

Session 21

*Job Repents to God of Uttering Things
He Understood Not*

Job 42:1-6

Scriptures

Job 42:1

Psalms 32:5

Job 42:2

I Corinthians 14:25

Genesis 6:5

Job 42:3

I John 1:8

Job 42:4

Psalms 119:33

Job 42:5

II Corinthians 3:18

Job 42:6

II Corinthians 7:11

Isaiah 43:25

Job 42:1 Then Job answered the Lord, and said,

Once a man has been sufficiently humbled by the Lord and confession of sin is made, all the previous agitation that has existed in his soul subsides.

Repentance for sin will produce for the penitent a spirit of peace entering into and abiding within his heart.

Where previously there was only contention and confusion because of sin's presence, once it is both confessed and repented of by the sinner, then God's spiritual rest will begin filling the soul.

This spiritual reality is now true of Job. He has recognized his sin, confessed it as wrong, and as a result has entered into sweet fellowship with the Lord.

How wonderful it is when erring and rebellious men confess their transgressions, admit their guilt, and recognize their sin against heaven!

And as a wonderful result, they are both forgiven and cleansed through the grace and mercy of God.

Psalms 32:5 I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

The conflict, struggle, and contention between the Lord and Job has now ceased, and Job is more than willing to confess his spiritual ignorance.

Job 42:2 I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Job's confession begins with his new spiritual understanding of God's power and ability not only to do everything, but that the Lord can also see everything.

Whereas previously Job had believed his inward feelings could be concealed from the Lord, now he knows they never could be.

As God has revealed, through both Elihu's and His own correction, that every thought of the sinner is not only observed but remembered.

No thought can be withheld from the Lord, and now Job understands this spiritual reality to be true concerning himself. What he had spoken and thought in secret, has now been made known publicly.

Not also until men spiritually perceive God's ability to detect the deep contemplations and intentions of the heart, will they realize that even thoughts they surmised able to be concealed, can be counted as sin against them.

Job's confession reveals his spiritual awakening that no thought can be hidden or undisclosed from the Lord.

Much of what both Elihu and God had spoken, dealt with the internal ruminations of Job's being, his hidden cogitations and un-uttered words.

It was this spiritual understanding that God can see all, knows all, and is aware of every thought in the human heart, that ultimately brought Job to his knees, prompting his spiritual repentance.

I Corinthians 14:25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

Not only had the Lord heard Job's words, but He had also taken specific account of his internal spiritual dissatisfaction. No doubt, Job's thought-to-be-hidden presumptions were just deeper accusations against the Lord and extended even further than his erring words.

Practically, sin lies not merely in what sinners do, but is equally present and accountable in what they think.

And just as the inside of the cup is the most unclean, so also are the thoughts of the sinner far more evil and accusative of the Lord than even the incriminating words he outwardly voices.

Genesis 6:5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

By divine standards, to think something in the heart is reckoned exactly the same as either speaking or doing it.

Job 42:3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

Because of Job's spiritual ignorance his pride had blinded him to believe he knew more of the Lord than he really did. This temerity has resulted in his sinning against the very One Whom he initially thought to praise. Because of his new spiritual enlightenment, Job is now fully ready to take responsibility for his sin:

Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

The emphasis is on "I": I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. The "I" is used with purposed and intentional design, simply

because Job had come to spiritually realize that he, and no other, was the source of his sin. He no longer blames his friends or his God.

It was he who had hidden God's counsel because of a lack of knowledge of the Lord, and he, who had uttered things concerning the Almighty, which he understood not.

Undoubtedly, by this time Job is fully aware that to wrongly blame others for sin, especially the Lord, is actually a denial of it.

None also can truly deny their sin and continue to possess the truth of God's Word living within their heart.

I John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

The sinner's denial of sin is common, and is first observed in Genesis in Adam's attempt to transfer his sin to Eve, with Eve doing the exact same thing in regard to the devil (Gen. 3:11–13). Yet in the end Adam, Eve, and the devil were all spiritually judged for the sin they committed (Gen. 3:14–19).

King Saul also tried unsuccessfully to transfer blame to the children of Israel for his sin of disobedience to God's commandment (I Sam. 15:19–23).

Thus, though it was absolutely true that Job's friends had troubled him, and the devil had both tempted and assaulted him, Job was now fully aware that his own sin is what had produced conflict with the Lord, and ultimately could never be transferred to anyone other than himself.

