

Job Replies To
Zophar

Chapters Twelve -
Fourteen

Job 12:1-3

“Then Job answered and said: ‘No doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Who does not know such things as these?’”

Job's Sarcastic Reply

- Zophar had been sarcastic with Job by calling him stupid so Job responds with sarcasm towards Zophar.
- Job says, “No doubt you are the people...”-Job 12:2
- Job says, could anybody be as wise as you because surely, “...wisdom will die with you.”-Job 12:2
- Job is sarcastically saying to Zophar and the rest of his friends that you are the ones that seemingly have it all together and seemingly have all the answers to life's problems who could doubt your wisdom.

Job Makes A Stand

- Job says that he also is a man of understanding.
- Eliphaz had applauded Job for his wisdom saying that Job had, “instructed many” (Job 4:3).
- Job tells Zophar and his friends that he is not “inferior” to them and they were not as wise as they thought themselves to be.
- The knowledge that they had been conveying to Job about God was nothing new to him for it was simply common knowledge; “Who does not know such things as these?” (Job 12:3)

- “All your boasted wisdom consists only in strings of proverbs which are in every person’s mouth, and are no proof of wisdom and experience in them that use them.” (Clarke, Adam)
- “I would we had another Job, to chastise the high-sounding language of modern theologians. There are starting up in our midst men, who if they are not heretics in doctrine, are aliens in speech.” (Spurgeon, Charles)

Job 12:4-6

“ I am a laughingstock to my friends; I, who called to God and he answered me, a just and blameless man, am a laughingstock. In the thought of one who is at ease there is contempt for misfortune; it is ready for those whose feet slip. The tents of robbers are at peace, and those who provoke God are secure, who bring their god in their hand.”

Job Defends His Character

- The word “laughingstock” carries the idea of being mocked, scorned, and teased while laughing at someone.
- It is making fun of someone at their expense.
- It is the worst kind of feeling of insecurity and hurt when perceived friends turn on you.
- “Job felt the pathos of being mocked by his friends, ridiculed, though just and blameless (v.4). He had been a lamp, giving light, but now was despised in the thoughts of these friends who were comfortably at ease, who were ready to put down those whose feet slip.”-Grant, L.M.

- Job sites his credentials of being a person of character who talked with God and was a blameless man.
- Job's character disproved his friends weak theology that a man's relationship with God is based upon works which God is obligated to reward.
- The fact is that often times the opposite is true the wicked person is rewarded and the righteous suffer (Job 12:6).

The Secure Are Relaxed

- When everything is going well in life there is a huge tendency to become complacent in the things of God.
- Job says two things about being secure with things in this life:
 1. It provides opportunity for slipping or wavering in faith.

2. Security in anything other than the living God provokes Him.

- Job was puzzled that his friends could be so secure resting in the blessing God had provided them.
- Job is warning his friends that the god they are revealing is false and an invention of their own making.
- “They are secure, and not only feel no hurt, but fear none, are under no apprehensions of danger either from threatening providences or an awakened conscience.”- Henry, Matthew

Spiritual Blindness

- Jesus told the Laodicean church that they didn't know their true spiritual condition.
- **In their pride** they claimed that they had it all together and were in need of nothing.
- But in fact they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.
- There was a contrast between what **they thought** of themselves and the reality of **what God thought** of them.
- There was a contrast between how **they saw** their lives and how **Jesus saw** their lives.
- There was a contrast between their **personal wealth** and their **spiritual bankruptcy.**

- "The Laodiceans are typical of the modern world, which revels in that which the natural eye can see but is untouched by the gospel and does not see beyond the veil of the material to the unseen and real eternal spiritual riches."-Walvoord, John
- For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire;
He blesses the greedy *and* renounces the LORD. The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts. His ways are always prospering; Your judgments *are* far above, out of his sight; *As for* all his enemies, he sneers at them. He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity."-**Psalm 10:3-6**
- Job's friends are spiritually blind to their condition because they are feeling secure in their prosperity believing they are blessed by God but in fact they are provoking God.

God Is A Jealous God

- Job says to his friends that, "...those who provoke God are secure, who bring their god in their hand."
- Anything and everything that attempts to replace God in our lives provokes Him to Jealousy!
- There are numerous Old Testament passages that speak of God as being jealous for man.
- "The idea is that God loves men with such a passion that he cannot bear any other love within the hearts of men." -Barclay, William

Job 12:7-12

“But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind. Does not the ear test words as the palate tastes food? Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days.”

