

# “But Now”

## Job 29-30

Our text comes from the first two words of chapter 30.

These two chapters give us a very stark contrast between what Job used to be and what he was now. There are several lessons to learn from these two chapters, but I believe the most important one for the believer is to do for the Lord what we can now, for we don't know what may come tomorrow.

### I. BEFORE – CHAPTER 29

***A. This chapter gives us what Job's life was like before this calamity hit him.***

***B. His life was wonderfully blessed – vs. 1-7:***

1. By the presence of the Lord – vs. 2-4

John 8:12

<sup>12</sup> Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 12:46

<sup>46</sup> I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

2. By the presence of his children – vs. 5

Psalms 127:3-5

<sup>3</sup> Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

<sup>4</sup> As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man;  
so are children of the youth.

<sup>5</sup> Happy is the man that hath his quiver full  
of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they  
shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

3. By the presence of wealth – vs. 6

a) The washing his “steps with butter” has  
been widely interpreted, but it all points to  
the great success he had with his milk  
production, and how he had so much extra  
that he could use it to wash with.

b) “The rock poured me out rivers of oil” –  
again, pointing to his being so blessed by  
God that even the rocks produced for him.

4. By the presence of others – vs. 7

**C. His life was wonderfully used – vs. 8-17.**

1. He was apparently a magistrate, or judge,  
and was able to use that position to help  
many others.

2. He was of such great importance to the  
area at that time that even the heads of  
state consider him great – vs. 8-11.

3. He was used of God to help those that  
could not help themselves – vs. 12-17.

**D. His life was wonderfully fulfilling – vs.  
18-25.**

**II.AFTER – CHAPTER 30**

**A. This chapter gives us what Job's life was like after this calamity hit him – it is a very stark opposite of what it was.**

**B. His life was horribly cursed – vs. 1-14.**

He was cursed by those he formerly would have considered wicked.

**C. His life was horribly abandoned – vs. 15-16.**

He was abandoned by others to such an extent that he saw no end to his dilemma.

**D. His life was horribly emptied – vs. 17-31:**

1. Emptied of health – vs. 17-18
2. Emptied of hope – vs. 19-23 – in his view, God had abandoned him. Keep in mind, this is a comparison to the previous chapter, and in relative or comparative terms, the only way for Job to describe what was happening to him was to speak as if God was “cruel” to him. If God was the source of his good before this calamity then He, by comparison, was the source of the bad of the calamity.
3. Emptied of help – vs. 24-31 – both help for him and his ability to help others
  - a) Verse 24 is one that has been interpreted in many ways, none of which agree with the others. The majority of biblical translations simply translate it literally because of the inability to make any more real sense out of it for English than the literal. Keeping with in the context of Job's lamenting about his condition (both here

and previous) and keeping with the idea that he often sought for death to end his suffering, that would be the best way to view this verse. Although the Hebrew word translated by the KJV translators as "death" is one that means simply "ruin or rubbish," the translators viewed the ruin or end of life as death, and so translated it thus.

b) Here is the original Hebrew of the verse:

אֵדָּ לֹא-בְעִי, יִשְׁלַח-יָדָּ;

אִם-בְּפִידוֹ, לָהֶן שׁוּעַ .

"Job means to state a general and important principle – that there was rest in the grave. He said he knew that God would bring him down there, but that would be a state of repose. The hand of God producing the pain, would not reach there, nor would the sorrows experienced in this world be felt there, provided there had been a praying life. Notwithstanding all his afflictions, therefore, and his certain conviction that he would die, he had unwavering confidence in God. Agreeably to this, the following paraphrase will convey the true sense. I know that he will bring me to the grave. Nevertheless (אך 'ak), over the ruins (בעי be'ô y) – of my body, the ruins in the grave – he will not stretch out his hand – to afflict me there or to pursue those who lie there with calamity and judgment; if in his destruction (בפידו bepi'ydô) – in the destruction or desolation which God

brings upon people – among them (להן) –  
lâhên)– among those who are thus  
consigned to the ruins of the grave –  
there is prayer (שׁוֹעַ shûa’); if there has  
been supplication offered to him, or a  
cry for mercy has gone up before him.”  
(Barnes)

c) Verse 29 is describing the resulting crying  
and screaming from the pain he either was  
in at this point, or more likely, simply  
recalling for his friends the pain he had  
been in all along.

(1) *"I am brother" – in this sense, a  
companion with similar traits – here,  
the trait of the loud noise made.*

(2) *"To dragons" – not the fire-breathing  
beast we think of, but simply a wild  
beast. The Geneva Bible has this as, "I  
am like the wild beasts that desire  
solitary places." The word for "dragon"  
here (תַּנִּינִים) is not the one we would  
expect for "dragon" in the Hebrew  
(תַּנִּינָאִים) – which is also translated  
serpents, whales, monster, etc. The  
point being made is not the animal in  
question but the wailing noise they  
made when in pain.*

(3) *"And a companion to owls" –  
"companion" relates to "brother" and  
"owl" to "dragon." The noise of the owl  
(an unclean bird – a horned or great  
owl, as we know them) and the noise of  
an injured beast were well known to  
people of the land and the comparison  
Job is making is one of despair.*

Conclusion: Just remember – we will all have a “before and after” story to tell. If we don’t have one now, we will. What is vitally important is that we remember that God is control, and we are in His care. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. . .”