

Is the Book of Job About the Second Coming

3-Year Bible Reading Plan

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Not only was that a wonderful reminder but a wonderful segue to tonight's Bible study as we walk through the book of Job. Here was a man who his friends, his wife, and probably others that were standing by made statements regarding his life, his existence, his experience that were contrary to what the Lord was saying, and he had a decision to make: do I believe what God is saying of me or do I believe what others are saying of me? Job is one of the great studies in the Bible regarding something that is difficult to come by called patience. You do realize according to the book of James 1, I would be really nervous to pray for patience because it says that patience comes by tribulation and struggle and suffering, and if you want patience then you have to get through the struggle to get the patience you so desire.

But we're actually told in the book of Ezekiel to remember the patience of Job. Now why would Ezekiel bring up Job? Not only because of historical relevance but Ezekiel is the one prophet in the Old Testament whose entire ministry was during the exile, 70 years that they were going to have to wait, 70 years before they went back to the Promised Land, and I'm sure there was grumbling and mumbling and a few frustrated folks, and so when the Lord says remember the patience of Job, he's reminding them not only that the Lord saw Job through the situation but as we'll allude to a little bit tonight, on the backside in chapter 42 he's actually blessed with a double-fold blessing in the end than he ever had in the beginning.

But tonight we're gonna look at the book of Job from possibly a little different perspective. Now as far as the text is concerned, we're gonna be in the entirety of Job but one passage that we probably will pay attention to is Job 38, so if you want to make your way over to Job 38, but we're gonna be looking at it in its entirety tonight and asking this question: is Job a book about the Second Coming? Now when we talk about end times events, when we talk about the Second Coming, you know, there are places in the Bible that we would naturally go to such as the book of Daniel, the book of Revelation, even Isaiah and a little bit of Jeremiah, Zechariah, even Zephaniah, but Job? Why would Job allow itself to be a text regarding the Second Coming?

I want to make just a few introductory concerns and then we'll get to the "meat" of the message tonight. The first one is this. Tonight is what I like calling exploratory Bible study. You say, "What is an exploratory Bible study?" Allow me to say it this way: could

it be? In other words, we're gonna look at some of the attributes of the book of Job, the character of Job in light of what the Bible says in its totality about the Second Coming and see if at possible the story of Job and the layout of Job is, shall we say, a color commentary on what we know as the Second Coming. Now when I say color commentary, football season is back and if you've watched any of the games, it's interesting watching a football game without fans. I like it because you can actually hear the players and what they're saying to one another on the field. But nonetheless, there is one guy who is the play-by-play guy. He's the one that tells you the number of the player, how many yards they got, who tackled him and whatever it may be. The color commentary's job is to come out and say, "Well, did you know that back in high school he suffered a horrible accident," and his job is to bring in the stories behind the stories. So the book of Job is not gonna serve tonight as a "guide to the Second Coming," but maybe a color commentary thereupon.

The second thing is this. Tonight is gonna be non-exhaustive. We are not gonna peruse through every aspect of the book of Job in what we could overlay as far as the Second Coming.

And the third thing, and I hate to even say this but I'm going to kind of in quotation marks here. I want to kind of have an excuse. You know what they say about excuses, right? Everyone's got them but they all stink, it's kind of like armpits. But let me give you an excuse here. When I'm dealing with Job as a picture of the Second Coming, I'm using the character, I'm using the text as a type. Now as we walk through the Bible, there's lots of types in the Bible. Joseph is a type of Christ. I mean, think about his life. Here he is the beloved of his father, despised by his brothers, left for dead, and he rescues them all. It's a type of the ministry of Jesus Christ. You cannot interpret Jesus through Joseph, Joseph pictures us the attributes of Jesus and the same would be for whom we know as the character of Job, the book of Job and the Second Coming. Don't try to read the Second Coming into Job, just allow it to express itself and maybe we can glean some other ideals and ideas. Other great types that we have in the Bible, Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel is a type of the antichrist, one who despises the Jews, makes everybody worship him and if you don't he throws you in the fiery furnace exactly as the antichrist is pictured toward the end of your Bible.

