

# Job 42.7-17

**42:7-9**—God deals with Job's three friends. Notice three things:

1. God's primary problem with the friends is that they did not speak of Him what was right (42:7). Yes, they were arrogant, harsh, insensitive, and shallow. Yes, they were terrible friends. But their worst mistake was that they maligned God. They oversimplified God and made Him a small god who fit their small-minded ways, and God was not pleased. It is so important that we would know God truly through His Word! It is crucial that we would know God for who He really is. Everything else is secondary to this, because everything else depends on and is built upon this.
2. God makes the friends go to Job in order to get right with God (42:8-9).
  - ◆ God puts a high premium on our relationships with one another. He greatly values our reconciliation with one another. He also greatly values the humility that we learn when we are forced to face our mistakes with one another.
  - ◆ Getting right with God does not free us from having to get right with one another. The exact opposite is true: Getting right with God requires that we get right with one another.
3. God is very gracious to the friends, even though they completely blew it (42:9).
  - ◆ Think about just how heinous the friends were, and then realize that God still accepted Job's prayer and forgave them. This is good news for us. We can be heinous sometimes, too. Even when we completely blow it, God is still gracious to forgive us.
  - ◆ Even though God forgives the friends, He still requires them to face Job, probably because He wanted them to learn humility. Even when God forgives us, He sometimes does not remove the consequences of our actions, because He wants to use those consequences to teach us something. We usually realize that God is gracious to forgive. What we don't realize nearly as often is that God is also gracious to make us face the consequences and learn from them. It is more gracious of God to teach us lessons that are good for our soul than it would be for God to just let us off the hook.

**42:10**—When does God make Job prosperous again? After he prays for his friends... which means Job prayed for his friends before his suffering was relieved.

We are reminded again that Job really is a righteous guy. However, I think we can easily misinterpret this verse if we don't remember the big picture of the book. We will be tempted to think the point is that God rewards Job for being such a good guy by giving him all his wealth back... As in, "Job is good to his friends, so then God blesses him." That is not the point! In fact, that is the very mistake that the book has been trying to correct all along!

The real point is this: Job really is righteous even apart from the blessings. His repentance in 42:1-6 was so authentic that he is willing to forgive the men who have been very cruel to him. God has been right all along: He really does know how to make His people righteous. Satan accused God of "short-circuiting" Job's righteousness by blessing him. Job accused God of being arbitrary in allowing Him to suffer. Both are proven wrong, and God is proven right. God was able to use both circumstances to make Job truly righteous, and that is proven once and for all in this verse.

God always knows what is best for His people. When He blesses us, He is right and it is best for us. When He allows us to suffer, He is right and it is best for us.

**42:10-17**—Don't miss this! It is really great!

When it's all said and done, God comes back and makes Job twice as prosperous as he was before (42:10, 12), rebuilds his family (42:13-15), and blesses him with a long and joyful life (42:16-17).

Again, make sure you have learned your lesson from the book. It would be a mistake to take such a simplified view that we think God is only blessing Job as a reward for his obedience. Of course, that is part of what He's doing, but remember the bigger picture.

Satan came to God and said, "Job isn't really righteous. He doesn't love you. He just loves the gifts. Take it all away, and Job will curse you. That will prove that you are wrong to bless the righteous. You don't know what's best for your people." So God agrees to remove His hand of blessing and allow Satan to afflict Job. As you well know by now, Job maintains his integrity during his suffering, and God is proven right.

That could be the end of the story, and God would be completely right. But think about what God does next: He comes back to Job and does the very thing that Satan had challenged Him about to start with... He blesses Job. It's almost like God is sticking His pinky in Satan's eye.

What is the real lesson we want to learn here? **God is completely free to do as He pleases.** He is not obligated to prove Himself to Satan. He can bless the righteous if He wants. Sure, He agreed to allow Job to suffer for a while, but in the end, He still blesses Job in spite of Satan's accusations. God will continue to do things His way, and just for good measure, every once in a while, He will demonstrate for us that He has been right all along!