All Creation Knows

- Job tells his friends that all of creation knows, “...that the hand of the LORD has done this?”.-**Job 12:9**
- The reason Job can be so assured is because God is the creator and sustainer Who, “In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.”-**Job 12:10**
- God is the creator and sustainer of all of creation and is sovereign over all events that occur in His world.
- If the animal world could speak they would tell of the glory of God.

Listen And Discern

- Job instructs his friends to listen to what they are saying and discern whether or not it is true.
- Job compares listening and tasting. When food enters the mouth immediately the palate likes or dislikes the taste.
- A person needs to discern what words agree or disagree with the revealed God of Scripture.
- “There is no appeal from the verdict of our palate. We know in a moment whether a substance is sweet or bitter, palatable or disagreeable. Now what the taste is to articles of diet, that the ear is to words, whether of God or man.”-Meyer, F.B.

Job 12:13-25

“With God are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding. If he tears down, none can rebuild; if he shuts a man in, none can open. If he withholds the waters, they dry up; if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land. With him are strength and sound wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his. He leads counselors away stripped, and judges he makes fools. He looses the bonds of kings and binds a waistcloth on their hips. He leads priests away stripped and overthrows the mighty.

He deprives of speech those who are trusted and takes away the discernment of the elders. He pours contempt on princes and loosens the belt of the strong. He uncovers the deeps out of darkness and brings deep darkness to light. He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away. He takes away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the earth and makes them wander in a trackless waste. They grope in the dark without light, and he makes them stagger like a drunken man.”

Job Knows God

- Job wants to settle once and for all to his friends that he knows that God is mighty in wisdom and that He is mighty in counsel and understanding.
- God doesn't get wisdom and understanding as man does by collecting and processing data over time but God is by nature the very substance of wisdom and understanding.

Job Knows What God Can Do

- Job now embarks upon a list of the might and understanding of God:
 1. **God has power over material things**: “If he tears down, none can rebuild”.
 - “He alone can create, and he alone can destroy. Nothing can be annihilated but by the same Power that created it. This is a most remarkable fact. No power, skill, or cunning of man can annihilate the smallest particle of matter. Man, by chemical agency, may change its form; but to reduce it to nothing belongs to God alone.” –Clarke, Adam

2. **God has power over mankind**: “if he shuts a man in, none can open”.
3. **God has power over waters**: “If he withholds the waters, they dry up; if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.”
4. **God has power over minds**: “the deceived and the deceiver are his”.
5. **God has power over the wise**: “He leads counselors away stripped, and judges he makes fools

6. **God has power over kings**: “He loosens the bonds of kings and binds a waistcloth on their hips”.
7. **God has power over religion**: “He leads priests away stripped and overthrows the mighty.”
8. **God has power over the words of man**: “He deprives of speech those who are trusted”.
9. **God has power over the nations**: “He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away.”

10. **God has power over rulers**: “He takes away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the earth and makes them wander in a trackless waste.”

- “In case this might suggest that God is whimsical, or a blind force, Job insists that God’s *might* is coupled with *wisdom, counsel, and understanding*. There is an intelligent purpose. The acts are deliberate, even if man can barely see their meaning or moral justification.”- Anderson, Francis

Job 13:1-12

“Behold, my eye has seen all this, my ear has heard and understood it. What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you. But I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue my case with God. As for you, you whitewash with lies; worthless physicians are you all. Oh that you would keep silent, and it would be your wisdom! Hear now my argument and listen to the pleadings of my lips.”

“Will you speak falsely for God and speak deceitfully for him? Will you show partiality toward him? Will you plead the case for God? Will it be well with you when he searches you out? Or can you deceive him, as one deceives a man? He will surely rebuke you if in secret you show partiality. Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you? Your maxims are proverbs of ashes; your defenses are defenses of clay.”

Worthless Physicians

- In Job 13:4, Job calls all his friends “worthless physicians”.
- If Job’s three friends appealed to their own experience as authoritative, Job would too (**Job 13:1-2**).
- Since Job's three friends could not answer his questions and give a good reason why he was enduring his present affliction, Job would appeal to God to speak with him and tell him what He had against him (**Job 13:3**).
- Job urged his worthless counselors to keep quiet (**Job 13:5**).
- Job warned his friends that God would punish them for speaking falsely of Him at the expense of the truth of Who God is (**Job 13:10-11**).

