

Job 20

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[0 : 00] We'll be in Job chapter 20. Job chapter 20, if you turn there with me. God has been good. I was thinking, you know, when I first graduated high school, where I lived is there was a lot of factories.

There were some factories. And what happened was is a kid would just go out there. And I already had a job by the – I graduated, I think it was like June the 4th or June the 3rd. I forget which day. It was on a Sunday. I walked. That Monday I was supposed to be at the Mansfield Plumbing Factory.

That's where you make toilets. And you can laugh there. It's funny. Okay. And so I was supposed to be there at 4.30 a.m. And my dad was just giving me some fatherly advice. I don't know if you guys know this about me, but I'm kind of like a jerk.

But I always voice my opinion. Very rarely are you going to find a time where I don't have an opinion. And I like to voice my opinion. And where I'm from, it's a different dynamics.

They had like the union there. And, you know, I was ready to set them all straight. And so my dad says, whenever you go there, son, keep your mouth shut. Okay. And so I thought, man, that's pretty wise. You know, I thought I was going to go in there and I was going to tell the Teamsters Local 40, what to do.

[0 : 59] And they're not going to take my money. But my dad said, just keep your mouth shut, son. I know you want to say something. Just keep your mouth shut. And I think a lot of times if we just use that truth, I mean, we could save ourselves from a lot of heartache and problems.

Just keep our mouths shut. How about that? You know what I mean? We're going to find in the book of Job, Job chapter 20, Zophar thinks he needs to speak, but he doesn't really need to speak. He doesn't need to speak. Actually, a verse that's really impacted my life.

If you've got your Bibles, jump over with me to Colossians chapter 4, Colossians 4, 6. This is what the scripture says about our speech. He says this. He says, let your speech be always with grace.

Man, that's hard. At least for me. You know, when Jesus came to the earth, his mouth poured out like grace. It was like honey. It was sweet, the psalmist said.

Paul says, when you speak, let it be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that they may know how ye ought to answer, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

[1 : 57] We've got to be careful with this mouth of ours. It can get us in some big trouble. It can cause a lot of hurt and heartache. So if you would, please take your Bibles with me. We're going to go to chapter 20 this morning. And so far, Zophar has been no help to Job.

That didn't go over like I thought it was going to go. I told that to Martin Wickens and Travis and they both laughed. But anyways, so far, Zophar has been no help to Job. Thank you, Kyle. Job is now suffering.

And nothing his friends have said or have done has been able to help Job. It's actually had the opposite effect. And it's been a massive burden for Job.

Job is now suffering. His friends come to him. And it's not helping him. It's not encouraging him. It's not seasoned with grace. It's not seasoned with salt. It's not gracious words. Man, they're just adding to the problems in Job's life.

In the book of Job, chapter 20, verse 1, we're going to look through these three verses. We're going to see a little bit of Zophar's heart right now. It says in verse 1, Then answered Zophar, the Nehemiahite, and he said, Therefore, do my thoughts cause me to answer?

[3 : 05] Wait a second. Wait a second. If you feel like you have to speak all the time, it's best if you don't. He said this, Job, I've already given you my opinion before.

You've given me your rebuttal. I feel like I need to speak on this. And for this, I make haste. I have heard, verse 3, the check of my reproach.

I have heard what you've said. I have seen how you've corrected my insults, my shames. I've seen how you took what I've said earlier and you have corrected it. And this is what he said at the end of the verse.

And my spirit of understanding causes me to answer. You know when I read that verse, I think of Proverbs 3, 5. You guys know what Proverbs 3, 5 says, right?

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. And lean not unto your what? Own understanding. Zophar says, I've heard what you said. I've given you my word, Job.

[4 : 05] And now I feel like I've got to respond back to it. That's my understanding. Be careful with your own understanding. A lot of times I say stuff, and this is terrible because I work with a training center, but it's often thrown back in my face.

So I just think it's better if we just don't say things as much, right? Let's just be careful with what we say. But Zophar feels like he needs to say something. And he's upset. In verse 3, he told Job that he heard the corrections of his insults.

And I like what one pastor said about Zophar's response. This is what one pastor said. He said this, Zophar has disquieting thoughts. He then admits to an inward agitation.

He also feels insulted. This is what this pastor said. He said, I'll be honest with you. I don't find anything that's disquieting, agitating, or insulting from what Job has said previously.

He has simply voiced disagreements with Zophar. Those who wish to set others straight and gain control over them are often disquieted, agitated, and insulted because they don't agree.

