

Dr. John Walton, Job, Session 18 – Podcast

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All right, welcome back, everyone, for another deep dive. Yeah. This time we're looking at Job.

Chapters 29 through 31. 29 through 31. Big chapters.

So if you've got your source material, get it out, follow along with us, because things are about to get really interesting. Yeah, it's where the story really starts to heat up. It really does.

Because now Job's not just... He's been suffering, we know that. Yeah, he's really suffering. We've heard him complain.

We've heard his friends give him bad advice. Terrible advice. But now we're going to see kind of a shift in his mindset.

Yeah. And we get this really fascinating emotional arc through these three chapters. Okay.

So let's kind of walk through it a little bit. Yeah. So chapter 29, what is the vibe? What's going on with Job here? So chapter 29, he's looking back.

Okay. He's thinking about the past. Right.

He's like, man, remember when? Yeah. Like the good old days. Right.

But it's more than that. Okay. Because his pain runs so deep.

Yeah. It's not just, oh, I miss my stuff. Right.

He's lost his standing in the community. Which back then, you know, so much of your- your wealth, your prosperity. It was a sign of God's favor.

It was a sign of who you were. Yeah. Exactly.

So when he loses everything, it's not just financial. It really is this complete upheaval of his whole world. It's like his identity is shattered.

Yeah. Exactly. And the language he uses in chapter 29, I mean, it's like- it's heartbreaking.

It's really sad. Yeah. Like he talks about being laughed at, being shunned, treated like a stranger.

Like people he knew. Right. By people who used to respect him.

Yeah. The social rejection, that's a wound that cuts deep. Yeah.

Because we all need that. We all need to belong. We all need to feel like we're part of something.

Yeah. We need that dignity and respect. Absolutely.

And so to have that stripped away, it's brutal. And then you add on top of that, everybody around him thinks he did something wrong. Right.

To deserve this. It's like this is all his fault. So not only is he suffering physically, he's lost everything.

But now he's got this weight of like- this guilt, this- is this my fault? Shame. Did I do something to deserve this? Yeah. That's where the real psychological torment comes in.

So we've got chapter 29, this longing. Yeah. This kind of sadness.

The good old days. And then we get to chapter 30, and that's where things take a turn. It's raw.

It's dark. Yeah. The brutal honesty.

Yeah. And the imagery that he uses. Oh, yeah.

It's so vivid. Yeah. He compares himself to like wild animals.

Yeah. Creatures of the night. People living out in the desert.

It's like he's been pushed to the margins of society, of humanity. And there's anger. Yeah.

There's bitterness. Like, how could this happen to me? Yeah. It's like he's railing against the injustice.

And you know what's interesting? Yeah. It's not just anger directed outward. Oh, interesting.

At the people who've wronged him or at God. It's also inward. Oh, wow.

He questions his own identity. That's tough. Like, who am I? Yeah.

What is my worth? So, it's just this crushing weight- it really is... of everything he's going through. Yeah.

But then we get to chapter 31. Here we go. And this is where things get really interesting.

Things take a turn. Job's not just complaining anymore. He's making a move.

He's taking action. A big move. This oath of innocence.

Yeah. I mean, this is big, right? This is huge. Yeah.

He's involved. He's invoking this legal and religious practice. Help us understand this.

Okay. So, Job's friends have been saying, you must have sinned. Right.

You must have done something wrong. To deserve all this. So, Job's like, all right, I'm going to list every sin, every transgression, and I'm going to swear before God that I am innocent.

It's like he's putting God on trial. In a way, he is. Wow.

It's this bold move. Yeah. He's forcing God's hand.

So, it's like, okay, God, I'm calling you out. Yes. If I'm innocent, you have to prove me wrong.

Exactly. And what's so interesting is- the silence. The silence.

It's deafening, right? Because in that time, silence meant guilt. Yeah. It's like, if you don't respond, it means- that you agree- that we agree.

Yeah. With the accusations. So, for Job, it's like- he agonized.

It's just further confirmation that God has abandoned him. Yeah. And it's not just about clearing his name.

Oh. This oath is bigger than that. Okay, so what is it about then? He's challenging God's reputation- whoa.

For justice and wisdom. So, it's not just God, why me? Right. It's God, why does the world work this way? Exactly.

That if you allow this to happen- to an innocent man- what does that say about you? What does that say about your character? Yeah. What does that say about the order of the universe? So, this is a big deal. Huge.

So, what happens if Job wins? That's the million-dollar question, right? Right. And if God doesn't respond, if God stays silent, then Job's logic is that God isn't just or wise. Right.

It means that the universe isn't built on justice. Right. It means that suffering is just arbitrary.

It's random. It's meaningless. It makes God a chaotic creature.

So, he's basically saying, if I'm wrong, God's wrong. Exactly. I mean, that's huge.

It has huge implications because it totally unravels the traditional understanding of God and the moral order of the universe. Wow. Job is challenging the very foundations of faith.

It's heavy stuff. I feel like we need to unpack this a little bit more. Let's take a pause here.

We'll come back, and we'll pick this conversation back up in the next part of our deep dive. Sounds good. Okay.

So, we left off with Job basically accusing God of being unjust. It's a pretty bold move. I mean, even for a guy who's going through all this.

Right. I mean, you would think he would be pleading for mercy. Yeah.

Like- Just fix this. Yeah. But he's not.

He's going beyond that. He's going way beyond that. Yeah.

Yeah. And even beyond what his friends were saying. Oh, absolutely.