So just kind of the main things about the book of Job in regards to the Second Coming. The first one is this: the period of time in which it encompasses. Now one of the great theological debates is how much time took place between chapter 1 and chapter 2. When the sons of God went and presented themselves before the Lord, we know that Job loses his family, he loses his fortune. Chapter 2, he loses his physical health. How much time? You know what the formal answer is? We don't know.

The other great question is this. Okay, so his friends come in chapter 3, they sit with him for seven days, that's what the Bible says, and then they began to dialog and debate with him until Elihu shows up in chapter 38. The question is how much time does that take? You know what the answer is, right? We don't know. We have no idea how much time

was with these testings. We don't know how much time he was there on the heap of ashes. We don't know how much time these individuals debated with him.

We just don't know the specifics but what is intriguing about the book of Job is this in regards to the Second Coming: it is 42 chapters. Now 42 chapters. There's a lot of numbers in the Bible that are significant. The number 1, the number 3, the number 7, the number 10, the number 12, but you may be thinking, "The number 42?" Now 40 days and 40 nights of rain, I get that. Forty days on Mount Sinai, 40 days in temptation. But what is 42? Well, as you study biblical prophecy, the number 42 is significant because what we see as a critical event in biblical prophecy takes place over the period of 42 months.

Now in the book of Daniel which is definitively a Second Coming book of the Bible, there in chapter 9 beginning about verse 24 through 27, it makes it clear that there is a prophetic timeline, and that the very last aspect of that timeline there is this period known as Daniel's 70th week. Now the book of Jeremiah lays it out very clearly in chapter 30 that every one of those days is representative of a year so therefore Daniel's 70th week is actually a timeframe of 7 years. Jesus Christ in chapter 24 of the Gospel of Matthew spoke of this time period, he even says, "As spoken by the prophet Daniel," as the "great tribulation." It's even called in the Bible Jacob's trouble. And so over and over and over we have this time period that is laid out in the Bible that is 7 years in length. When you get to the book of Revelation, specifically this time period would be in chapter 6 with the opening of that famous first seal, and it would end when Jesus Christ physically returns to the earth.

Well, 7 years is 42 months x 2, correct? That's how much it would last. It would be 84 months, particularly in a Jewish calendar that is on a lunar year of 12 months of 30 days each. But why is 42 significant? Because in Daniel 9:27 that final week, that final 7 year period is actually divided into two sections. Now I know Jesus referred to it as the great tribulation but compared to the second half, the first half is wonderful, okay? Even though the antichrist is reigning, even though the mark of the beast has been unleashed, at least you're able to buy and sell, at least you're able to go about. Now I'm not recommending anybody go through this, okay? I'm just saying compared to the second half it's okay.

In the exact middle of that week according to Daniel 9, an event that Jesus called in Matthew 24 the abomination of desolation takes place. What's the abomination of desolation? 2 Thessalonians 2 tells us that the antichrist will walk into the temple of God and declare that he is God. Now what did Jesus say about that in Matthew 24? He said, "When you see the abomination of desolation as spoken by the prophet Daniel," this is literally what Jesus says, "run for the hills." He says, "Get out of Dodge," is what we would say. In fact, you go into Revelation 12 and there's some color commentary there where they're running from the antichrist, the people of God. They don't have food. They don't have water. God is supernaturally providing it again as he did during the exodus experience, but that horrific time period where the people of God are not just being persecuted but being chased by the enemy of God is a time period that, you guessed it, lasts 42 months.

And here we have an individual who is despised by everyone around him, he is criticized on all levels, he is condemned by everybody who opens their mouth, and he is considered an enemy of God and technically an enemy of the culture and the state. So I find it interesting that this horrific time period that lasts 42 months, we have a character in the Bible that experiences the most horrific existence described of anybody outside of the Passion event of Jesus Christ and it happens to be a book that's 42 chapters in length.