[5 : 06] They don't want to listen. They want to talk. They don't want to learn. They want to instruct, preferably lecture. And they certainly don't want to be disagreed with. That's the man that we're dealing with, with Mr. Zophar.

Zophar is upset. And this man, this man, he is going to lash out at Job. Look at the truth that Zophar tells Job in this passage. Look at verse number 4.

Job chapter 20, verses 4. Knowest thou not this of old, since the man was placed on earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short? If you like to underline things in your Bible, this is where you would like to underline it, in verse number 5.

This is the topic that Zophar is saying. He's saying that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite, but for a moment. Job, I'd like to tell you a truth.

This is what Zophar is saying. Job, this truth's been around since the beginning. What's that truth, Zophar? That the success and the triumphing of the wicked is short.

[6 : 06] I personally don't know where Zophar gets his reasoning. But it seems to me that God has been very gracious to the evil and being long-suffering, right? You think about the time of the flood.

How long did God give those people to repent and turn? Like 120 years. They had 120 years to enjoy their lifestyle. I don't know what Zophar is saying. The point, sometimes I wonder, how long is God going to put up with the evil?

How long will the wicked enjoy the prosperous life? That's what goes throughout all the Bible. But Job, in his rebuttal, he asked the same thing to Zophar in Job chapter 21, verses 7 through 8.

This is what Job says to that spirit. Wicked people, they die quickly. Job says this back to that thought. Verse 7 through 8 in Job chapter 21. Wherefore do the wicked live, become whole?

Yea, they are mighty in power. Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. But in this portion of Scripture, in Job chapter 20, Zophar has an axe to grind.

[7 : 06] He has a point to be made, and now it's his turn to talk, and he's going to talk. Zophar then goes on to show Job that the wicked, these wicked people, might look prosperous, they might look happy, they might look prideful, but they will shortly be forgotten.

Look what Zophar says in verse number 6. Through his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reached unto the clouds. Yet he shall perish forever like his own dung.

They which have seen him shall say, where is he? He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found. Yea, verses 8. Yea, he shall be chased away as a vision in the night.

Verse 9. And this is what Zophar keeps on saying. The eye also which saw him shall see him no more, neither shall his place any more behold him. Job, wicked people will not be remembered.

No matter how big these evil ones are, no matter how great they are, they can become hugely successful and extremely well known. And their heads can reach up to their clouds, clear up to the clouds, but they will end up like their own dung down the drain.

[8 : 13] What kind of words do you say? Why would you say this to a friend that is suffering? What in the world is going through this mind? You're going to go down to the ground.

The wicked ones will be forgotten like a dream. What do you think Zophar is insinuating at this point in this chapter? His point is clear. Wicked people only prosper for a short amount of time.

Who do you believe that Zophar was talking to? This is just one of the points of the insights that Zophar had to share with Job. He just had to share. It was on his heart. His second point, as one minister put it, Zophar bears down even farther.

Put yourself in Job's shoes when you hear this next point. And hear it. He says this. This is his point. This is what Zophar tells Job. He tells him the ill-gotten riches.

The ill-gotten, the stolen riches and wealth from the wicked will only last for a short moment. Look in verse number 10 of Job chapter 20. Look what Zophar says. His children shall seek to please the poor and his hands shall restore their goods.

[9 : 23] A wicked man who gets destroyed, his kids will be asking help from the poor people. A wicked's wealth will be returned and will be taken away from them.

It will be returned back to the poor and be taken away from them. The wicked will die in his youth in verse 11. The wicked man enjoys his sin and savors it like some people do eating, if you read through this chapter. But eventually, that sin becomes poison in his system and the wicked will vomit it back up.

Verse 12 through 15, this is what the scripture says. Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, though he spare it and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth, yet his meat in his bowels is turned.

It is the gall of ass within him. He has swallowed down the riches and he shall vomit them up again. God shall cast them out of his belly.

Look what he says in verses 20 through 21. Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly. He shall not save of that which he desired. Verse 21, there shall none of his meat be left, therefore shall no man look at his goods.

[10 : 30] What is he saying? He's saying, Job, don't you realize that wicked people that prey on poor and they oppress the poor, that their money that they love and enjoy so much will one day come back to bite them?

Don't you realize that rich people who oppress people and they steal money and they take advantage of the lesser people, that that's going to bite them in the backside? I want you to remind yourself, where was Job?

Job? What's happened in Job's life? What's happened? What has he lost? He's lost all his wealth. He's lost his kids.