As a further admission of his spiritual ignorance, Job confesses that there are many things concerning the Lord *too wonderful* to be known.

The Lord's plan had been intricate, far beyond human understanding, and well above Job's natural ability to comprehend its final godly purpose. God's wisdom, Job rightly confesses, is far above his own.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 42:3

too wonderful—I rashly denied that Thou hast any fixed plan in governing human affairs, merely because Thy plan was “too wonderful” for my comprehension.

History details that God allows certain events in men's lives so that His purposes can be fulfilled for them.

Joseph was sold into slavery not only because of the envy that lived in his brothers' hearts, but also, and most importantly, because this was part of God's plan for his life (Gen. 45:4–8).

Moses also was abandoned as a child (Exod. 2:1–6) for the singular purpose of being raised up in Pharaoh's court so that he might adequately be prepared to lead God's people out of Egypt (Exod. 14:21–31).

In what proved to be the case with Joseph, Moses, Job, and many others, when it seemed initially that they could be viewed as victims, actually the Lord was purposing a much higher and nobler design for their lives.

Ultimately, the Lord has a distinct and blessed purpose for every child of God. This purpose is always and without question to work all things for their final good. But if men fight against divine will, and foolishly accuse God of injustice, then they shall very

quickly find themselves in conflict with Him—simply because to complain against God's will for your life, and accuse Him of sinning against you, is to question both the sovereignty and goodness of God.

Job's journey was both lengthy and difficult to bear, but in the end his newfound wisdom and knowledge of God was priceless.

Whereas previously he had only heard of God, now he reveals that he has actually come to see Him (Job 42:5).

Job had learned much spiritually, which only a trial like this could accomplish. And although the journey was long, the spiritual illumination was indispensable, and would forever change his faith, his perception of God, and his opinions of himself.

Job 42:4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Benson Commentary, Job 42:4

The words which God had uttered to Job by way of challenge, Job returns to him in the way of submission.

Once the Lord has sufficiently humbled Job, he is now in a position to answer the Lord properly.

Whereas this servant of God had previously been afraid of offending God through his speech, now he feels fully confident to carry on a proper conversation with the Lord without any spiritual trepidation.

His confession had produced a clean conscience, a heart free from internal accusation, and a new holy, spiritual confidence.

Having been sufficiently humbled, and realizing the degree of his error, he now assumes the role of a penitent and teachable pupil.

Psalms 119:33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.

Job 42:5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

It is one thing to hear of God *by the hearing of the ear* and quite another, and a more profound thing, to actually come to see Him: *but now mine eye seeth thee*.

Where previously Job had only heard of God and what others had said concerning Him, now, after his trial, he could actually see the Lord.

It is this result that is the purpose of divine trials, in order that those who successfully undergo them, are brought to the spiritual enlightenment of actually coming to see the Lord.

As with Job, and also with ourselves, divine trials are purposed to remove spiritual blindness.

So that if the Lord cannot be truly seen before the trial, He shall be able to be accurately perceived after it.

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Benson Commentary, Job 42:5

But now mine eye seeth thee—“It is plain,” says Dr. Dodd, “that there is some privilege intended here that Job had never enjoyed before, and which he calls a sight of God. He had heard of him by the hearing of the ear, or the tradition delivered down from his forefathers; but he had now a clear and sensible perception of his being and divine perfections; some light thrown in upon his mind, which carried its own evidence with it; and which to him had all the certainty and clearness even of sight itself.”

Nothing is as transformative to the sinner’s soul as when the Lord and His glory become visible.

It is this sight of God which is the very first step of being transformed by Him.

It is also the process of beholding the Lord’s glory which practically aids in transforming the sinner.

II Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Job 42:6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Here we observe that Job no longer claims any personal self-righteousness. Whereas previously he had exalted himself, thinking himself able to question the Lord’s justice, now he abhors the very man he once defended.

Though Job now despised both his ignorance and uncleanness before God, the result in his heart was quite the opposite of what one might expect, simply because whenever there is sincere and genuine repentance for sin, a healing in self will be simultaneously produced.

All truth, even truth purposed for man’s contrition, if believed, sets men free.

There are two primary effects that will be evidenced when confession of sin is made by the penitent.

The first is an indignation and hatred for the sin committed.