- “Job warned them about lying even while they uttered beautiful words in defense of God. If they were going to plead God’s case, they had better do it honestly. God would judge them for their deceit even if they used it in his behalf (Job 13:8-9).”-Smick, Elmer
- The idea is that men may argue in defense of God upon false lines, through limited knowledge. That is exactly what these men had been doing. The result was that they were unjust to Job. They did not know it: they did not intend that it should be so. But it was so.” (Morgan, G Campbell)

Partiality

- Job accuses his friends of showing partiality which he may or may not have known that God detests.
- It is the problem of inconsistent love for other people that demonstrates itself in how we treat them with favoritism and cultural biases.
- People have routinely categorized others as rich or poor, black or white, slave or free, sinner or sanctified, or whatever label a person could conjure up to stand above the other people group.
- The word Job uses for “partiality” is better translated as “respecter of persons” to give judgment and respect to the outward circumstances of man and not to their intrinsic merits.
- Job perceived that his friends believed him to be inferior to them.

- Job's friends saw Job as a failure and sinner because of his present outward affliction and failed to look at his heart.
- It is very easy in the culture we live in today to show favoritism to those we deem rich and successful over those who seem to be less advantageous, weak, and failing.
- After all it is the “lifestyles of the rich and famous” that get all the accolades. We don’t give much attention the “lifestyles of the poor and mediocre”.
- Personal favoritism is not a characteristic that should be accepted by the Christian community, and it is inconsistent for a Christian who holds the “faith and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ” to practice it.

No Partiality With God

- “For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.”-**Deuteronomy 10:17**
- “Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.”-**Acts 10:34**
- “But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man....”-**Galatians 2:6**
- A significant aspect of the work of Jesus was to break down these walls that divided humanity, and to bring forth one new race of mankind in Him (Galatians 3:26-28;Ephesians 2:14-15)

The Heart Of God

- God has chosen the poor, the down-trodden, the burned out, the afflicted, the beat-up by life people to be rich in faith.
- Those who have been humbled and broken by life.
- “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”-Psalm 34:18
- The broken have a deep sense of need for God which makes them rich in faith.
- When a Christian mistreats "the broken," they treat them exactly opposite to the way God treats them.
- So Job warns his friends that they are treading on shaky ground and that it would be best for them if they remained silent.

Job 13:13-19

“Let me have silence, and I will speak, and let come on me what may. Why should I take my flesh in my teeth And put my life in my hand? Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face. This will be my salvation, that the godless shall not come before him.”

“Keep listening to my words, and let my declaration be in your ears. Behold, I have prepared my case; I know that I shall be in the right. Who is there who will contend with me? For then I would be silent and die.”

Job's Attitude

- Job displays an amazing confidence in God.
- Job says that he will take his case directly to God and in doing so would put his life on the line.
- God has the ability to slay him but if He doesn't then it is proof that Job is innocent.
- However, Job's confidence is not in himself but in God who is the anchor of his hope.
- This is one of the most amazing displays of faith found anywhere in Scripture.

Job's Defense

- Job once again makes a plea to meet God in court and state his case before Him.
- Job knew that if he did nothing that he would die from his affliction.
- Job also knew if he was rejected by God that he would die.
- Job believed himself to be innocent and clung to that belief all during his affliction.
- Job's hope was that God would prove him right.

Job 13:20-28

“Only grant me two things, then I will not hide myself from your face: withdraw your hand far from me, and let not dread of you terrify me. Then call, and I will answer; or let me speak, and you reply to me. How many are my iniquities and my sins? Make me know my transgression and my sin. Why do you hide your face and count me as your enemy?”

“Will you frighten a driven leaf and pursue dry chaff? For you write bitter things against me and make me inherit the iniquities of my youth. You put my feet in the stocks and watch all my paths; you set a limit for the soles of my feet. Man wastes away like a rotten thing, like a garment that is moth-eaten.”

Two Things

- Job asks God for “two things”:
 1. He wanted God to withdraw His hand and stop the affliction.
 2. He wanted God to stop terrifying him.
- In Job’s thinking, if God would do these two things then communication could be restored.
- This is a typical prayer of bargaining with God to get Him to act but it rarely works if at all and it results in Job sinking into deeper despair (Job 14).

