

True Wisdom in the Face of Suffering (Job 12)

I. Man's Faulty Wisdom May Seem Right (1-6)

A. The Advice of Job's Friends is Typical (1-3)

1. Job's friends are mocked for their "wisdom" (1-2)
 - a. "you are the people" – meaning the great people
 - b. "wisdom will die with you" – He is being sarcastic
 - c. He is well aware that they are giving him the standard knowledge of how God works (if you do good, you get good things. If you do bad, you get suffering)
2. Job's Friends are chided for their typical advice (3)
 - a. Job understands what they have said perfectly
 - b. Job declares they are no better than he
 - c. Job states that everyone knows these things

B. The Advice of Job's Friends is Faulty (4-6)

Those who do good don't always get good – Job is an example. Suffering happens to him in spite of his righteousness.

1. Job is Scorned even though he is Righteous (4)
 - a. Job is a laughingstock – He was once seen as righteous "one who called to God"
 - b. He was a just and blameless man – yet he still suffers
 - c. He is a laughingstock because men now think he is getting what he deserves for some secret sins.
 - d. We as the readers know the whole story
2. Those who are Comfortable Scorn the suffering (5)
 - a. Those who are at ease have contempt for the suffering
 - i. The assumption is that those who are at ease are good
 - ii. The assumption is that those who are suffering deserve it – "ready for those whose feet slip"
 - iii. The only reason they suffer is because their feet have slipped – is the assumption
3. Those who are Wicked live in comfort and ease (6)
 - a. The tents of robbers are at peace
 - b. those who provoke God are secure
 - c. Idolaters (those who bring their god) seem happy

*Job's friends have posited a works based system where God gives good to the good and punishes the bad in this life. Job is demonstrating that the fundamental premise of this logic is refuted by examples of real life. – G
It seems that the evil are prospering and the righteous are suffering.*

II. Wisdom Understands God's Sovereignty (7-12)

A. All Creation Recognizes God's Sovereignty (7-10)

Job may be mocking the friends here. They claim to be wise but even the dumb animals of creation know that God is sovereign over all things and does what he wills.

1. The beasts, birds, bushes, and fish will teach you this if you don't know

- 2. All life is in God's hand
 - 3. The breath of all men is in God's hand
- B. Wisdom Doesn't Always Come with Age (11-12)
 - 1. The ear tests words (11)
 - a. anyone can hear the truth or error in the advice of the friends
 - b. truth must be examined and tested
 - 2. "Wisdom is with the aged" – Job seems to be being sarcastic
- III. God is Sovereign Over All Things (13-25)
 - A. God Alone Possesses Wisdom (13)
 - B. God's Purposes Cannot Be thwarted by Man (14)
 - 1. No one can rebuild what God tears down
 - 2. No one can release a man God has shut in
 - C. God Controls the Forces of Nature (15)
 - 1. God controls the rain
 - 2. God controls the droughts
 - D. God is Sovereign Over all Mankind (16-21)
 - 1. God possesses all strength and wisdom
 - 2. God Uses both the deceiver and his deceived for his purposes
 - a. "All things work together for good..." – Rom. 8:28
 - b. This is a hard truth – God sends delusions in judgment, God turns men over to what they desire, God uses even Satan to accomplish his purposes (the point of the book of Job)
 - 3. God confounds the wisdom of men (17)
 - 4. God defies the authority of human kings (18)
 - 5. God rebukes the religious and confounds the strong
 - 6. God confounds the discernment of men
 - E. God Uncovers all that is Hidden (22)
 - F. God is Sovereign over Nations and Kingdoms (23)
 - G. God is Sovereign Over all Man's Wisdom (24-25)