This is not an ungodly reaction, but is actual proof of sincere remorse for committing sin.

The second is that there will be a renewed spiritual energy, to never again transgress in the same manner.

Because God forgives the penitent, the weight of sin shall be lifted, and a fresh new spiritual walk can begin.

Second Corinthians speaks of this process, when men experience true godly sorrow and then become spiritually energized to pursue a much holier life.

II Corinthians 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Barnes' notes on this topic are lengthy but worthy of consideration. They reveal how godly sorrow and repentance for sin, will produce true and lasting spiritual transformation in the soul.

Barnes' Notes on the Bible, II Cor. 7:11

For behold this self-same thing—For see in your own case the happy effects of godly sorrow. See the effects which it produced; see an illustration of what it is suited to produce. The construction is, “For lo! this very thing, to wit, your sorrowing after a godly manner, wrought carefulness, clearing of yourselves,” etc. The object of Paul is to illustrate the effects of godly sorrow, to which he had referred in 2 Corinthians 7:10. He appeals, therefore, to their own case, and says that it was beautifully illustrated among themselves.

What carefulness—(σπουδήν *spoudēn*). This word properly denotes “speed, haste;” then diligence, earnest effort, forwardness. Here it is evidently used to denote the diligence and the great anxiety which they manifested to remove the evils which existed among them. They went to work to remove them. They did not sit down to mourn over them merely, nor did they wait for God to remove them, nor did they plead that they could do nothing, but they set about the work as though they believed it might be done. When people are thoroughly convinced of sin, they will set about removing it with the utmost diligence. They will feel that this can be done, and must be done, or that the soul will be lost.

What clearing of yourselves—(ἀπολογίαν *apologian*). Apology. This word properly means a plea or defense before a tribunal or elsewhere; Acts 22:1; 2 Timothy 4:16. Tyndale renders it, “Yea, it caused you to clear yourselves.” The word here properly means “apology” for what had been done; and it probably refers here to the effort which would be made by the sounder part of the church to clear themselves from blame in what had occurred. ... The whole church was roused, and all felt, and all endeavored in the proper way to free themselves from the blame, and to remove the evil from among them.

Yea, what indignation—Indignation against the sin, and perhaps against the persons who had drawn down the censure of the apostle. One effect of true repentance is to produce decided hatred of sin. It is not mere regret, or sorrow, it is positive hatred. There is a deep indignation against it as an evil and a bitter thing.

Yea, what fear—Fear lest the thing should be repeated. Fear lest it should not be entirely removed. Or it may possibly mean fear of the displeasure of Paul, and of the punishment which would be inflicted if the evil were not removed. But it more probably refers to the anxious state of mind that the whole evil might be corrected, and to the dread of having any vestige of the evil remaining among them.

Yea, what vehement desire—This may either mean their fervent wish to remove the cause of complaint, or their anxious desire to see the apostle. It is used in the latter sense in 2 Corinthians 7:7, and according to Doddridge and Bloomfield this is the meaning here. Locke renders it, “desire of satisfying me.” It seems to me more probable that Paul refers to their anxious wish to remove the sin, since this is the topic under consideration. The point of his remarks in this verse is not so much their affection for him as their indignation against their sin, and their deep grief that sin had existed and had been tolerated among them.

Yea, what zeal—Zeal to remove the sin, and to show your attachment to me. They set about the work of reformation in great earnest. ...

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In all things ...—The sense of this is, “You have entirely acquitted yourselves of blame in this business.” The apostle does not mean that none of them had been to blame, or that the church had been free from fault, for a large part of his former Epistle is occupied in reproofing them for their faults in this business, but he means that by their zeal and their readiness to take away the cause of complaint, they had removed all necessity of further blame, and had pursued such a course as entirely to meet his approbation. They had cleared themselves of any further blame in this business, and had become, so far as this was concerned, “clear” (ἀγνοῦς *hagnous*) or pure.

Whenever there is sincere recognition and repentance for sin, as evidenced with Job, spiritual transformation will be the result.

This includes indignation and hatred for the sin committed, a determination to never repeat it again, and a renewed holy desire to live more godly before God.

This was proven true concerning the Corinthians, true with Job, and it shall be proven true with us.

By acknowledging our sin, we can be both forgiven and cleansed from it, and consequently purified from all previous unrighteousness, which is an eternal testament to the manifold grace, mercy, and goodness of God.

Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