Another interesting factor as far as a time period is concerned is there is an event during this great tribulation toward the end where we have two witnesses. Now I know there's been a debate on who these two witnesses are. Nobody argues about Elijah. Elijah kind of gets a free pass. Everybody agrees with Elijah, it's that second witness that nobody can seem to come to agreements on. Is it Moses? Is it Enoch? Some people think it's Enoch because Enoch didn't have a physical death like Moses did. Others would say that it is Moses because it says that this one takes the river and turns them into blood just as Moses did. I believe one of the great evidences for Elijah and Moses is Jesus in John 11 when here we are in the raising of Lazarus, he says that if one believes they will never die and if one dies he shall live again. Elijah is one who never died and Moses is one who died and lived again. But nonetheless, the reason that that is significant is because when you get to the end of that tribulational period, these two witnesses, their heads are removed from their bodies in a martyrdom fashion, they lay in the streets for 3 ½ days, their heads supernaturally – I'm not making this stuff up, this is in the Bible, chapter 11 of Revelation – supernaturally goes on their body and they ascend up into the air. They just go directly to heaven.

Now by the way, no matter what you think about chronology, that event where someone supernaturally goes from one place to another is the word we use is called a rapture. That's the word for it. In fact, the Bible says to be caught up in the air when Philip was caught up in Acts 8 from one location to another, it's the same word. In 1 Thessalonians 4 when it talks about those who are dead in Christ and alive in Christ being caught up together with the Lord, it's that same word. Why is that significant? Because when you get to Revelation 19 when Jesus Christ splits the skies, when he's pictured on that white horse with the double-edged sword out of his mouth, with his feet as brass, his eyes red as fire, do you know who's behind him? All the saints. All the believers of all the ages of all the days, and they are coming back not only to "fight with him" but to reign with him.

The reason that is significant is that there is this rapturesque type event that we see in Revelation 11 where people during that tribulational time period are "taken up to be with the Lord." You say, "Well, why is that significant with the time period?" Because one of the great chronological discussions is, okay, in this last half of the tribulation, in these last 42 months, when is that gonna take place? Now I don't know exactly when it's gonna take place but I do find it interesting that in a book of the Bible that contains an individual under heavy persecution that is 42 chapters in length, it's in chapter 38 that God shows up. Now I'm not gonna get specific and say at that specific time period but I think it's interesting that if you begin to just look at statistically toward the very end you begin to maybe categorize it on a timeframe toward that very, and it's not the very last thing but

it's very near to it. He shows up just like he did with Elijah, 2 Kings 3, he shows up in a whirlwind and he catches up in the air. Well, that's kind of a period of time led. I know that was a lot of passages, a lot of possibilities but I find it intriguing that the one character that we have in the Bible that best pictures what it would look like for a "person of faith" to walk through this tribulational time period is the character of Job. His story has the same amount of chapters as the months of this great horrific time period and God shows up in his story at the end just like he is going to one day in the future.

Now let's talk about the perspective of Job. How does it begin? Well, it actually begins as the story of prosperity. Those of you that were with us this morning, we read not only about having 7 sons and 3 daughters, we read about the incredible amount of livestock that he possessed, the incredible amount of finances that would have been at his disposal. He was a very wealthy, prosperous, prestigious that the Bible calls, interestingly, the greatest in the east. Now I find that interesting, the greatest in the east. And by the way, the land of Uz that we read in Job 1 is modern-day Edom, just to the south of what we know as the Dead Sea. The greatest in the east. Just think about what that means. Anytime we use the superlative, that means nobody can compare. I have a feeling that in those days nobody could compare when it came to bank accounts. Nobody could compare when it came to reputation. It was a story of prosperity.