He's lost his health. What do you think Zophar is insinuating? What's Zophar saying to Job? Job, you were the richest man in all the East, weren't you?

You had all them donkeys. You had all them cattle. You had everything, man. You had it all going for you, didn't you? But now it's gone and you're here in this pile of ash and you're crying out to God and you're weeping, you're scratching your arms and now you lost your health.

[11 : 31] You know why? Let me tell you the truth. It's been around since the beginning. Wicked people don't prosper. And their money that they stole from others, it goes back.

What is Zophar saying about Job? Job, you're that wicked person. Job, Job, you're the one that's oppressing the poor people. Could you imagine being falsely accused?

Could you imagine? Man, you were just upright. You were a good man. You hated evil. You tried to flee from that stuff. Whatever you saw wrong, man, you tried to avoid it as much as possible. But now the people who are supposed to comfort you are now making false accusations against you.

Man, it's not bad enough that you've lost everything. It's not bad enough that you've lost your health. It's not bad enough that your kids are no longer there. Your wife is not even a help. But now people are speaking evil against you and going after your character and your integrity?

Has that ever happened in your life? Zophar continues the brow beating in this chapter. He continues to lay in to Job. And he continues to say evil things against Job.

[12 : 41] Look what his statement says in verse number 17. He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. Verse 18. That which he labored for shall he restore and shall not swallow it down.

According to the substance shall the restitution be. He shall not rejoice therein. The comments to rivers and floods, the comments about the brooks of honey and butter are all symbols, one theologian said.

They are symbols of prosperity and they cannot be enjoyed by sinners is what Zophar is saying. Don't we have that mindset sometimes? Man, wicked people, they can't enjoy riches.

But yet you go buy houses and you know people have done wrong and man, they die old, rich. And they've abused things. Is this true what Zophar is saying?

I know that the pleasure of sin is just for a season. I know that. But is that true always? No. What's Zophar doing? He's attacking Job.

[13 : 45] He's attacking his integrity. He's attacking his character. Actually, Zophar even goes further. He says this. The wealth or the riches of that wicked man that has ill gotten.

That means the stuff that he has acquired unfairly, in this case by oppressing the poor, abusing the poor. Look what he says in Job chapter 20 verses 19.

Because he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor, because he hath violently taken away a house which he builded not. What is Zophar insinuating towards Job? He's abusing poor people?

He's taking away their stuff? Job, you have taken unfair advantage of others. You have stolen other people's wealth. And now all that pain that you are in, it's because of you doing wrong.

You are the wicked one, Job. You have brought this suffering on yourself. You exploited the poor by pushing them out of their homes and stealing their property.

[14 : 49] Your pleasures are over. The gig is up. The news is out. They finally found you, Job. They know who you really are.

Your wickedness has finally caught you. And he doesn't stop. Zophar continues on. Verse 23, this is what Zophar continues to say.

When he's about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him. Job, what you're going through right now is God's wrath.

It's God that's doing all this stuff to you. His wrath upon him. And shall reign it upon him while he is eating. While you're enjoying all that stuff that you got, God's going to judge you just quick, just like that.

Job, all that stuff that you were enjoying in your life, man, you were living it up. Man, your kids were having parties. You had all this stuff. In a moment, just like that, you lost it all. It was God's wrath coming on you. Man, he sounds like a good preacher.

[15 : 53] God's judgment is coming for the wicked man, Job. While this vile man is living it up, God's judgment will pour out on him like rain. While he's enjoying his prosperity, that wicked man will experience distress, misery, and God's burning anger.

God will rain it out upon him. The evil man will try to run away, but God will come at him with a sword, and he'll shoot him with a bronze-tipped arrow that'll pierce him. Get this.

And all this that was spoken by Zophar was towards Job. Job, you're going to face terrors and darkness. Verse 25 through 26. This is what he says in chapter 20.

It is drawn and cometh out of the body. Yea, the glittering sword cometh out of the gull. Terrors are upon him. Verse 26. All darkness shall be hidden in secret places. A fire not blown shall consume him.

It shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle. Job, your iniquity is being revealed, and it's God that's doing it. God is bringing this wrath on you.

[17 : 00] Verses 27 through 29. Heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him. The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of wrath.

This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and a heritage appointed unto him by God. Job, your suffering is brought on you because of your wickedness.

The problem with this chapter is this. Is that some of it's true. What's true? There is pleasure for sin in a season. We realize that.

