

Who Said Life Would Be Fair?  
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Job 15;16;19; and 21

- **Opening Question: Anyone know what a “sports participation trophy” is? What’s it all about? Kids’ sports teams do this because they want to make everything...what?**
- **What are they trying to PROTECT the kids from?**
- The truth is...Life is \_\_\_\_\_ !
- The older folks had an expression you don’t hear much anymore, they’d say: “You’re a regular “Job’s COMFORTER!” **What does that expression mean?**
- Last week Scott introduced you to Job’s three friends who came to comfort him.
- **Instead of comforting Job what did they do?**
- Like the old saying, “With friends like that, \_\_\_\_\_?”
- In 16:2 Job said to them, *“I’ve had all I can take of your talk. What a bunch of miserable comforters!”* (MSG) In the AP translation: “You guys STINK as COMFORTERS!”
- When we’re suffering, sometimes people around us misunderstand and even make it worse.

Here’s the point: Life is NOT fair. Good people suffer; the wicked prosper. Even your friends may misunderstand you; ignore you; or make things worse. Life is NOT fair...but God can STILL be trusted!

Let’s review:

- **Who was Job and what was he like? What happened to him and his life?**
- So Job is sitting in the garbage dump suffering in ways we can’t imagine and his three “friends” show up. Eliphaz; Bildad; and Zophar. All older than Job. (Job 32:6; 15:10).
- **They’re so shocked by Job’s situation, what do they do for seven days?**
- First there was Eliphaz, believed to be the oldest.
- Eliphaz takes one look at Job and says: *“This kind of suffering doesn’t happen to good people, Job. You must have done something REALLY BAD!”*
- What he actually said in 4:7 was: *“Who ever perished being innocent?”*
- **Question: What did he mean by that statement? Can you punch a hole in that statement? Examples to prove your point?**
- Wiersbe: *“Eliphaz had a rigid theology that left little or no room for the grace of God.”*
- Eliphaz’s position was Job is suffering because he has sinned.
- Next was Bildad. A true legalist. By the way, I saw a great quote about legalists the other day:

Burk Parsons Tweeted: *A Christian wants you to look more like Christ. A legalist only wants you to look more like them.*

- Bildad was a legalist. [Wiersbe says Bildad's] life-text was (8:20), *“Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will He help the evildoers”*.
- For some reason, Bildad was sure that Job’s children died because they also were sinners (8:4). The man seemed to have no feeling for his hurting friend.
- Bildad’s claim was *“Job won’t admit he sinned so he’s still suffering!”* (Life App.S Bible)
- “Zophar was the youngest of the three and surely the most dogmatic. He is merciless and tells Job that he deserved even MORE suffering for his sins! (11:6)
- “All three men said some good and true things, as well as some foolish things; but they were of no help to Job because their viewpoint was too narrow.” (Wiersbe)
- Job defended himself with each man. ...wishing he could “go to court” before God.
- Now, his three friends respond to his defense. Beginning in chapter 15 it gets uglier:

Turn to Job 15:2 (in the ESV...)

15 Then Eliphaz...answered and said:

2 “Should a wise man answer with windy knowledge,  
and fill his belly with the east wind?

- **What is he calling Job? If someone is debating someone else and can’t refute their arguments, what tactic do they often use? If you don’t have facts...**

Job 15:5–6 in the NLT, Eliphaz continues:

5 Your sins are telling your mouth what to say.

Your words are based on clever deception.

6 Your own mouth condemns you, not I.

Your own lips testify against you.

- Eliphaz is accusing Job of what we today call “spin.” (NIV Application Commentary)
- *“Job, you are only JUSTIFYING and RATIONALIZING.”* Then he really got SARCASTIC! *“You must think you’re the smartest man who was ever born.”*

Job 15:9–10 (NLT)

9 What do you know that we don’t?

What do you understand that we do not?

