

Title: Job's First Reply to Zophar: Though He Slay Me I Will Trust Him (Pt 2)

Number: 0321Job13.3-14:22(17)

Text: Job 13:3-14:22

Central Idea: *I May Not Know, But I Know I May Trust*

Date: March 28, 2021

{Read 13:13-16}

[i] Luke 13:1-5

Luke 13:1–5 1 Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to [Jesus] about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? 3 “I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. 4 “Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? 5 “I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

Jesus cited 2 historical instances about calamity. 1st was about some Galileans who were killed by Pilate while they were offering sacrifices. 2d concerned 18 innocent people near Jerusalem who were killed when a tower ... collapsed on them.

What's t/point? We live in a fallen world; therefore, tragedy is no respecter of persons. Living or dying in this life is not a measure of a person's righteousness (or lack thereof). So repent . . .

[ii] That wasn't the worldview of Job and his three friends

Old nursery rhyme ==>

There was a crooked man, and he went a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence against a crooked stile:
He bought a crooked cat, which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a crooked little house.

[iii] Job's 3 friends had a crooked theology

It was a perverted reap what you sow doctrine of divine punishment or blessing based exclusively if you were good or bad.

Bad things happen to bad people. If you are suffering, you did something to deserve it. You must have sinned.

One writer observes==>

“Any theology that does not have room for Job’s experience, that of a righteous man who is suffering, is a lie, and it is shocking that lies should be spoken about God.” [David J. A. Clines, “Job,” in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 469]

Zophar spoke lies about God and Job in chapter 11. Job replies to Zophar in chaps 12-14.

[iv] This is part 2 of ==>

Job’s First Reply to Zophar: Though He Slay Me I Will Trust Him

That subtitle is taken from 13:15 ==>

13:15 “**Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. . . .**”

[v] Our main idea for these 3 chapters ==>

“I May Not Know, but I Know I May Trust.” IOW . . .

As far as our outline is concerned, there are 3 main points:

I. Job's Complaint Against his Friends (12:1–12; 13:1–2)

II. Job's Confession of God's Sovereignty (12:7–25)

III. Job's Cry to God for Deliverance (13:1–14:22)

First 2 points we looked at last time ==>

I. Job's Complaint Against his Friends (12:1–12; 13:1–2)

We noted how Job begins in chapter 12 ==>

A. Job's Sarcasm (12:1-2)

12:1 **Then Job responded,**

12:2 **“Truly then you are the people, And with you wisdom will die!”**

B. Job Defends His Epistemic Equality (12:3)

12:3 **“But I have intelligence as well as you; I am not inferior to you. And who does not know such things as these?”**

1. Job echoes this same thought (epistemic equality) in 13:1–2

13:1-2 1 “Behold, my eye has seen all this, My ear has heard and understood it.” 2 “What you know I also know; I am not inferior to you.”

II. Job's Confession of God's Sovereignty (12:7–25)

A. Defined

“God's sovereignty means that He is the King who is in complete control of His creation. His Kingship encompasses the doctrines of predestination and providence.”

B. 12:7-25 are a powerful commentary on God's absolute sovereignty over all His creation

This brings us to our 3d main point ==>

III. Job's Cry to God for Deliverance (13:3-14:22)

Four sub-points ==>

A. The Elusivity of God (13:3-28)

B. The Brevity of Life (14:1-6)

C. The Finality of Death (14:7-17)

D. The Paucity of Hope (14:18-22)

A. The Elusivity of God (13:3-28)

First thing we see is ==>

1. Job's Desire (13:3)

a. Contrast developed in 13:1-2 (cf. 12:3)

13:1-2 1 "Behold, my eye has seen all this, My ear has heard and understood it. 2 "What you know I also know; I am not inferior to you.

b. Verse 3

13:3 "But I would speak to the Almighty, And I desire to argue with God."

c. Note two things:

(1) God is Personal

3a "But I would speak to the Almighty . . .

(a) Shaddai = God is Almighty

Yet, even 2 millennia before t/advent of JC we see that God is personal. Unlike the mindless gods of t/pagans, He can be spoken to.

(b) Immediately after the fall of man in Genesis chapter 3

Genesis 3:8–10 8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”

(dialogue follows . . .)

John 9:31 (t/man born blind who was healed by Jesus) “. . . if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.”

(1) God is Personal

(2) God is Approachable

3b . . . **And I desire to argue with God.**”

(a) Remember - Job has just finished expressing his belief in God’s absolute sovereignty in 12:13-25

i. Passage where he says things like:

14 “. . . He tears down, and it cannot be rebuilt . . . 16 “With Him are strength and sound wisdom, The misled and the misleader belong to Him. 23 “He makes the nations great, then destroys them . . .