Sin doesn't always pleasure us. It's not continual. It's just for a season. The truth is God will judge those who oppress the poor. The truth is God's wrath will be substantial, and you won't be able to escape it.

But the problem with this chapter is this. Zophar is accusing Job. His accusation of Job is false. Job was not like this at all.

[18 : 08] I mean, can you imagine being Job? Man, Zophar was supposed to be Job's friend. And this sounds like no friend I've ever heard. What kind of friend comes to you and says, man, your life stinks pretty bad, right?

You lost everything you got. I'll tell you why. It's because you're stinking wicked. I'm like, why didn't you tell me this before judgment? Why you wait until after judgment? It's all your fault. It's all your fault. Everything you got, I've been watching you.

It's been ill-gotten. You've oppressed the poor people. You're just out there. You're just doing wrong. What a jerk, right? What kind of friend? False accusations.

This doesn't sound like a friend. This sounds more like a prosecuting attorney. And Zophar's out to get Job. This man, Zophar, is going at Job's guns a-blazing.

And this is what it seems like he's trying to do. He's trying to destroy Job. All these accusations, can I remind you, are totally false. Totally false.

[19 : 04] Job wasn't being wicked. Job wasn't taking pleasure in ill-gotten gain. Not at all. Remember what we read in the beginning in Job 1-1? There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job.

And that man was perfect and upright. That's what the Bible says. One that feared God and eschewed evil. When God was talking with Satan about Job.

In Job chapter 1, verses 8, this is what the Lord said to Satan. He says, Job was innocent.

But yet he was being falsely accused. His character was being slandered. And this was being done in the worst time possible. Do you get it?

Do you get what Job's going through? He was suffering. He had just lost everything. His kids were dead. The graves were newly built. I mean, they were newly dug.

[20 : 04] Wealth was gone. He was in pain. And now his friends are accusing him of stuff that he hadn't done. And he's finding himself being backed in a corner. Having to fight for himself.

So let me ask you a question. Simple question. Have you ever been falsely accused? You know it's all throughout the Bible, right?

I like what one preacher said. He said, You might be surprised to find out how often false accusations were leveled against innocent people in the Scriptures. Let's think of several examples. All of them victims of unfair, damaging words.

Let's start with a man named Joseph. Who learned a new language. Became familiar with a completely different culture. He earned his way in the palace with a great responsibility as a manager of Potiphar's belonging.

He was a model of integrity. But at the height of his career, Joseph was falsely accused of rape by Potiphar's wife. He wound up in jail. How unfair.

[21 : 08] Moses was faithfully serving, or faithfully even at 80 years old of age, to obey God's voice and to accept God's commission from the burning bush to go back to Egypt and deliver the people from bondage.

Following the Exodus, while he was wandering across the wilderness, the very people that he had delivered turned on him and falsely accused of him, bringing them into a wilderness to watch them die.

Nothing was further from the truth. David, after killing a giant and demonstrating a life of courage and integrity, was falsely accused of trying to dethrone king by a jealous and insecure king himself.

And he became public enemy number one. Throughout all the land, everyone was seeking after David over false accusations. He became a fugitive for a dozen or more years, falsely accused of something that was not true at all.

How undeserving. Nehemiah, Peter, John, accused of preaching a false Christ. Clearly a false accusation.

[22 : 10] Paul was accused of being a phony convert shortly after his conversion. All these people throughout the scriptures lied about.

Lied about. So what do we do? So what do we do when we're falsely accused? Let's quickly look at Job's response. Job comes back strong in chapter 21, verses 1.

Look what he says. Job answered and said, this is what he says in verse 2 of chapter 21. Hear diligently. That's the imperative. He's like, listen to me diligently.

My speech. And let this be your consolation. He tells Zophar, he says, look at me. Look at me. And close your mouth. Look what he says in verse 5. Mark me and be astonished.

Lay your hand upon your mouth. And then Job goes on to refute Zophar's claim. I don't have enough time to go through all that. But Job just refutes everything that Zophar says.

[23 : 11] And he comes back with truth. Chapter 21, verses 27. I want you to see. Job really realizes that his character's being under attack.

Look what it says in Job 21, 27. He says this. Behold, I know your thoughts. Zophar, I know your thoughts. And the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against who?

Me. I know you're wrongfully imagining these. For you say, you say, where's the house of the prince? And where are the dwelling in the places of the wicked? Have you not asked them that go by the way? Do you not know their tokens?

