

The Book of Job: Blessed Be the Name of the Lord

Lesson Five

1. Throughout much of this book, Job thinks that God is mean. The meaning of Job's name is *enemy*. And often in this book Job thinks that God is treating him like an enemy.
2. But here in Job 23:10, there is a glimmer of understanding on Job's part. A hint that Job really gets what's going on. He says, "When He has tested me, I will come forth as gold." God wants you to have a faith as refined as gold. He takes both the good things in your life and the times of suffering and works them together, melts them together to bring forth a mature faith. The Lord uses five elements to refine your faith as gold. The five S's.
3. When suffering comes, and most likely it will, you may experience **shock**. You remember when Job sat in ashes, scraping himself with a piece of broken pottery. He had just lost everything. His world had fallen apart. And for seven and days and seven nights neither he nor his friends said a word. Job couldn't say anything. He'd had the wind knocked out of him. He was in shock.
4. Then, Job began to lament, to **sorrow**. He began to cry out to God, and it was not pretty. He cursed the day he was born. He said he wanted God to just leave him alone and let him die. His heart was breaking. And he was not getting any sort of reply from God. The only sound was the sound of his own lament, his own sorrow.
5. But here in chapter 23, Job's lament takes a turn. He begins to question the silent God as to why all this has happened to him. Verses 3 and 4: "If only I knew where to find Him; if only I could go to His dwelling! I would state my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments." Sometimes, life does not make sense. We see bad

people prosper, filling their pockets off of others. While we, good people, suffer. So, we **struggle** with God, argue with God.

6. And God has to remind us that making us happy is not His goal. (Luke 14:25-32, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21) His goal is to make us more like Jesus, a new creation. More and more like Jesus in the way we live and talk and think. That's called **sanctification**. (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 2 Thessalonians 2:13) And just because we use the word *goal* here does not mean that there is a reason for everything. At times, we must admit that we see no reason why something has happened. At the same time, no suffering happens in your life without God's permission. Not a hair on your head can be lost unless God permits it. God has His own purposes, though we cannot see them. We cannot see the reasons for our suffering, but God always has a plan. And our sanctification is a big part of that plan. God uses the bad in our lives for good. As He promises in Romans 8:28: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him."

7. Note that Paul does not say that all things are good. Just because you're a Christian does not mean that everything in your life will be good. But what Paul is saying is that God is very good at taking something very bad in your life and turning it into something good. He turns crucifixions into resurrections. What looked like a dead end on Good Friday when Jesus died for your sins and mine opened up onto Easter morning. "I know that my Redeemer lives!" God takes the suffering in our lives and works it together with the good in our lives to use it for good.

8. To use it to serve others. To mature us in faith so that we can be of **service** to others. Who can better help the parents of a Down syndrome child than parents who have had a Down syndrome child? Who can better help someone who has alcohol or drug addiction than someone who is recovering from alcohol or drug addiction? The very thing you want least to talk about in your life is the very thing God wants to use most to help other folks. Job 23:10.