- “We must admit that a lot of our praying is really giving orders to God. We pray as if we are a top sergeant talking to a buck private in the rear ranks. We say, 'You do that,' or 'You do it this way.' But God doesn't move that way.”- McGee, J Vernon
- “If God would only stop tormenting him and communicate, Job felt all would end well.”- Smick, Elmer

Job Prays

- Job prays that God would show him, “How many are my iniquities and my sins? Make me know my transgression and my sin.”-**Job 13:23**
- Job desires God to show him and to let him know the sin that was causing the separation with God that he now was experiencing (**Job 13:24**).
- Maybe David had read Job when he stated a similar prayer: “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”-**Psalm 139:23-24**

A Driven Leaf

- Job at this time feels like he is a driven leaf tossed to and fro by the winds of his affliction.
- Job at this time also feels as though God is holding the sins of his youth against him.
- This is another example of the truth that Job did not see himself as sinless.
- In fact Job saw himself as sinful, weak, helpless, despised by his friends and perishing as a driven leaf.

Job 14:1-2

“Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble. He comes out like a flower and withers; he flees like a shadow and continues not.”

Man Is Frail

- Job switches his focus from himself in particular to the plight of the human race in general.
- Either through observation or revelation Job recognizes that man is “born of a woman”.
- Middle eastern traditions regard women to be weak and frail in comparison to man.
- Job reasons that if man is “born of a woman” who is weak and frail then men are weak and frail as well.

- The human predicament, as Job sees it, is man is weak and frail, his days are full of trouble, and then he dies.
- Job understands that as soon as man is born the process of dying has begun, Job says man, “comes out like a flower and withers”.
- In the in between time from birth to death the days of man are “full of trouble”.
- The Bible never sugar coats the trials and tribulations of man. Jesus spoke about it (Matt. 13:21; John 16:33) and Paul as well the other writers of the N.T. wrote about it (Rom. 5:4, Rom. 12:12, James 1).

- After the Fall of Man, God said that man's days would be filled with work, hardship, and pain amounting to futility and death.
- The phrase “born of a woman” not only speaks of the frailty of man but also is a phrase of hope in the redemption of man.
- God said to the Serpent in **Genesis 3:15**: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

- God's mercy and grace extends towards the woman whom He will use to bring the redeemer of mankind into the world.
- Childbirth reminds man of the Fall but also man's redemption through the seed of the woman.
- "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." -**Galatians 4:4-5**

Job 14:3-6

“And do you open your eyes on such a one and bring me into judgment with you? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one. Since his days are determined, and the number of his months is with you, and you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass, look away from him and leave him alone, that he may enjoy, like a hired hand, his day.”

Job's Prayer

- Job asks God to “open His eyes” to his dire situation and have mercy upon him.
- Job knows that if God requires perfect cleanliness before He will restore him, then the end result would be futile because “no one” could never meet that standard.
- Job seems to understand that God is the only One through His grace and mercy can “bring a clean thing out of an unclean”. (Job 14:4)

- “I do not say, I am clean, as Zophar pretendeth; but confess that I am a very unclean creature, and therefore liable to thy justice, if thou wilt deal rigorously with me; but remember that this is not my peculiar case, but the common lot of every man.”-Poole, Matthew
- Job affirms the universality of the sinfulness of man.

Are People Born Good?

- “If you believe people are born good, you will not stress character development when you raise children. You will have schools teach young people how to use condoms, how to avoid first and secondhand tobacco smoke, how to recycle and how to prevent rainforests from disappearing. You will teach them how to struggle against the evils of society -- its sexism, its racism, its classism and its homophobia. **But you will not teach them that the primary struggle they have to wage to make a better world is against their own nature**.....if you believe that people are basically good, God and religion are morally unnecessary, even harmful. Why would basically good people need a God or religion to provide moral standards? Therefore, the crowd that believes in innate human goodness tends to either be secular or to reduce God and religion to social workers, providers of compassion rather than of moral standards and moral judgments.”- **Dennis Prager, “If you believe that people are basically good”**

- In our culture today it is not popular to say that, “there is something wrong with man”.
- Society believes people are by nature good and people become bad through being influenced by an evil culture and environment.
- Our culture today believes that the society one lives in sets the standard of “good” and “bad”.
- Those that disagree with the set standard may become social outcasts or considered criminals.

- As societal standards shift from absolute right and wrong to relative right and wrong any action or behavior can become right in the individual's life and then eventually will be accepted by the whole.
- However, it is interesting that if children are born good then why do we need to teach our children to do the right thing if by nature they are predetermined to do good?
- Why then, when children are guided in the right direction, they often declare a defiant "No" in rebellion to the right direction because it is in their human corrupt nature to act bad .
- Human nature since the Fall is now thoroughly corrupt. All are sinners. We are born that way, we live that way and we will die that way. Sin is now the environment in which our world is subjected too.

Job 14:7-12

“For there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grow old in the earth, and its stump die in the soil, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put out branches like a young plant.”