You do realize that as we grow closer to the return of Christ, that it is the people of that Old Testament covenant, the Jewish people who are an incredibly prosperous people. I mean, incredibly prosperous. In fact, one of my favorite statistics regarding what we know as the Jewish people is that they contain .02% of the world's population and they have won over 50% of the Noble prizes. That's prosperity. There are unfortunately stereotypical jokes that are out there regarding the prosperity of the Jewish people. There was a rabbi years ago, he wrote a book called "Thou Shalt Prosper" and the subtitle was "How the 10 Commandments Lead to Jewish Prosperity." That they never see their life as ending with a period but as a dash. I'm not retiring so I can sit on the front porch and drink sweet tea all day, I am retiring so that those coming behind me can do greater things with what I established and so I can redirect my skills. Just it goes on and on and on using the 10 Commandments. I think we would have to agree that the Jewish people have been incredibly prospered by God in a lot of different ways. Even as we walk through a global pandemic, some of you who have studied history, you know the famous bubonic plague, you know who got blamed for it, right? The Jews. Why did the Jews get blamed for it? Because their kosher way of eating and sanitizing kept them clean in the midst of the plague and so they thought because they were not dying at the same rate, obviously it was their fault. How many times throughout the years when we have seen success, prosperity, ability, whatever it may be, that there is this underlying just hatred toward the Jewish people because of their prosperity.

Well, they've been prosperous all throughout time but as we come to these last days, as that parable of the fig leaf in Matthew 24 is coming back to fruition, as they've regained their sovereign state, as they've regained an incredible position in the world culture, the prosperity is only going to continue and much like Job it's a story of great prosperity. When that event happens known as the abomination of desolation in that Jewish temple,

you do realize that as a collective group they will be a very prosperous people. They are there, they are part of the movement and the activities but I want you to think about the middle, the majority, shall I say, of the book of Job is not a story about prosperity, is it? It is a story of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual persecution. That's the story. Is that not what happens to the people of God once that abomination of desolation takes place? Once the antichrist reveals his true identity, once they begin to do as Jesus says and they run for the hills, once they begin to fend for their own lives going to and fro, they are persecuted physically, they are persecuted emotionally, they are persecuted mentally and spiritually. They have no place to worship. They have no place to find food. They have nobody who will comfort them or help them. They have no place to lay their head. They are completely nomadic for the rest of that time period on planet earth.

What do we see with the character of Job? Let's begin physically. Was he not physically persecuted? His body had sores from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet, so much so that he was taking potsherds and he was scraping them. What about emotionally? When your wife tells you to curse God and die and your friends tell you you have hidden sin, you're dealing with emotional persecution. How about mentally? Read the words of Job as we walk through our Bible reading plan. He makes statements like this, "It would have been better off if I had never been born." Why does somebody say that? Because they've been all alone on a dunghill thinking things out, that's why, and they begin to question did God, was he really taking care of me, was it a figment of my imagination, do I really understand what's going on? And how about spiritual persecution? You know, one of the great verses that we find in the book of Job is in chapter 9 where he makes this statement, "If there was only somebody who could stand between God and I and testify." What's that a picture of? It's a picture of the Messiah Jesus Christ. But then when you get to Job 19, one of the great statements in the Bible, it's in Handel's Messiah, "I know my Redeemer lives and one day I shall see him stand on the earth." But yet here's a guy going, "I just want somebody to intercede. I just want somebody to redeem me." But there's nobody here and when you know God has said he's gonna take care of you but you don't see it happening, that is a brutal time period of life.

So it begins with prosperity, the entire middle section is incredible persecution, but how does it end? How does it end when Jesus Christ returns in that last day? Oh, it's prosperity like they had never seen before. It is victory like they've never seen before. What does Jesus Christ do according to Psalm 110:1? He establishes his kingdom. Where? In Jerusalem. Literally just down the road from the very place that the Jewish people worship on a regular basis when so desired and when able. Jesus establishes his kingdom and those his people are blessed accordingly.

