

- **\*READ Job 22:21-23\*** To nearly all of us, the story of job is one that we would seem as a microcosm of the unfair nature of life. Here is this man of the land of Uz who is recorded as blameless, upright, and God-fearing man who made a habit of turning away from evil within his life. He was such a godly individual that God was willing to brag about Him to Satan himself as the supernatural beings were gathered together. (**Job 1:1-8**)
- Satan, being the tempter that he is, demanded that God test the godliness of Job through cursing his blessed life. God would do no such thing to His great servant, but He allowed for Satan to take the blessings of Job. Though Job lost it all, even to the point of his own body being ravaged, his godliness remained intact. (**Job 1:9-2:10**)
- However, the turmoils of Job didn't end with the loss of his blessings and his health. Three of Job's "friends" came to him giving what they deemed as needed and helpful advice. For the span of a week, the friends of Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar simply sat with Job as he mourned, but that was as far as their kindness extended. (**Job 2:11-13**) From that point on, instead of actually encouraging their bereaved friend, they questioned the godliness and faithfulness of Job because surely no one who was truly faithful to God would suffer in such a manner.
- Just a moment ago we read just a few verses of Eliphaz's admonishments towards Job. (**Job 22:21-23**) "*Yield now and be at peace with Him*" is the advice of Job's friend because surely Job was guilty of sin which had brought upon the result of him experiencing all of the horrible things that he had gone through. A large portion of Job's book is a back and forth conversation between Job and these friends as they level accusation after accusation of wrongdoing against Job, but His resolve was strong and He stood his ground in his claims of innocence.
- These claims of innocence are clearly seen in **Job 27:1-6**, and Job did not waver in his claims of having lived a righteous and blameless life that was not deserving of such ill fortune. The entire chapter of **Job 28** is Job recounting his past life and details his godly living and the blessings that came as a result of it. In Job's mind the life that he had lived showed that God was pleased with him because he was blessed so immensely.
- Yet, Job's life at this point was so different. He had and was suffering so greatly, and he simply couldn't figure out why. His friends were convinced he was suffering because of his sin, but Job knew this not to be the case. However in **Job 31**, Job pauses and acknowledges that there is a man worthy of the punishment that he was suffering. "*Is it not calamity to the unjust and disaster to those who work iniquity?*" (**Job 31:3**)
- In **Job 31** we read of the worthy man that Job speaks of to his friends and by extension us. We will use our time of study this morning looking at this man that is worthy of punishment and then turn it around and consider the man that lives in such a way that he is worthy of God's praise because of his righteous and blameless living. Our goal is to examine ourselves, especially the men who are present, and see what it is that we are worthy of based upon the lives we are living before God.

### The Man Worthy Of Punishment...

#### A. walks in falsehood. (**Job 31:5-8**)

1. The man who walks in falsehood and deceit is a man worthy of punishment. Job uses language that alludes to those who might have been merchants to misbalanced their scales so that they would read heavier than they were actually weighing.
2. In Job's mind, this person was worthy of being punished. He says that is this is the type of man that he is then let someone else come and take what he has sown and harvested and let any remaining works of his be uprooted and destroyed. These would only be appropriate punishments for the one who walks in falsehood.

**B. lacks sexual integrity. (Job 31:9-12)**

1. The man worthy of punishment is the man who lacks sexual integrity. If Job had been that man who was enticed by a woman, or if he had been the man who lurked in the house of his neighbor looking to have his wife then Job acknowledges that he was worthy of punishment.
2. He goes on to say that just punishment would've been for some man to come and take his wife for himself. His ungodly actions would be most deserving of punishment and destruction.

**C. despises his neighbors. (Job 31:13-15)**

1. All of those around us are our neighbors for Job makes the point that all people are made in the womb by God. Even his servants were his neighbors, and if Job had been inconsiderate of them and if he had despised them and their needs then he was worthy of punishment.
2. That punishment would be handed out by God once he stood before God having to give any account. *"What then could I do when God arises?...what will I answer Him?"*

**D. ignores the helpless. (Job 31:16-23)**

1. The man worthy of punishment is the man who fails to care for those who are helpless. In these verses we see Job mentioning the poor, the widow, the orphans, and the needy as being people who were worthy of aid. Yet, if he had not aided them when able then he recognized himself as worthy of punishment for withholding care and aid.
2. Job says that if he has been this type of man then God would be just to cause his shoulders to fall out of socket and for his arms to be broken off at the elbow. Job being a blessed man had the means to help others, but if he had not done so then he knew he should be punished.

**E. trusts in earthly things. (Job 31:24-28)**

1. If Job's confidence had been in gold, wealth, the sun, the moon or other parts of this life then Job readily admitted that he would be worthy of punishment.
2. *"For I would have denied God above."* God was the one who had blessed him so abundantly, and his confidence in the blessings and not the blessing giver would only make him worthy of the punishment that then would be given by God.

**F. seeks his own vengeance. (Job 31:29,30)**

- Job asks if he had been a man who had rejoiced when his enemies were exterminated.

**G. lacks hospitality. (Job 31:31,32)**

- Had Job been the type of man who had withheld his tent or food from the alien who came to him in need of provisions?

**H. indulges in secret sin. (Job 31:33,34)**

- Had Job been the type of man who had covered up his transgressions as Adam tried to hide his sin from God while in the garden of Eden?

Job had not been this type of man in any way, shape, or form! If he had of been the type of man who was worthy of punishment at the hands of God then there is no way that **Job 1:1** could've been written as a statement of fact. Job is simply setting up a description of the type of man that is deserving of punishment, even the punishment that he himself had recently experienced. Job was not this type of man who was deserving of punishment...so then what type of man was Job that made him worthy of such praise from God at the beginning of this book? Let's finish by considering the other side of the coin...the type of man that is worthy of God.

