

## March 31

**Scriptures:** Read Job 29 & 30

**Key Verse:** “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me...” (Job 29:14)

### Overview

Job eloquently describes two contrasting pictures: his former prestige, wealth, happiness, and health in chapter twenty-nine, and his present humiliation, poverty, and miserable suffering in chapter thirty. He begins by wistfully recounting his past situation as it was at the beginning of the book of Job. He once had God’s protective hedge around him and was greatly blessed by God in all he did, as well as with many possessions and much land (1:10). More than these material blessings and favour with man, Job longed for the restoration of the friendly relationship he once had with God, when God looked upon him with favour and was with him (29:2-5).

Job had been a community leader and a judge who brought justice to the oppressed and sat in a prominent place at the town gate (29:7, a forum where civil matters were decided). He was greatly respected by everyone, including the princes, for he was like a king over them. He was so great that young men hid and older men stood when he came to take his place among other dignitaries. It was not only his great wealth, high position, and wise counsel that brought him respect, but it was mainly his righteousness.

Job tells of the way he was benevolent and just to the poor, orphans, and widows (29:12-13). He helped the lame and the blind, and he helped to release victims from the jaws of the wicked (29:17). Job’s words are a clear denial of Eliphaz’s charges that he was an oppressor (22:5-9). Rather, Job showed he was a deliverer (29:12). Job had been deeply hurt by Eliphaz’s accusations, and he could no longer be silent. He was also hurt to realize that the things he had done for the oppressed were not being done for him during his time of need; and the justice he had shown others was being denied him — even denied by God! (30:24-26).

In the midst of describing his benevolence, Job gives the reason for his kind heart and justice : “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me” (29:14). Even though he lived centuries before the incarnation of Jesus, Job was Christ-like, because he loved God and desired to do that which pleased Him. We too must put on the righteousness of Christ, that we may be able to stand against the schemes of Satan (Ephesians 6:11; 14; Romans 13:14). If Job had not been clothed with righteousness (righteousness that came from God, Isaiah 61:10), he never would have been able to withstand the temptation of Satan to curse God.

When Job stopped reminiscing, he again took up his lament, showing the sharp contrast between his life before and after his calamities. His happiness, represented by the lovely sounds of the harp and flute, had become sounds of mourning and weeping (30:31). His hope of dying peacefully at a ripe old age and having many descendants (“my root is spread out,” 29:18-19) was shattered and gone. He who once had a family and many friends was now alone and in misery. He who was once the chief of princes was now scorned by all, even the lowest class of men had made him a byword and would spit in his face (30:9). These lowest-class people had a community of their own outside of the town; they were wretched and wicked outcasts, and yet

even among them Job was an outcast. His horrible disfiguring skin disease probably appeared worse than even leprosy, so everyone would have loathed to look at him (30:18; cf. 2:12).

Job turned from addressing Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, and took his lament to the Lord in prayer. It was much more distressing for Job to be disdained by God than by man. Job believed so strongly in the sovereignty of God over everything, including his life, since he was a child of God. Therefore, he blamed God for casting him into the mire, being cruel, opposing him, and spoiling his success (30:19-22). Yes, God was indeed sovereign, but Job did not understand the permissive will of God in allowing this to happen. However, it was Satan who was the direct cause of Job's misery, not God. God was the One who came, lifted Job up out of the mire, and placed him on solid ground (Psalm 40:2). When Job later had more understanding, he repented of his presumptuous words (42:3-6).

### **Prayer**

Lord, we desire to be like Job was, apart from his suffering and loss. You have promised to change us from glory to glory, until we are conformed to the image of Your Son, our Lord Jesus. If suffering and loss should come, give us Your great grace to overcome.