(b) Job knows that his argument isn’t ultimately with men

i. But why argue with God when He does as He pleases?

Because we interact w/Him in reality. May be that G. does what He pleases, but we know that He pleases to hear us—even our questions, our hurts, our complaints (laments).

I know that when Giana was in t/hospital & esp. when she was in rehab I pleaded w/G. to heal her—even tho I understood His sov.

G. may know all, He may do whatever He pleases, but He uses our prayers & hears our pleas.

Eph. 4:30 — we can grieve t/H.S. by what we fail to do.

G. works in eternity & he relates to us in time.

G. desires a relationship w/us (elect). Contrary to false religions like pantheistic new age philosophies, God is Personal & Approachable.

13:3 “. . . I would speak to the Almighty, And I desire to argue with God.”

“The language is thoroughly legal and formal, but, as in Israelite legal practice generally, the point of the legal process Job envisages here is not so much the winning of a dispute as the settlement of a disagreement.” [Word Biblical Commentary]

14:15 “You will call, and I will answer You; You will long for the work of Your hands.

God is approachable. We can have a relationship w/Him thru JC.

“You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in You.” [Augustine, Confessions, 1.1.1]

It is only in God that our restless hearts can rest.

Matt. 11:28 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

1. Job’s Desire (13:3)

To speak—even argue w/God.

2. Job’s Dilemma (13:17-23)

a. For Job there is still a sense in which God is elusive

13:17 **“Listen carefully to my speech, And let my declaration fill your ears.**

Using courtroom language we have become fam. w/==>

13:18 **“Behold now, I have prepared my case; I know that I will be vindicated.**

(1) “Vindicated” is translated “right” in 9:15

9:15a “for though I were ‘right’ I could not answer [Him]” . . .

It’s to be “innocent of wrong, not guilty”

13:20-21 20 **“Only two things do not do to me, Then I will not hide from Your face: 21 Remove Your hand from me, And let not the dread of You terrify me.**

b. Note “two things” [^]

(1) Issue with the NASB

Implies that Job wants God to keep His hand upon him (judgment).
Clearly not the case.

(2) Other versions that remove this ambiguity

13:21 **Only grant me two things, then I will not hide myself from your face: withdraw your hand far from me, and let not dread of you terrify me.** [ESV]

13:22 **“Then call, and I will answer; Or let me speak, then reply to me.**

c. Cf. 9:16 (disbelief of Job)

9:16 “If I called and He answered me, I could not believe that He was listening to my voice.”

13:23 **“How many are my iniquities and sins? Make known to me my rebellion and my sin.**

Job is not saying that his sins are many. He’s asking where is his sin? What has he done? That’s evident from t/2d half of t/verse.

d. Job accuses God of hiding from him

13:24-25 24 **“Why do You hide Your face And consider me Your enemy? 25 “Will You cause a driven leaf to tremble? Or will You pursue the dry chaff?**

“Why do you frighten me and make me like a dry leaf blown from a tree, and chase me like straw blown by the wind?”

13:26 **“For You write bitter things against me And make me to inherit the iniquities of my youth.**

IOW - You're like a judge who keeps a record of my wrongs which consist largely of stupid things I did as a kid!

13:27 **“You put my feet in the stocks And watch all my paths; You set a limit for the soles of my feet,**

13:28 **While I am decaying like a rotten thing, Like a garment that is moth-eaten.**

e. Job never again directs a word to God until his closing speech in chapter 30

He will accuse G. of being inaccessible (23:3), but he will not speak directly to Him again.

Apparently, this means that Job has said all he wants to as far as G. is concerned.

1. Job's Desire (13:3)

2. Job's Dilemma (13:17-23)

3. Job's Disgust (13:4-14)

This is Job's disgust with t/council of his 3 friends, esp. Zophar.

a. Job calls them liars and worthless physicians (13:4)

b. He wishes that they would do as they did when they first arrived: say nothing (13:5) — that would be their “wisdom”

Prov. 17:28: “Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise.”

c. He asks them to hear him out in verse 6—and then asks them a series of questions in verses 7-11

13:7 “Will you speak what is unjust for God, And speak what is deceitful for Him?”

13:8a “Will you show partiality for Him?”

13:8b Will you contend for God?

IOW - You are standing in God’s place, misrepresenting Him.

13:9a “Will it be well when He examines you?”

13:9b Or will you deceive Him as one deceives a man?

13:11a “Will not His majesty terrify you, And the dread of Him fall on you?”

How would you fare under His scrutiny? You think you can trick Him?

13:10 “He will surely reprove you If you secretly show partiality.