How does the book of Job end? I mentioned chapter 38, chapter 38, hopefully you have it turned to in your Bible. It says, "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said." By the way, he's about to ask 35 questions that all of the collective wisdom and education of humanity cannot answer. "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man," as a dad of all boys, I love that verse, "gird up your loins like a man for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if you have

understanding." You do realize you cannot answer the very first question? People say, "Well, we've had people that they think they figured out how it all began." No, no, no, that's not the question. The question is, "Where were you when I did this?" There is nobody who can answer that question and so the Lord begins to show him not only his sovereignty, his greatness, his grandeur, but basically shows him that even in light of this incredible difference between his holiness and grandeur and Job's littleness, even though he is the greatest in the east, his grace, his mercy, his love.

In fact, if you'll fast forward to chapter 42, it says, "Then Job answered the LORD." Now this is important. It said, "Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." Listen to verse 6, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Now why is this critical? Because as you read through the end of the book of Job which we'll do so in our Bible reading plan in the days ahead, God demands his friends repent, he doesn't demand for Job to repent because Job knew he needed to. There was no need to tell him, he understood. His friends are told to repent. His friends don't receive anything as a reward, so to speak. Job literally falls on his face and he repents.

Then turn to the very end of chapter 42, verse 12 and I want you to see what the Lord does. "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep." Allow me to go ahead and do the math. In chapter 1 he had 7,000 so he's gonna double everything. He has "six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand donkeys. He had also seven sons and three daughters." And so we see that at the end that as he went through this incredibly miserable experience, he actually receives twice the blessing as before. When you read passages in your Bible like Isaiah 59 and chapter 65 and others, and you read the accounts that the Bible has of what it will look like when Jesus Christ is reigning on the earth, what does it look like when Satan is bound in the bottomless pit, what does that look like, you realize that the earth will prosper immensely more in those days than it ever has in these days, and the prosperity that the people of God have experienced in days past will pale in comparison to the prosperity of days future.

So the quick perspective if you want to overlay the Second Coming motif here is that the people of God enter this time period very blessed, they go through a horrible series of persecution but when the Lord, the Messiah returns, there is great prosperity, even more than before exactly as the story of Job.

So what about some parallels? What are some things that happen in Job's personal life even beyond the chronology here that parallel what we know as the Second Coming events? The first one is this. He is absolutely completely betrayed by his friends. I mentioned this morning and it goes and it bears repeating again: if you ever meet anybody by the name of Zophar, Bildad or Eliphaz, run and run fast. You don't want to

have anything to do with them. Now there could be someone who accidentally named their child that, my suggestion would be to get a name change. But that's okay because in the Bible these are those who persecute Job more than anyone else. Betrayed by their friends. In fact, chapter 3 to chapter 37, the majority of what we know as the book of Job is his consistent persecution of his friends Eliphaz, Zophar, Bildad and a guy who shows up in chapter 32 by the name of Elihu. The Jewish people, are they not "betrayed" during those Second Coming events? Absolutely. In fact, they're betrayed by the ultimate of friends because back in Daniel 9, we alluded to this earlier, who is it that makes a covenant with them? It's the antichrist. It's this world ruler who literally befriends them, pulls them under his wing and says, "That's okay, even though others despise you, I will take care of you. I will provide for you. I will allow you to worship. I will allow you to prosper." And then he goes into their own temple and he desecrates it by claiming he is God. It is the ultimate betrayal.

So one of the parallels is the betrayal, the other one is this, that Job like the Jewish people particularly during the Second Coming events, is told that his theology is wrong and the world's is right. You think about all the Second Coming events that we see and just take some of the things that are very well-known to us, the whole idea of the mark of the beast, we are told that in those days if you take it, it's a good thing, if you reject it, it's not when what does the Bible say? You don't want to take that for any reason whatsoever. Their theology is told that it is wrong.

When the antichrist goes into that temple, I'm sure the world will celebrate it and say, "Oh, look at this incredible man. Look who he is and what he has to offer." But what do the Jewish people say? "Oh, no, no, no. He is not one of us."