“But a man dies and is laid low; man breathes his last, and where is he? As waters fail from a lake and a river wastes away and dries up, so a man lies down and rises not again; till the heavens are no more he will not awake”

Man And Nature

- Job observed the natural world around him and compared man to it.
- Job prayed to God that a shriveled up old stump will be revived again at the first scent of water.
- Man, on the other hand, is determined to be laid low like a dried up river or lake never to rise again.
- Why should a tree have a better hope of resurrection than a man?

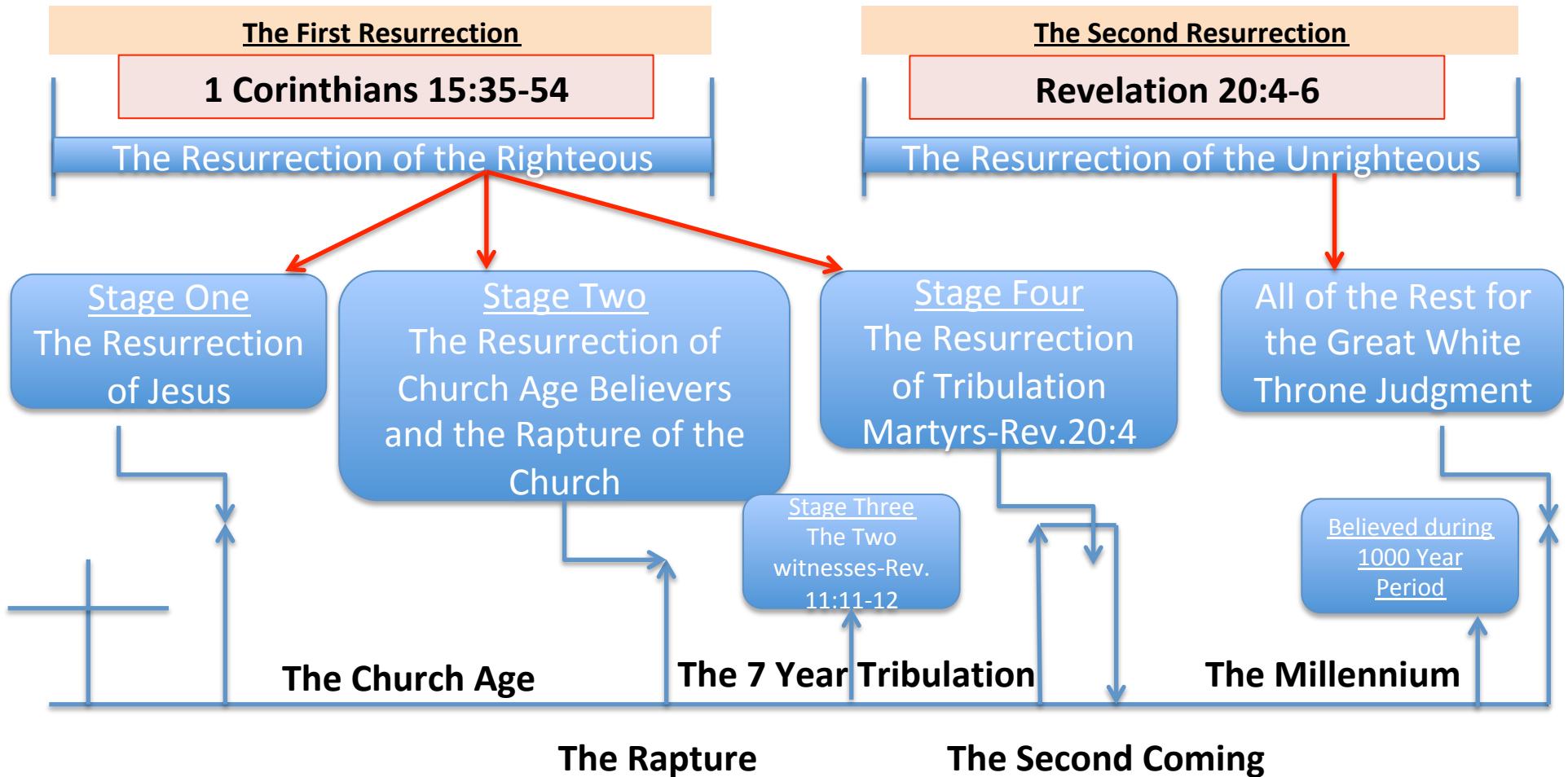
- In the Book of Job it is unclear if he believed or had heard at this time about the resurrection.
- It seems in Job's mind that death which he longed for was an end to this life's suffering.
- Job believed he would stand before God though he had no assurance from God at this time that he would “rise again”.