42:7 . . . LORD said . . . “My wrath is kindled against you [Eliphaz] and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has.”

d. Job, sitting among the ashes & broken pottery ==>

13:12 “Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes, Your defenses are defenses of clay.”

Can pic. Job grabbing a handful of ashes from his perch at t/town dump, letting them sift thru his fingers; or picking up a broken piece of pottery as an illust. of their broken words of supposed wisdom.

Let’s regroup . . .

III. Job’s Cry to God for Deliverance (13:3–14:22)

A. The Elusivity of God (13:3-28)

Next 3 sub-points hang together:

B. The Brevity of Life (14:1–6)

C. The Finality of Death (14:7–17)

D. The Fragility of Hope (14:18–22)

Think about that: Life is Brief; Death is Final; Hope is Fragile.

If you’re suffering under t/worst conditions you could ever imagine:

If you realize that life is but a vapor—you’re here 1 day, gone t/next;

If you think that death is t/bitter end of all that this life entails;

Then, you are going to have a very fragile hope.

That’s where Job is right now.

That brings us to chapt. 14 ==>

B. The Brevity of Life (14:1–6)

1. We see in Scripture the emphasis (warning) that life is sort

Job in 7:6, “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, And come to an end without hope.”

Bildad in 8:9, “For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, Because our days on earth are as a shadow.”

Moses in Ps 90:10, As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away.

David in 1 Chr 29:15, “. . . our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.

Isaiah in 40:7, The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass.

James in 4:14, . . . You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

You don’t tend to see it when you’re young, unless you witness t/death of a young person, like Giana. But as you get older you see that life, apart from hope, is dreary, dismal, and depressing.

Job==>

14:1 “Man, who is born of woman, Is short-lived and full of turmoil.

Our days are too few and our troubles too many!

14:2 “Like a flower he comes forth and withers. He also flees like a shadow and does not remain.

That is quite the picture of life. [^]

As I've said before, it's like we are on a conveyor belt. Babies pop up here & t/elderly drop off there. We shuttle along. 1st, you see grandpa or grandma drop off. Then an aunt or an uncle. Meanwhile you look & that drop off point is getting closer. Occasionally someone gets pushed off prematurely. Every so often it dawns on you that you've moved quite a bit toward t/end. You lose your parents & you wonder, "Am I down to my last 20 or 30 years on this earth?"

T/picture from nature that's used in t/Bible is t/life-cycle of flowers & moving shadows ==>

14:2 "Like a flower he comes forth and withers. He also flees like a shadow and does not remain.

Here in WNY we see those sorts of things, even w/spring, summer, fall, winter.

2. Yet, God is sovereign over those days

14:5-6 5 "Since his days are determined, The number of his months is with You; And his limits You have set so that he cannot pass.

6 "Turn Your gaze from him that he may rest, Until he fulfills his day like a hired man.

Neither you nor I will live 1 day longer than G. has ordained we live. We each have an appointment w/Death & barring t/return of JC for his CH, it's an appointment we cannot avoid.

Psalm 139:16 . . . in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.

Job 23:13–14 13 “But He is unique and who can turn Him? And what His soul desires, that He does. 14 “For He performs what is appointed for me, And many such decrees are with Him.

Psalm 39:4 “LORD, make me to know my end And what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am.

B. The Brevity of Life (14:1–6)

C. The Finality of Death (14:7–17)

1. Job draws a contrast between a felled tree and humanity

14:7-8 7 “For there is hope for a tree, When it is cut down, that it will sprout again, And its shoots will not fail. 8 “Though its roots grow old in the ground And its stump dies in the dry soil, 9 At the scent of water it will flourish And put forth sprigs like a plant.

You cut a tree down & what often happens? Sprigs, new growth, emerges! Job is saying that there’s more hope for a tree than for people who die.

“There may be some allusion to a practice . . . of cutting down old fig trees, walnuts and pomegranates, as well as vines that have ceased to bear good fruit; the stumps if watered put out new shoots the following year and subsequently bear good crops. [One of the ancient writers] speaks also of the laurel as keeping its life even when the trunk is cut down (Pliny, Hist. nat. 15.30). For a tree, death brings new life—at least that is the hope.” [Word Biblical Commentary]

14:10 **“But man dies and lies prostrate. Man expires, and where is he?”**

Man is cut down and where is he? His body lies in the ground.

14:12 . . . **man lies down and does not rise. Until the heavens are no longer, He will not awake nor be aroused out of his sleep.**

2. Sounds like Job believes that once you’re dead, you’re dead!

Eccles. 9:5 For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten.

