

## **Overview**

- Job 28: an interlude on the subject of wisdom
- Job 29: a longing for the “good old days”/coherence of the past
- Job 30: a description of the “harsh” present/incoherence of the present
- Job 31: final defense and an attempt to force coherence

### **I. Job 28**

- meditative interlude with three sections
- section one: discussion of mining in connection with the difficulty of discovering wisdom (1-11)
- section two: rhetorical questions highlight the preciousness and inaccessibility of wisdom (12-19)
- section three: rhetorical questions introduce and provide an answer (20-28)
- climactic verse is 28:28: fear Adonai and shun evil
- comment on giving weight to the wind (28:25)

### **II. Job 29**

- reflection on coherence of the past with five sections
- resuming the discourse (1)
- section one: blessings enjoyed (2-6)
- section two: honors received (7-12)
- section three: good deeds done (13-17)
- section four: life planned out/coherence (18-20)
- section 5: influence on others (21-25)

### **III. Job 30**

- description of “harsh” and incoherent present in five descriptive sections
- introduced with a key adversative (1)
- section one: disdained (1-10)

- section two: defenseless (11-15)
- section three: devastation (16-19)
- section four: disregarded (20-26)
- section five: defeated (27-31)

#### **IV. Job 31**

- final defense: no sin committed to account for pain...
- attempt to regain coherence through assertions of righteousness
- lust/sexual sin (1-4)
- inspect my life (6-8): implication of "...weighed in a just balance..."
- purity/moral blamelessness (9-12)
- fairness/compassion to employees (13-15)
- compassion for the poor and defenseless (16-23)
- no trust in riches (24-28)
- perspective toward enemies (29-30)
- hospitality (31-32)
- no hypocrisy (33-37): signature to oath before El Shaddai
- stewardship of land (38-40)
- no more words until 42:2

#### **V. Observations/Applications from Job 28-31**

- Exchange your illusions for God's truth. Confront sub-biblical theology.
- Sometimes we suffer because our affliction accomplishes God's purpose.
- Even in the depths of suffering, God's character never changes.
- Repudiate Marcionism and the "name it/claim it" perspective.
- "The book of Job sets forth a declaration of such sublimity as to humble our minds." (Calvin)
- Learn to live with mystery. "God confronts Job with undecipherable mystery." (Chesterton)
- One cannot dismiss all suffering as the just desert of sin.

-God is inscrutable but not capricious or inconsistent.

-Be careful lest, in your quest for self-vindication, you launch an assault on God's reputation.

## **VI. Sample Sermon Starters**

Job 28: "Wisdom in the Middle of Your Mess"

1. Reflect on the inability of human ingenuity. (1-11)
2. Consider the exceeding value of wisdom. (12-19)
3. Acknowledge God as the source of wisdom. (20-28)

Thesis: Because God is the source of wisdom, seek Him in the midst of your suffering,

Applications:

- \*Reject all substitutes for wisdom.
- \*Confess your inability to obtain wisdom apart from God.
- \*Fear God above all. Adore and obey...
- \*Treasure the wisdom centered in Christ. (1 Cor. 1:30)

Job 29-31: "Bad Idea, Job!"

1. Job reflects on the "good old days" of his past. (29)
2. Job describes the painful reality of his present status. (30)
3. Job attempts to defend himself in anticipation of his future. (31)

Thesis: Because God's character remains consistent, trust Him and abandon self-defense.

Applications:

- \*Avoid any attempt to put God on the "witness stand."
- \*Affirm the faithfulness of God in the extremities of your experience.
- \*Make sure you are more concerned with God's reputation than your own.
- \*Apply the disciplines of stillness and silence in your suffering.
- \*Look to Christ and His perfect sufficiency. (Luke 18:9-14; 1 John 1:1-2:2)