- Around 700 B.C. Isaiah said, “Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”-**Isaiah 26:19**
- Around 580 B.C. Daniel said, “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.”-**Daniel 12:2**

- The New Testament reveals that everyone, righteous and unrighteous, will stand before God some day (Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15; Heb. 9:27; Rev 20).
- God corrected Job's arrogant thinking regarding the afterlife reminding Job that he did not in fact know anything what life after death was like (Job 38:2 and 38:17).

Births, Deaths, and Resurrections

<u>Event</u>	<u>Unbeliever</u>	<u>Believer</u>	<u>Description</u>
Born again	No	Yes	The first birth is physical. A person is "born again" through faith in Jesus.
First Death	Yes	Yes	The first death is of the body
First Resurrection	No	Yes	The first resurrection occurs prior to the seven year tribulation and is only for the believer
Second Resurrection	Yes	No	The second resurrection occurs at the end of the Millennial reign of Jesus. All those who did not believe in Jesus will be resurrected to face the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:14-15)
Second Death	Yes	No	This is for the unbeliever to be cast in the lake of fire for eternity. It occurs after the Millennial Kingdom



Order	Phase	When	Who	Account	Scriptures
1	First	Third Day	Jesus	The resurrection of Jesus.	Mat. 28:1-7;Mk. 16:1-11; Lk. 24:1-12; Jn. 20:1-18;1 Cor. 15:20
2	First	During the resurrection of Jesus	O.T Saints	An earthquake caused the graves to open.	Matt. 27:50-53
3	First	Before the 7 Year Tribulation	The Church	The resurrection of Church age believers and the rapture of the Church.	1Th. 4:13-18; 1Cor. 15:50-53
4	First	Middle of the Tribulation	Two Witnesses	The two witnesses will be raised from the dead after being killed by the beast.	Rev. 11:11-12
5	First	At the start of the Millennial kingdom	Tribulation Martyrs	Those who didn't receive the mark and didn't worship the beast.	Rev. 20:4-6
6	First	At the end of the Millennium	Those who believed in Jesus.	There will be those who die during the 1000 year period who will need to be resurrected at the end.	Rev. 20:15
7	Second	At the end of the Millennial kingdom	All the unbelieving dead	AT the Great White throne Judgment all unbelievers will be cast into the lake of fire forever.	Rev. 20:11-15

Job 14:13-17

“Oh that you would hide me in Sheol, that you would conceal me until your wrath be past, that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my service I would wait, till my renewal should come. You would call, and I would answer you; you would long for the work of your hands.”

“For then you would number my steps; you would not keep watch over my sin; my transgression would be sealed up in a bag, and you would cover over my iniquity.”

Job Prays For Renewal

- Job asserts his uncertainty in the resurrection with his question: “If a man dies, shall he live again?”
- Job prays that God would renew him as he waits and serves Him.
- He reminds God that he is the “work of God’s hands”.
- “God has subjected the creature to vanity, in hope; having determined the resurrection. Man is one of the noblest works of God. He has exhibited him as a master-piece of his creative skill, power, and goodness.”-Clarke, Adam

Sealed And Covered

- Job prays that God would not “watch over” his sin but would “seal up in a bag” and “cover over” his sin and transgressions.
- All of Job’s as well as our sins are number along with the steps of our life but if God would remember His creative work of His hands then God would extend mercy and grace to Job and seal and cover his sin.

Job 14:18-22

“But the mountain falls and crumbles away, and the rock is removed from its place; the waters wear away the stones; the torrents wash away the soil of the earth; so you destroy the hope of man. You prevail forever against him, and he passes; you change his countenance, and send him away. His sons come to honor, and he does not know it; they are brought low, and he perceives it not. He feels only the pain of his own body, and he mourns only for himself.”

God's Limitless Power

- Job considers in his prayer the limitless power of God and becomes depressed.
- Job once again considers the natural world and sees a mountain crumbling away and a flood eroding the earth.
- The natural order illustrates the way that God destroys the hope of man.
- When God sets himself against the determination of man there is nothing man can do.

- “It is easy to read these emotional outbursts and the lack of theological detachment in this blameless and upright man and think that Job was less spiritual than he should be. Yet we remember that the Book of Job records many of Job’s opinions (born out of great pain and frustration), opinions that are later corrected and reproved (Job 38:2 and 38:17).”-Guzick, David