Right. Because they were trying to put everything in this neat little theological box. You sinned.

You're suffering. Repent. God will bless you.

Eat. Yeah. But Job is saying, even if I never get back what I lost- right.

Even if I die a broken man, I will not compromise my integrity. So, it's bigger than just the stuff. It's way bigger.

Than the health, the wealth, the family. It's about his character. Yeah.

It's about God's character. He's saying, a God who allows this kind of suffering- To an innocent person. Yeah.

Isn't a God worth worshiping? Exactly. Wow. So, that oath of innocence- yeah.

That's dangerous. It's dangerous. It's subversive.

It's- Because if he's right- Yeah. And God doesn't respond- Right. It means the universe isn't built on justice.

Right. It means suffering is meaningless. Random.

God becomes this chaos-creature. Right. And that's not the God that we- That we read about in the rest of the Bible.

That we want to believe in. Exactly. So, he's shaking the very foundation- Of faith itself.

But isn't there a certain kind of faith in that? Oh, I think so. In the questioning. Yeah.

Because, I mean- Like to be that bold. To be that- To challenge God like that. Yeah.

That takes guts. Yeah. And I think that's why this story still speaks to us today.

It does. Because we all go through hard times. We do.

We all question God. Absolutely. Those why-me moments.

And Job gives us permission to wrestle with that. Yeah. To challenge those assumptions that we have about God.

It's like he's saying, faith isn't about blind acceptance. It's about dialogue. Yeah.

It's about wrestling. It's real. It's raw.

It can get messy. Absolutely. But that's where the growth happens.

Yeah. I mean, think about it. When have you grown the most? When things have been tough.

When you've been challenged. Yeah. When you've had to really wrestle with your beliefs.

That's when you come out stronger. Exactly. So Job is giving us permission to do that.

He's showing us the way. It's okay to not have all the answers. It's okay to doubt, to question, to be angry.

But don't disengage. Stay in the conversation. Wrestle with God.

But let's be honest. Most of us probably wouldn't be as bold as Job. Right.

I mean- we might grumble a little bit. We might complain to our friends. Yeah.

But would we actually speak it to God? Call God out like that? That's a good question. Yeah.

What would you do if you were in Job's shoes? Yeah. What would we do? Would we demand answers? Yeah. Would we double down and be like, no, I'm right, God.

You're wrong. Or would we just- or would we find some other way to cope? Yeah. Those are good questions.

Give us time to think about. What stands out to you about Job's approach? You know, I think for me what's really striking is even in his anger, even in his accusation- there's still faith there. There's still that little glimmer.

Yeah. He hasn't given up on God completely. No.

He's still engaged. He's still seeking that response. Even if it's through protest.

Yeah. Like, God, I need you to show up. I need you to meet me in this.

I need you to prove me wrong. So there's this underlying hope that God will break through the silence. That maybe, just maybe, there's more to the story.

Then we can see right now. Then meets the eye. Okay.

So we've got Job's bold challenge. We've got his plea for justice. We're waiting for God's response.

And that's where we'll pick up in the final part of our deep dive. It's going to be fascinating to see how this all plays out. Oh, yeah.

What does it reveal about God? About faith. About suffering. Big questions.

All right. So we've walked through this emotional rollercoaster with Job. Yeah.

We've seen the highs, the lows- accusations. The anger, the despair, the hope. Yeah.

And it all culminates in this really bold challenge to God. Right. He's raising the stakes to a whole other level.

And it makes you wonder, where did this idea even come from? Yeah. Is this just Job's own personal vendetta? Right. Actually, it's not.

Okay. This idea that God has to be just. Uh-huh.

That was actually a pretty common theme- Oh, really? Back in the ancient Near East. Okay. There was this deeply ingrained belief in this thing called cosmic order.

Cosmic order. Okay. This idea that there's this balance between heaven and earth.

Okay. And it's all held together by divine justice. So if things are out of whack- if bad things are happening to good people- it's like a crack in the foundation.

It's a threat to the whole system. Wow. So Job isn't just complaining about his own situation.

No. He's pointing to a flaw. A potential flaw.

In the very fabric of reality. And that's got to be unsettling. To anyone who believes in this cosmic order.

Right. It's like he's saying, hey, something's not right here. Yeah.

It's like, God, you need to fix this. And that's something we can all relate to, right? Absolutely. When we see suffering in the world.

Especially when it seems so random and unfair. Yeah. Those why questions.

It makes us question everything. Like, where is God in all of this? Does he even care? And Job gives us permission to ask those questions. Yeah.

Even if they make us uncomfortable. Even if they challenge our beliefs. I think there's a real honesty in that.

Yeah. That willingness to wrestle with the tough stuff. It's like saying faith isn't always easy.

It's not about having all the answers. Right. It's not about blind faith.

It's about acknowledging the mystery. The struggle. Yeah.

And sometimes that's where I find the most profound truths. So as we wrap up this deep dive on Job. Chapters 29 through 31.

What's the one thing you hope our listeners take away from all of this? Don't be afraid to ask the tough questions. Yeah. Don't settle for easy answers.

Embrace the struggle. The mystery. The doubt.

Yeah. Because in that wrestling. That's where we grow.

That's where we find a deeper faith. And you know, Job's story doesn't end here. Right.

We still haven't heard God's response. That's a whole other deep dive. But for now, let's sit with these questions.

Yeah. Let them simmer. Let's wrestle with them.

Because sometimes the answers aren't in the resolution. They're in the journey itself. Well said.

Until next time, keep diving deep.