14:21 **“His sons achieve honor, but he does not know it; Or they become insignificant, but he does not perceive it.**

a. All about context—Job doesn’t really think death is the end

(1) Job hopes for future, eternal fellowship with his God ==>

14:13 **“Oh that You would hide me in Sheol [the grave or the place of departed spirits], That You would conceal me until Your wrath returns to You, That You would set a limit for me and remember me!**

(2) Job asks (I think optimistically) ==>

14:14 **“If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my struggle I will wait Until my change comes.**

“Until my change comes” is a military metaphor. Job pictures himself standing at his post in Sheol, waiting to be relieved of duty. Maybe having t/resurr. in mind.

Job later in chapter 19 26 “Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; 27 Whom I myself shall behold, And whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!

14:15 “You will call, and I will answer You; You will long for the work of Your hands.

Last point ==>

D. The Fragility of Hope (14:18–22)

Here we see ==>

1. Job’s Despair (14:18-22)

2. Job’s Determination (13:15-16)

1. Job’s Despair (14:18-22)

14:18-19 18 “**But the falling mountain crumbles away, And the rock moves from its place; 19 Water wears away stones, Its torrents wash away the dust of the earth; So You destroy man’s hope.**

14:19c . . . **So You destroy man’s hope.**

a. Have you ever been there? Honestly? I have . . .

Shortly b4 t/drunk driver hit us, taking Giana’s life, I had a circumstance where I gathered in prayer with a few others over damage done to us. I believed that this humble cry to God would result in peace. I believed that. I was wrong. It didn’t. Those we prayed w/turned against us.

When Giana was in rehab I prayed believing/hoping that God would heal her. We were joined by countless others. He didn’t heal her, not in this life. Instead, He took her home w/him in June 2016.

14:19c . . . **So You destroy man’s hope.**

1. Job's Despair (14:18-22)

A despair we have shared in.

Doesn't end there. Not for me; not for you; not for Job.

For this we have to go back to chapt. 13.

2. Job's Determination (13:15-16)

13:15-16 15 **"Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him.** 16 **"This also will be my salvation, For a godless man may not come before His presence.**

a. Note the first part of verse 15

13:15a **"Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. . . .**

(1) Translation Issue here that you are probably not aware of unless you happen to be using the RSV

Sam Storms==>

"13:15 is a famous verse that may be taken in one of two ways: (1) . . . 'Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him.' In other words, no matter what happens to me, I still remain confident that God will vindicate me. (2) Or it may be, 'Behold, He will slay me; I have no hope.' Thus Job anticipated that his self-defense would result in his being killed by God. But he intends to go ahead anyway, firmly persuaded of his innocence." [Sam Storms, *Biblical Studies: Job* (Edmond, OK: Sam Storms, 2016), Job 12:1-12]

13:15 [RSV] **"Behold, he will slay me; I have no hope . . .**

(2) I'm sticking with the majority of the translators here:

NASB/ESV Though he slay me, I will hope in him . . .

KJV Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him . . .

NCV Even if God kills me, I have hope in him . . .

NIV Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him . . .

HCSB Even if He kills me, I will hope in Him . . .

Reformer John Calvin turned it into a rhetorical question”

“Shall I not hope?”

I can't be overly dogmatic, but I think that the traditional sense is the way we should go:

13:15a **“Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. . . .**

(3) We commonly see these glimmers of hope in t/midst of despair from Job (6:10)

6:10 “But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, That I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

I May Not Know, But I Know I May Trust

1. God is Personal and Approachable

a. We can bring our concerns, even our respectfully framed arguments before Him

2. There are Times When God May Appear Elusive

Psa. 10:1 Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?

a. Persevere in faith knowing He is there

I May Not Know, But I Know I May Trust

Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me . . .

3. The Answer is Jesus Christ

a. What's the question?

Job asks it in 14:4 ==>

14:4 **“Who can make the clean out of the unclean? No one!**

Eliphaz asked a similar ? in 4:17 ==>

4:17, “Can mortal man be righteous before God? Can a man be pure before his maker?”

That is THE ? [^]

3. *The Answer is Jesus Christ*

Phil. 3:9 [I want to] be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

In 13:15 when Job says “I will argue my ways before Him.”

He uses a Heb. word *yakhach*, related to t/word transl. “umpire” in 9:33 where Job bemoans that ==> “There is no umpire between us [between him and God], [one] Who may lay his hand upon us both.”

Here in chapt. 13, just like we saw in chapt. 9, Job feels that he needs to be his own advocate.

Not true for us. We have a public defender . . .

1 John 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate (παράκλητος) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

1. The Answer is Jesus Christ

13:16 **“This also will be my salvation, For a godless man may not come before His presence.**

“Salvation” is t/noun yěšûâ, t/Heb. equivalent of the name “Jesus.”

1. The Answer is Jesus Christ