

“But Man Dieth”

Job 14:1-22

The text for the title comes from verse 10.

Job is continuing his discourse with God in this chapter. It is part of the greater answer (discourse) that he was giving to Zophar (and Bildad and Eliphaz as well) regarding the accusation that he was a hypocrite and a liar, and somehow had deserved all the trouble he was in.

In this chapter are some very straightforward truths about life and death. One author said this chapter in the life of Job could be used at funerals in relation to those that have already died and would be useful for us in preparing for our own death (Matthew Henry). It will help us to understand that death is not to be feared for the believer.

One thing to keep in mind in this text in Job is that what he says here about life and death is in direct relation to the trial he was going through, and his oft requested desire to die if that was the only way the suffering would end. God is giving basic principles of life and death for which there can be (and sometimes are) exceptions or qualifications in other portions of Scripture. This text cannot be used to build absolute Bible doctrine or dogma on, without taking the preponderance of evidence from the rest of written Scripture in accordance with it. This gives us a starting point, so to speak.

We have in this chapter an account of:

I. MAN’S LIFE – vs. 1-6

A. *It is short – vs. 1a, 2*

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days”

(short of days)

Genesis 47:9

⁹ And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

Psalm 39:4-5

⁴ LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

⁵ Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

Psalm 90:10

¹⁰ The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

B. It is sorrowful – vs. 1b

“And full of trouble” (full of unrest) – the word “trouble” carries the idea of agitation – “the chaos of ordinary life in this world” (Zodhiates).

Ecclesiastes 2:17-23

¹⁷ Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

¹⁸ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

¹⁹ And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise

man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

²⁰ Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

²¹ For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.

²² For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

²³ For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

C. It is sinful – vs. 3-4

1. In verse 3, Job is referring to the righteousness and holiness of God, and comparing himself to that, and how that God will judge all of us by His own holiness – the only way we will be able to stand will be if we are clothed in the holiness of Christ.
2. Verse 4 is seen over and over in the Bible – we are all sinners, no matter who we are, nor what we have or have not done.

Psalm 51:5

⁵ Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Isaiah 64:6

⁶ But we are all as an unclean thing, and all

our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

D. It is set – vs. 5-6, 14

1. Vs. 5 – our days are “determined” – predestined to be what they are. This speaks to the sovereign will of God. We cannot understand all of what that term means, but we know that as we live our lives God is there to guide us in the direction He wants us to go. This is one of those verses that are used to show the predeterminate will of God for every life. Some argue we have no choice in the matter. That is not what it is saying – Job is simply stating an obvious truth: God is in control of all things, including man’s lifespan, and it is His choice if it ends or not. Job is not saying man does not have a choice – He is only dealing with his particular situation and life and stating general terms in relation to that understanding.
2. Vs. 14 – “my appointed time” – the time of our death.
 - a) Job is speaking to this life and death – that once we die, we won’t live here again.
 - b) This verse can be used to show that although we won’t come back here, there will be an existence after death here (either heaven or hell). That’s what the last phrase references – “till my change come” (change of order, literally).

II. MAN’S DEATH – VS. 7-15

A. *It is final and forever – vs. 7-12*

1. That is, in relation to this life
2. Job is not so much concerned with life after death here as he is with this life.
3. When this life is over, and physical death takes us, we aren't going to come back from it (here on earth) – it is final and forever.

B. *It is fixed – vs. 13-15*

1. By "fixed" I mean that it is an appointed time and nothing man can do can change that appointed time (albeit, he can bring it sooner out of foolishness, but he cannot extend it).
2. Just as man's life is set, so is his death fixed, or set.

III. MAN'S VIEW IN LIGHT OF BOTH – VS. 16-22

A. *That we are sinners and deserve punishment – vs. 16-17*

1. Although Job was right in understanding that God knows our sin, he seems to accuse God unjustifiably here of being too harsh on him.
2. The Bible makes it clear that God is keeping the books of mankind's sins and payment must be made for them.
3. Jesus paid the price for our sins, and for those that accept that payment, we are

already justified – our payment is already settled, but for those that do not accept the payment, in death, they will pay for their sins.

Revelation 20:11–13

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

B. That all of creation will eventually pass away – vs. 18-20

1. That includes even the strongest of creation – mountains and rocks
2. As verse 19 shows us, God can use something as simple as water to wash a stone of immense size away over time – all of life will come to an end.
3. That is true of man as well – the “hope of man” spoken of here is not that of heaven but that of longer life than we are appointed – many today are trying to “cheat” death in an attempt to live longer, but it won’t work, no matter how much they “hope” for it.

4. Verse 20 refers to what happens after we die – our body decays (“thou changest his countenance”) and we return to dust (“sendest him away”).

C. That nothing of this life is known after death – vs. 21

D. That, while living, we will have pain and sorrow – vs. 22

1. This goes back to the first verse of this chapter
2. Because of man’s original sin, there is going to be pain in our body and misery in our soul – no matter what we do to try and prevent it.

Conclusion: This chapter in Job is one of both joy and sadness. The thing to remember is just that – that life is going to be filled with both, and so also is death. For the believer, death brings joy and a forever in heaven; however, for those left behind it brings sadness and sorrow. That will not change as long as man is on this earth as they are now. Thank God, though, that there is life after death in heaven to look forward to – even Job knew that.

Job 19:25-27

25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.