What about the famous two witnesses? By the way, some of you have heard me say this in the past, it's not listed in 1 Corinthians 13 but if I could choose my own spiritual gift, it would be what these two individuals had. When somebody disagreed with them, they breathed fire on them and they were no more. It would eliminate a whole lot of difficult conversations, just to be honest with you, if you could just open your mouth and they're gone, but that's what happens there in Revelation 11. The world so despises those two witnesses, read chapter 11 of Revelation, you know what happens? When their bodies are lying dead in the street, do you know what they do? They celebrate it. They throw a party. They send each other gifts. Can you imagine responding that way to the death of somebody? We're seeing the birthpangs in our culture today, are we not? We're seeing people lose their life and other people celebrate in the streets because thereof.

What we see with the two witnesses may not be abnormal by then, it may just be how humanity is, but what we see is a consistent pattern here that Job was told that everything he believed was wrong, everything he promoted was wrong, everything that he abhorred was wrong, but yet at the end who is the only one that was right? It was Job. When you look at the Second Coming events particularly the people of God during that horrible tribulation period, who they agree with, the witnesses, they reject the mark of the beast, they run from the antichrist, they're told by everybody, "Most assuredly you are in the wrong," when they are in the right.

And last but not least, one of the great parallels. We've alluded to this already. It's the incredible, great, physical pain that Job underwent. I don't know what it looks like, feels like, or the experience of having boils and sores from the crown of my head to the bottom of my feet. I don't know what it's like to be in so much pain that you actually take sharpened pottery scraps and you scrape your body. You know, the Bible says that the dogs came and licked his sores. I can only imagine what it looked like, what it might have felt like but you do know that as you study those end time events, those who do not bear the mark of the beast, those who are running from the antichrist, those who are waiting on the return of the Lord, they're not living a plush lifestyle, in fact, they're living a very nomadic lifestyle, they're living a lifestyle that is so grave that if God does not bring literally manna from heaven to them, they have no sustenance in their life. So an incredible incredible parallel with what he underwent with what the people of God one day in the future are going to go through as well.

Again, before we get to this last point, don't read the Second Coming out of the life of Job, just allow Job to give us a little color commentary because as you walk through it over the course of the next couple weeks, you're gonna see incredible physical pain, you're gonna see incredible debate and arguing between him and his friends, and yet at the same time you're gonna see Job crying going, "I know, God, you're gonna deliver me. I just don't know how because it's not looking real good right now."

Last thing I want to address as far as Job and the Second Coming is this, the promises of God. The promises of God. In spite of the persecution, in spite of all of the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual difficulties, God gives us some great promises that we see realized in Job.

The first one is this. I mentioned chapter 38 earlier, I mentioned the whirlwind, the parallel with Elijah and I also said don't get too strict on the chronology here. But there is a promise that the Bible says over and over and over again that one day the Lord is gonna come in the clouds and deliver his people. He is going to come and deliver his people. Does God come out of the whirlwind to deliver the three friends? No. Does he come out of the whirlwind and deliver Job's wife? No. Does he deliver Elihu? No. Who does he deliver? He delivers Job. He comes out of the clouds and he wants a conversation with Job. He wants a conversation with what we saw this morning, "My servant Job." So there is the promise that no matter how bad it gets, how bad it looks, one day the Redeemer will stand on the earth. The Bible describes it as the clouds opening up and the Lord descending.

The second promise is this, that those who condemn God's people will be destroyed. They will not get away with it forever. It's not going to happen. In fact, in Matthew 25, Jesus pictures this at the end of that famous Olivet Discourse, that Second Coming sermon where he talks about coming out of the clouds in his majesty and in his glory. You remember the famous verse where he talks about, "On my right hand there will be the sheep. They will go to life everlasting. But on my left, the goats, and they will go to the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels." There is a promise that those who

condemn the people of God, those who reject the people of God, those who incarcerate the people of God, those that martyr the people of God will one day come face-to-face with their Creator, their Maker, and they will pay the price for the persecution that they ensued. That's a promise we have because we see it happen also in the book of Job.