**II. is a man of integrity.**

- A. Job begins this section of writing by declaring an oath that he had made within himself. "I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?" Job's intent with this oath is quite obvious...Job desired to be a man that was holy and blameless. Job was striving to be a man of strong integrity. He was a man of honesty and strong moral fortitude.

- B. Job strived to be the type of man that others could trust and count upon. He wanted to be the type of man that others wouldn't have to be concerned as to what his intentions were or if he was someone that could be counted upon. Job's mind and word were things that he valued to a very high degree, and for that others could trust him and God was willing to praise him.
- C. Men...are we striving to be that same kind of man? Are we striving to be men who hold strong integrity within our hearts? Are we striving to be pure and holy in the sight of God? I fully recognize that Satan is constantly against us and trying to use the gift of the woman body against us, but we must be as Job was and be men of internal integrity, and that should extend externally to our word and the way we carry ourselves and behave in everything we do. When we are dealing and interacting with others are we honest and forthright? Are we trustworthy and honest in our interactions? If we are then we are following the positive example of Job and being men who are worthy of God's praise in our lives.

### III. loves his neighbors.

- A. Job was the type of man who loved all of those around him. We can be confident in this by considering his reactions to his servants being slain and slaughtered at the beginning of the book. Job's mourning was not only for his children and possessions, but he was also mourning for the loss of those who served him faithfully. Job was well aware that all men are made in the image of God, and that all men are worthy of love and respect. He knew that even the lowliest of servants were formed and fashioned in his mother's womb as even Job himself was.
- B. Do we recognize the same thing? Are we mindful of the value of every soul that we come in contact with? Are we considerate of the needs of others? Are we willing to treat every other person as we would desire for them to treat us? The man that is worthy of God's praise is that type of man that is mindful of others and isn't so self-centered in his own mind that he only thinks of himself day after day. This especially extends to those who are in the greatest need.

### IV. cares for the helpless.

- A. Job spends a considerable amount of time discussing those who are the most vulnerable and needy in **Job 31:16-23**. He mentions the poor, the widow, the orphans, and the needy as being those that he had opportunity to help in some way. His question centers around what type of man he would've been if he had not cared for these individuals, so I imagine that he mentions this because he had given type to the care for these type of people. Job was a blameless and godly man because he cared for the needs of the most needy.
- B. While we don't have the occasion mentioned in Scripture, Paul quotes our Lord Jesus by saying that *"it is more blessed to give rather than receive."* (**Acts 20:35**) As men and as the leaders within our families, households, communities, and churches we should feel challenged to be the type of men who are looking for opportunities to help those who are needy. Surely we remember the words of Jesus in **Matthew 25** as He speaks of the sheep and the goats that were judged, and how Jesus specifically mentioned the care of those who were in need. If we want to be men who are worthy of God's praise as Job was found worthy, then we will be men who are mindful to care for those who are the most helpless and in need. All of these first three points are important for us to consider within our lives, but the bottom line is that they don't find true value unless they are a result of our faith and trust in God.

### V. trusts in the Lord above all.

- A. Finally, Job speaks of those who trust in self and other earthly things and were deserving of punishment. Job shows us nothing within this book that would cause for any of us to believe that he was anything besides a man whose full confidence and trust was in the Lord his God. As we read Job's story and we see his reaction to the loss of so much, we see a man who fell on his knees and poured his heart out before God because He was the One in whom Job's trust rested.

- B. So many men have experienced loss in this life that has left them feeling as if they have nothing else in which to find purpose and meaning, but Job was not that type of man and we ought not be those type of men either. Everything we see around us is perishable and can let us down. Our wealth, the blessings of life, and even our own bodies will eventually fail us, but the man who trusts in God is a man whose anchor will also find a place where it will hold firm. The man who is able to react to suffering and loss as Job did is the type of man who truly trusts in the Lord, and that type of man is worthy of great praise from God. He is the type of man who will be sustained in everything that he does for God will be with him.

Job was a man who suffered in ways that we can only imagine, and yet we find him maintaining his faith even in the face of constant accusations from ignorant men who knew not what they were talking about. Where others might have crumbled and given up, we find Job remaining strong and grounded in his godliness and innocence. He knew what the man worthy of punishment looked like, and he did not see that man when he looked in the mirror. Instead he saw a man worthy of God's praise because he was a man who trusted in the Lord above all else. He knew that God gave to him greatly, and he even praised the man of Yahweh when so much was taken. Are we that type of man, men? Are we the type of men that carry ourselves in such a way that those we are leading see us as being worthy of praise because we are walking in the ways of the godly man? The weight of such responsibility can be heavy, but we serve a great God who will strengthen us to carry the heavy load if we will put all of our faith and trust in Him. May God be praised and glorified as we all strive to be men who are worthy of the praise of God just as Job found himself to be.

**\*PRAYER\*** *Our great Father in heaven...we approach You this morning so thankful to be able to read of the example of Job. His actions stand out so greatly to us for he was a man of true faith, trust, and godliness. May we all desire to have the faith of Job, and may all of the men who are gathered here together this morning be resolved to be more like Job in our lives. Help us to be men of integrity, love, and trust. Help us to lead those in our charge well, and may all of it result in Your name being glorified in our lives. We desire so greatly to be found worthy of Your praise, and we know that can be our portion if we will only trust fully in You. Strengthen us all to grow in our faith and trust in You, and we ask Your blessings upon us in these endeavors. In Jesus our Savior we pray these things...amen.*