uncle, we need help.

We let go. We need you to help carry us, Lord. He will apply that pressure until we get to that point. So get to that point sooner than later, okay?

But every trouble you face is endurable because God will carry you if you trust him. God still allows this attack and God, this is the other amazing part about this book, God already knows the outcome, okay?

So God permits Satan to attack in every way imaginable and the challenge is he is going to curse you to your face, he's not going to remain true, he's going to fail, he's going to be destroyed, I'm bringing him down, he's going to curse you but God's like, no, he's not because I'm going to carry him and you can't touch this.

[33 : 20] You can't come against this power, I'm in control. So every, every suffering you face is endurable because of the power of God.

Alright, that was Job, a man of integrity, now we have a couple minutes to talk about Job, a man of endurance, a man of endurance. Verses 7 to 13, so Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

Okay, sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Totality of this physical suffering now that he's going to experience. And he took, speaking of Job now, a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.

Job, a man of endurance, that's what we see. And this, a sudden attack from the enemy. First, a sudden attack from the enemy.

Almost simultaneously with getting permission, now Job is afflicted. This instantaneous affliction that pops out all over Job's body and it is horrendous.

[34 : 43] It is awful. It's horrific. It's described throughout this book. We see that, especially in Job chapter 7.

We see the restless nights that Job endured. He says, when I lie down, I say, when shall I arise? But the night is so long and I'm full of tossing until the dawn.

In verse 5 of chapter 7, it talks about his skin. My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt. Imagine. Clothed with worms and dirt.

My skin hardens, then breaks out afresh. Job 7, 14. You scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions.

In chapter 7, verse 15. I would choose strangling in death rather than my bones. In chapter 16, verse 8, he says, he has shriveled me up, which is a witness against me and my leanness has risen up against me.

[35 : 50] It testifies to my face. In chapter 30, verse 30, he says, my skin turns black and falls from me and my bones burn with heat.

Commentators have surmised what kind of illness or disease that Job had and I think that's probably a wasted effort and the reason why is because this was a Satan-infused disease.

Nobody on the face of the earth has ever experienced this kind of torment, at least in this physical way. Job did because God gave him permission.

By the way, I'm not talking about Jesus. Of course, Jesus endured suffering, but I'm talking about the kind of physical torment to his body in this way and this was a Satan-infused disease, the worst of the worst, as bad as Satan could throw at Job and how given permission, you can better believe that Job is going to be doing everything short of Job's life being taken away because that was the one boundary.

So everything up to that point is what God has allowed Satan to do. This was not a localized problem. It was from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

[37 : 14] There was no place that Job could find that was comfortable. His dreams, his sleep, were haunted. He couldn't even find relief in the night where most of us say, well, at least I can go to bed and then worry about this tomorrow.

No, not Job because Job is going to experience this kind of pain relentlessly enduring all the time. There is no relief. By the way, no antibiotics, no pain relievers, no special ointments, no one to give attention to his wounds, no surgeons to remove the dead skin, no specialized dressing, no anti- inflammatory drugs, no nerve blockers.

He is experiencing the breadth and the depth of this with no relief and no end in sight. And what makes this the worst is that Job will think and his friends will say, God is against you.

That was the hardest thing. But Job continues to maintain his integrity. Children or not, friends or not, regardless of pain and loss and confusion and by the way, the silence of God, Job remains true.

He endures. His heart remains loyal to God. God. Next, a moment of weakness. I want to deal with this quickly, but I don't want to run through this and you're going to have to bear with me because what I'm about to share with you is probably not agreed on by most commentators.

[38 : 58] Okay? So, you can just take it for what's worth, check out for a couple of minutes, then check back in when we finish our last point. But here we go. Verse 9, it says this, then his wife said to him, do you still hold fast your integrity?

Curse God and die. But he said to her, you speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God and shall we not receive evil?

In all this, Job did not sin with his lips. And by the way, as we've just learned, he didn't sin with his lips and he hasn't sinned with his heart because the lips are an expression of what's going on inside.

Okay? But I want to just, I want to pause for a moment and talk about Job's wife. Okay? And I want to talk about a moment of weakness. I believe this is a response of weakness.

I believe, it's my personal conviction that she is responding in pity to her suffering husband. Job's wife is here, by the way, to show us what every single one of us would do.

[40 : 03] Every one of us would do in the same situation because remember, remember what God says of Job, there is no one like him on the earth. I think Job's wife was runner up, by the way.

That's my personal opinion. But she got to the breaking point. She couldn't bear it anymore. Now, why do I say that? Well, I say that for a couple of reasons.

First, I say that because of what I know about God's commendation of Job and what I see in his family. This was an epic family. This was an ideal family.

You read through this, you're like, man, how did they do it? And by the way, you realize these things don't happen by themselves. Older brothers caring for younger sisters in that culture.

The closeness, the unity, the oneness, they're almost finding excuses to get together. The spiritual following after their dad who does sacrifices for them.

[41 : 06] And knowing that Job is a godly man means that he's a godly father, but he's also a godly husband. And I believe that requires that he's leading his wife.