The third promise is this, that those who are believers in the Lord, those who are faithful to the Lord will be rewarded. We will be rewarded. It may not be in this life, it may only be in the next, it may not look the way that we'd hoped or we'd dreamed or that we had somehow drawn it out, but that same passage in Matthew 25 says those on the right hand, that they will go into an everlasting kingdom. The Lord makes it very clear that when he returns, those who persecuted his people, they will be condemned to the lake of fire, those who took care of and honored them will be rewarded and we just looked at the end of Job 42, that we see that he actually receives twice what he had in chapter 1. We see that he actually benefits greater in the end than he did in the beginning.

But there's one last promise that I want to address and I will go ahead and give you a little foresight and insight, we're gonna talk a little bit about this next Sunday morning as we kind of extrapolate it very sermonically, so to speak, but I want you to look if you still have Job open, I want you to look in chapter 42 and then we're gonna go into Ezekiel. Remember Ezekiel is the one prophet that says remember the patience of Job. In Job 42:13, an interesting statement is made. He had also 7 sons and 3 daughters. Now remember chapter 1. Job had 10 children. He used to go on the feast days, he would offer sacrifice just in the event that maybe they had sinned against God. Do you remember how the genders broke down there? There were 7 boys and 3 girls. Now I am not a statistician but I do think we would all have to agree that it is a statistical outlier that a man with wife A could have 7 boys and 3 girls, and then have a second marriage to wife B and also have 7 boys and 3 girls. I could happen but then in verse 14 he called the name of the first, then he called the name of the second, then he called the name of the third, and I know what you're thinking, "Why aren't you calling the names?" Because I can't pronounce them any better than you can. But nonetheless, we don't have their names in chapter 1. We're not given their names. We're also not told that Job's wife who said, "Curse God and die," is anywhere to be found, and there is no mention anywhere of "a new bride" for Job. So A, either the Lord just left out those details and they're not for us to know, or B, is it possible that Job got his kids back?

Now I'm gonna talk as a daddy for just a moment. Now I know we all have our respective families and they look the way they do because the Lord has allowed them to do so, but I want to just give you a hypothetical. I don't ever desire this to happen, don't ever want it to happen but it fits in the story. I want you to imagine that what happened to Job happens to me. I want you to imagine that my three sons are taken from me. Their lives are lost. They're no longer. I go through this horrific time period as Job did, there's mourning, there's sackcloth, there's ashes, the whole thing. And the Lord comes back, the money's great, the sheep are great, the oxen are great, don't get me wrong that's wonderful, but at the end of the day who do I really want to be a part of my life again? My boys. I don't want three new ones. I want the ones I had. Now I could say that now they're not finished growing up, I may change my mind in the years ahead. I may want

three new ones, I don't know, but nonetheless I think we would all agree when we've lost somebody near to us, can anybody really replace them? No. They can fill a void. They can fill the heartache, they can come alongside of us in life, but they don't replace. I mean, and yet they're the same numbers of the gender, the names are given. I don't know all the details here and, again, it's just kind of a look at this as an overview, but is it possible in looking at the book of Job from a Second Coming perspective, is it possible that, yes, he had twice the stuff but his own kids raised from the dead?

Now you know this isn't abnormal to the Lord. He raises people from the dead all the time. He can do it. We don't have a lot of stories but the Lord does do it and it's not just the story of Lazarus, there's other stories where people are raised from the dead, and so tonight I want to close by going to Ezekiel 37. Ezekiel is going to be to your right a significant way. We mentioned Ezekiel at the very beginning. He is the one prophet who primarily, or shall I say exclusively preached through what you and I know as the Babylonian exile. Jeremiah was unique in that the first part of his prophecy was before the exile, the latter half is during the exile. But there's a lot of discussion about Ezekiel, and by the way, Ezekiel is Ezekiel. When we get to that Bible reading plan, we're gonna have to fast, I'm just gonna promise you that. It's gonna be tough to get through.