The wicked is reserved for the day of destruction. They shall be brought forth in the day of wrath. Job knew exactly what Zophar was communicating. In the end of the chapter, in verse 34, this is what he says.

How then comfort ye me in vain? Seeing your answers, there remain falsehood. You are imagining things against me. And everything you've imagined is false. So what do we do?

[24 : 10] What did Job do? Let me give you some things, because I'm really young. I'm going to give you something that someone older, much older than I said, much smarter than me, from this passage on how to respond to false accusers.

This is what this wiser, older saint said. He said this. First, listen to what's being said. When someone comes at you with false accusations, listen to what's being said.

Consider the character of the critic. Stay calm. Isn't that so easy? Whenever someone comes at you and they're lying about you, for you to lose it?

Isn't it? At least for me it is. You'll be tempted to jump in and rashly react in the flesh, saying things you will later regret. Do your best to listen to what's being said.

While doing so, keep in mind the character of the person who is the source of the accusation. Calmly take it all in. Listen to what's being said.

[25 : 12] Job did that, which prepared him for his further response. Second thing is this. Respond with true facts and accurate information, knowing the nature of your accuser.

Speak truth. Don't react or ponder ways to retaliate. If you yield to either temptation, you'll come off sounding like an accuser.

God honors integrity. Maybe not immediately, but ultimately you will be vindicated. Psalms 26 verses 1 says this. Judge me, O Lord.

God, you vindicate me, for I walk in mine integrity. I have trusted also in the Lord, therefore I shall not slide. God's truth. God is truth. God is truth.

And it will prevail among the people who traffic it in and make decisions based on it. Truth is the best vindication of slander. When someone comes against you with false accusations, listen and then respond back with truth.

[26 : 16] Don't go after their integrity. Don't fight them. Just speak the truth. Don't exaggerate. Don't deny. Don't hesitate to say it. Third, use examples that represent reality and balance.

Trusting your defense to the Lord. Lean hard. Stop and think. Job did precisely that. While speaking the truth, he left his defense of his own character to who?

To God. To the Lord. He was firm and deliberate, but he remained in control. I repeat, I understand. This is what this wiser is saying. I understand what it's like to be unjustly maligned.

I've been accused of things, and that rumor has kept me awake. It's made my stomach churn. It's taken away my appetite. I have determined not to pay attention to it, yet I was found unable to turn it off in my mind.

Not until I decided to leave things in the Lord's hand and rest in his control did I find inner peace. I say again, the truth will win. God will be glorified.

[27 : 18] Fourth is this one. Refuse to let accusations discourage and derail you. Remember that false accusations are nonsense and lies.

This is what this author says. Get tough. Returning to the one-liner from the Revolutionary War, trust in God, but keep your powder dry, is essential to keeping your balance.

Trusting God is not naive presumption. Wisdom must be applied to a life of faith. Getting through hard times requires a get tough mindset.

Go there. That may seem harsh, but realistic. Realism is a powerful message. And this is what I said for fifthly. Fifth and final. What do you do when people attack you falsely?

Fifth, remember Jesus. From the beginning of his ministry to the time of his death, he was constantly being reviled and lied about.

[28 : 17] Was he not? They called him an illegitimate son. They called him a drunkard. They said he was being demon-possessed.

They said he was an instrument of Satan. They even called him a blasphemer. Because he claimed to be God. But yet he loved his enemies.

And he prayed for them. And he died for them. He said this at the beginning of his ministry when he was teaching. He said this. Matthew 5, 11. He says this. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you.

And shall say all manner of evil against you falsely. For my sake. Bless them. Bless them.

Doesn't a supernaturally changed heart bless those people who are out to destroy you? Isn't that what Jesus has demonstrated?

[29 : 23] Has he not done a change in your life? When people come at you and they're trying to accuse you of doing something wrong? What happens when you bless them and love them? And you heap coals of fire on them, right?

No. You live like Jesus. You live like the one that's changed your heart. You live like the one that now resides in you. That's what happens. How do we deal with false accusations?

I can tell you. Man. There's coming a time when someone's going to accuse you of doing something bad. Gave you five things. If you're that person that likes to accuse people falsely. Stop it. Take the words from Scott.

That's my dad. Keep your mouth shut, Robert. Keep your mouth shut. If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all. If you're being falsely accused, go back to those things and remember.

Remember. And you don't have to retaliate. Listen to them. Respond to the facts. Trust in God. Lean on him. You're going to have to. You've got to get tough.

[30 : 25] And then remember Jesus. Remember he took it too.