10 On our side are aged, gray-haired men  
much older than your father!

- Eliphaz ridicules Job. “Job, you think you’re smarter than all the wise, old men.”

Job 15:20 (NLT) Eliphaz says...

20 “The wicked writhe in pain throughout their lives.

Years of trouble are stored up for the ruthless.

- **What does Eliphaz mean with that comment? What is he accusing Job of? Job, must be....\_\_\_\_\_.**
- **Question: Why would these three men speak to their friend as these men spoke to Job? Why were they so angry at Job for his situation?**

Warren Wiersbe writes:

*“The three men were afraid that the same calamities would come to them! Therefore, they had to defend their basic premise that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked. As long as they were “righteous,” nothing evil could happen to them in this life.”*

*“By maintaining his integrity and refusing to say he had sinned, Job undermined the theology of his friends and robbed them of their peace and confidence; and this made them angry.”*

- **Question: Put yourself in Job’s place, if you were suffering and your friends and family treated you like Job’s three friends treated him, how would you deal with it? What would you say to your friends?** (Check out Job 13:4-5)
- **If your friends misunderstand, what should you do instead of talking to them?** (Check out Job 13:3; 15)
- Flip over to Job 16:19–2.
- Job responds again, there’s only ONE FRIEND he can really trust...

19 Even now my witness is in heaven.

My advocate is there on high.

20 My friends scorn me,  
but I pour out my tears to God.

21 I need someone to mediate between God and me,  
as a person mediates between friends.

- **Verses 19 and 20: Where will Job take his case?**
- **Verse 21: What does he say he needs? What word did he use in verse 19 for this?**
- **Who is OUR advocate today?**

Romans 8:34 (ESV)

34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Hebrews 7:25 (ESV)

25 Consequently, he [Jesus] is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

- Job’s three friends had THEORIES and OPINIONS about why he was suffering. **Who had the TRUTH?** If we’re trying to help someone through suffering what’s the best thing we can do for them?
- Life is not fair. Friends can misunderstand. But, God CAN BE TRUSTED.

- One of the lessons of Job is that during suffering, even God’s most UPRIGHT saints ride a “roller coaster” of weak faith and strong faith. Our faith moves up and down.
- We’re HUMAN! One minute we question if God CARES and then a moment of STRONG FAITH breaks through.

Job 19:25–27 (NLT) Job says...

25 “But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and he will stand upon the earth at last.

26 And after my body has decayed,  
yet in my body I will see God!

- “My redeemer lives!” **Anyone know the Old Testament meaning of “kinsman redeemer?”**
- **In our day, who is our REDEEMER?**
- Important point: If Jesus isn’t your LORD, He can’t be your REDEEMER. Only by putting our FULL FAITH in Christ and turning our lives over to Him can we ACCESS Him as our REDEEMER, our ADVOCATE to the Heavenly Father.

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Life is not fair, and sometimes friends and family can make it worse.
- When we try to comfort a friend, they don’t need our THEORIES or our JUDGEMENT, they need us to CARE and to point them to THE GRACE OF GOD.
- When WE are the one suffering, we need to remember, like Job, WHERE TO TURN...

Nicole C. Mullin recorded a wonderful song entitled, “My Redeemer Lives.”

Listen to the words:

*The very same God  
That spins things in orbit  
Runs to the weary, the worn and the weak  
And the same gentle hands that hold me when I'm broken  
They conquered death to bring me victory  
I KNOW my redeemer LIVES!*

When life is not FAIR, and your friends don’t understand, do you KNOW your redeemer LIVES? Do you KNOW it so deep that circumstances can’t SHAKE that belief? Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Our redeemer LIVES!

Job said...

27 I will see him for myself.

Yes, I will see him with my own eyes.

I am overwhelmed at the thought!

When we’re OVERWHELMED with suffering...we need to be EVEN MORE OVERWHELMED at the THOUGHT that we HAVE a REDEEMER who is ALIVE, WELL, and who loves us as if we were His ONLY CHILD.