If you have a study Bible and not everybody does and I understand, one of the things you may notice is at the end of chapter 36 of the book of Ezekiel there's sometimes there's a line that is drawn. There's a division that is made. We divide just like we kind of divide Isaiah into two sections, the first 39 chapters and the latter 27 chapters, we divide Ezekiel the first 36 chapters and then the latter chapters just because there's a theme change, so to speak. Still Ezekiel. Still the same prophet, still inspired by God. I want to read Ezekiel 37. I'm not gonna read the entirety of it but this is about the Second Coming, this is about the battle of Armageddon, this is about the Lord descending on that famous white horse, this is about all those events that if Job is a picture of the "last days."

Verse 1, "The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones." Push pause. Y'all know what story's coming, right? Remember the valley of the dry bones?

Verse 2, he "caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD." Verse 7, "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain," these slain,

"that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived." I want you to see this next statement, "and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel." God didn't go and get new children, he raised up the former children. He did not go and find new people, he took those that were slain in the valley, he took those that had lost their life and he raised up those that had been dead for who knows how long. "Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people," here we go, "I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Is that not what the Lord does when he returns? I mean, it's pictured right there in Ezekiel 37.

We've looked at Job as a color commentary, as a picture, as a type of some of those end time events. I don't find it ironic and I don't find it incidental that the book of Job that so parallels these Second Coming events not only in his person but even in the chronology, it ends with the possibility of the raising of the dead, and what is it that Jesus Christ does at the final battle when he descends? He raises the dead.

Now I cannot conclude positively that these are not 10 "new kids." There's no mention of the former wife, there's no mention of a new wife, and I promise you Job couldn't pull it off himself. It just doesn't work that way. But there are the same number and they're the same gender.

The book of Job is a story about suffering, about persecution, about patience and about trusting God but it may just be a story to give us insight of the days ahead as well. As we go through our Bible reading plan, the majority of Job is to come and maybe tonight the Lord's giving you kind of a filter, kind of a lens to kind of see the conversations, to see the statements, to see the events. Yes, Job is on the hill of ashes and, yes, he's being persecuted but maybe he's also giving us a little color commentary on events that are yet to come.

You know, on Sunday nights in recent days, we don't have a stand up, walk down invitation but we do have some phone numbers. We do have the ability for you to reach out to us by text or by call. You have the ability to let us know, "Hey, man, I need to talk with somebody. I need to talk with somebody. I need to converse. I need to be prayed with. I need to pray for." Probably the easiest way in today's technology world is just to text us. It's 334-231-2313, and I can say with absolute assurance that there is someone on the other side of that phone number right now and so if you need to reach out to somebody, feel free to do so. We would love to sit down and have a conversation in a very socially distanced manner. We would love maybe by way of email, by way of phone call.

But you know, you read the story of Job, you read the Bible in its entirety and I know this sounds overly simplistic but I just want to close on this before we dismiss. There's coming a day where the Lord is going to descend and he's going to reign over the earth and there's only two groups of people, there are those that rebelled against him, and those

that believed in him, and that's the only choices we've got. So at the end of the day no matter how we may prosper or how we may succeed or what we think of our lives, we're either going to come back with the Lord or the Lord's gonna come back against us and that's the decision that all of us have to make. I don't know about you but I'm grateful that when that day comes I'm not on the pointed end of the sword, I'm behind the rider of the white horse and the great news is 2 Peter 3:9 says that God is not like man, he is longsuffering, he desires that all come to repentance and none perish. The sad reality is on that day he returns there will be those that have rebelled against him because even though he desires that none perish, there are those who continue to rebel and want nothing of the Lord in their lives. May that not be you this night. Reach out to us. Call us. Text us. Find us after the service. We would love to pray with and for you.