And she's responding. Especially since, by the way, we've heard this statement behind every great man is a great woman.

I've heard that before. That's not just a good phrase. That's something we find in the scripture. Proverbs 31 woman, you see the results of her husband and the way he's lifted up in the gates and the way that he's revered and respected.

Well, that's because his wife is like killing it everywhere. And women in that day were responsible for the home. It was their domain.

It wasn't that the dads never had anything to do with it, but let me tell you, you see these things in the family, you better believe they were true about Job's wife.

[42 : 10] That's my perspective. Not to mention the fact, notice how Job corrects her. Notice in verse 10, he says, you speak as one of the foolish women speak.

What did he not say? You are a foolish woman. foolish woman. He doesn't say that. He says, you're speaking like the foolish woman. This isn't you.

You know better. What are you doing? Well, she had a moment of weakness. She succumbed to a Satan inspired message.

And I say Satan inspired because the word of God to Satan was, have you noticed he hangs on to his integrity? And then the words that are repeated back. Why do you hold on to your integrity?

And then Satan's accusation, well, he will curse you to your face and then Job's wife curse God and die. Can we appreciate that she experienced the same suffering?

[43 : 18] The loss of property, the loss of friendships, the loss of dignity in the community. And now what seemed to eclipse it, especially for people of compassion, is to now look on somebody who's in great pain and your heart breaks for them.

And it's like, I cannot bear this anymore. I can't do it anymore. Just end it now, Job.

Get it over with. That's what I think is happening. And I say that, by the way, because at the end of the book, this is a spoiler alert, at the end of the book, Job's wife is restored along with Job.

Her family restored. Her property, her dignity, her standing in the community. All of that is restored to her too. So, it's a reminder, it's a reminder to us not to get too arrogant.

Look at his wife and say, what a messenger of Satan. Well, she was, but every single one of us in this room have been there. You have been a messenger of Satan too.

[44 : 31] And we're going to learn about that more in a couple of weeks. Okay. A moment of silence. That's where we're going to finish with. Very quickly.

A moment of silence. This is Job's friends. Now, when Job's three friends heard of all the evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place.

Eliphaz, the Temanite, Bildad, the Shuhite, Zophar, the Namathite. By the way, have you heard the joke? Here's the shortest guy in the Bible. Bildad, the Shuhite.

He's only the Shuhite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort. And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him.

And they raised their voices and wept. They tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads towards heaven. They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

[45 : 35] This was the very best they could ever do. This is the best they will ever be in this book, by the way. What's significant is we don't know exactly where they're from, but it's likely they were from Edom, which was just to the west of Uz.

And it's significant because Edom was known as a, is renowned for its wisdom. And so here are the aged, here are the wise, they're coming to bring wisdom and comfort.

They've arranged a time in the schedule to come and to meet with Job. And make this appointment. And then they round the corner and they see Job in the worst place he could possibly be with open wounds, sitting on the ashes, scraping himself with a piece of pottery.

And they lose it. They're so broken over the scene. They can't even recognize their friend. Face swollen, sores oozing, blackened skin, this emaciated form.

who is this guy? What tragedy has befallen him? And the wisest thing that they do is keep their mouth shut.

[46 : 53] And we're going to learn about this more in a couple of weeks. But when God does not speak, be quiet. The silence of God should be a clue to us that we also must be silent.

God and sometimes the best thing that we could possibly do is sit and cry and pray and just be a friend that's there.

I tried to find this story and just bear with me. I'm just going to retell it. I was reading in a book and it was interesting.

The author of this book talked about a tragedy that he experienced where his wife had died because of an illness and he was so broken and troubled and grieving. And he gets this call from a friend and he answers the call and the friend just says, listen, I'm in town, I'm staying at the hotel, I just want you to know I'm here and if you need me, you know where to find me.

I would love to come over, I would love to listen to what you're going through, I want to pray with you, I want to put my arm around you and give you a hug, but I'm just here to be for you.

[48 : 09] If you don't need me, I'll just turn around and go back home the end of this week and it'll be fine. I wonder if we can learn a lesson from his friends here and learning the example of quietness when God has not spoken, learning to be quiet and learning the significance of just keeping our mouth shut and maybe praying for this individual, putting your arm around them, crying with them, tossing up some dust to the heavens, whatever the expression of grief is, join them in that process and just be a listening, tender, sympathetic ear.

Let me pray for us. I'm going to let you watch a quick testimony video. We're going to do a baptism and then I will dismiss you. All right? Father, thank you for the example of Job.

Thank you for his enduring heart that was full of integrity. God, I pray that you would help us as men, as fathers, as single guys, young and old, wherever we might fit into the continuum.

I pray that you would help us, Lord, to be the kinds of men that you take notice of because we're filled up with the spirit.

We're strengthened by your word. We're moving in the right direction because we're following the scriptures. scriptures. May that be the expression of our life and may, God, we use that to encourage and strengthen the people around us.

[49 : 53] We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.