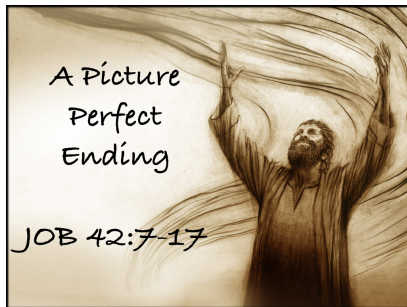


## A Picture Perfect Ending (Job 42:7-17 December 4, 2016)



If you are a prosperity teacher – someone who believes God gives health wealth and prosperity to his children you love the beginning of Job but you *really* love the end of Job.

You love the opening of the book with godly Job the greatest man of his day – blessed with family, wealth, position and prosperity.

But you *really* love the end of the book where Job repents and receives a *double* blessing. He ends up with more family, wealth, position and prosperity than he had at the start.

**However**, if you are a prosperity teacher – you find the rest of the book – everything in between to be uncomfortable and messy.

As for most of the rest of Christendom – including those here this morning – we like the opening of Job – we empathise with him in the middle of the book – but most of us find the end of the book to be messy – really messy.

There are a number of things about the ending of Job that just do not sit right with most of us.

Because of this – some – even very conservative Christians – have wondered if the end of Job was tacked on and is not supposed to be here.

So why does the end of Job make many of us feel uncomfortable?

There are a number of reasons – but let me give you my top:

**Two things that don't seem to make sense about the ending of Job.**

- 1. Why did God only accept the repentance of the three friends based on the mediation of Job?**
- 2. Why did God bless Job so abundantly after he repented?**

If it is not immediately clear why these are messy – let me unpack these for you.

## **1. Why did God only accept the repentance of the three friends based on the mediation of Job?**

Look at verses 7-9:

After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the Lord had told them, and the Lord accepted Job's prayer.

This is messy because Job is set in the days before priests and sacrifices – yet God says to Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite – you have to make a burnt offering and then go to Job and he will pray for you and I will accept you based on his prayer for you.

These guys need Job – who has no official position as a priest – to be a mediator before God will accept their repentance? Why?

It didn't seem like Job needed any mediator when he repented in verses 2-6.

So why Job as mediator?

But if you think that is messy – now we come to the really messy bit.

## **2. Why did God bless Job so abundantly after he repented?**

Job 42:10–17:

And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and ate bread with him in his house. And they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him. And each of them gave him a piece of money and a ring of gold. And the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning. And he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first daughter Jemimah, and the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-happuch. And in all the land there were no women so beautiful as Job's daughters. And their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. And after this Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations. And Job died, an old man, and full of days.

**Wow – that is what I call a happy ending!**

It is not just that one day Job's suffering ended. Job's suffering ended, he was healed and he was blessed so abundantly he received a double blessing of everything – including children.

You and I read this and there is a part of us that thinks – that's great! After all his unjust suffering Job gets his reward – his happy ending. Who isn't happy for Job?

And – a big part of us hopes – maybe I can get this kind of happy ending.

So, what is the problem with this ending?

Happy endings don't sit well with reality.

The good guys don't always win.

The poor girl doesn't always get the prince.

The reality is that most of us don't get a happy ending – no matter how much we repent, pray or obey.

And in many ways Job doesn't deserve a happy ending.

Here is Job a man who maintains his anger and rage and doesn't repent even when a prophet of God appears.

Job spends 28 chapters complaining bitterly about God's unrighteousness.

Job says some *very* harsh things about God.

God finally appears and only then does Job repent.

Yet God doesn't just restore Job to his former glory and prominence – He restores him twofold.

On the surface – the lesson of the ending of Job seems to be – when you are suffering – find the sin – find the lesson God wants you to learn – repent – and then wait for incredible blessings to flow.

If that is actually the lesson – then angry Job was right, the three friends were right.

If you do the right thing by God – God will eventually bless you.

Joel Osteen and the prosperity teachers are ultimately right.

And notice the other implication – if you don't get a happy ending – if you aren't healed – if you don't get married – don't have children – don't find a job – **then** you have not truly repented, have dealt with sin, are not right with God.

Not only is this cruel – **but** – this **isn't** how God seems to work in the rest of the Bible *or* in real life.

It isn't how God treated the prophets, the Apostles or Jesus.

It isn't how He usually treats Christians.

The vast majority of Christians with terminal cancer do die.

The vast majority of parents of disabled children never see a miracle and their children cured.

Since the days of the Apostles – I don't know of any grieving husband who saw his wife resurrected.

Paul prayed three times for God to remove the thorn in his flesh. God didn't. The answer to his prayer was – My grace is sufficient.

In chapter 1 – Satan said to God – Job only serves you because you give him stuff. You bless him, protect him and give him prosperity.

This ending actually makes Satan look like he might have a point.

If you know that after a season of suffering – you will learn your lesson and then have incredible blessing – what gets you through the suffering is *not* faith in the glory and greatness and goodness of God – **but** hanging on for the blessing that will come.

That is exactly what Job did at the beginning of his trials – and the blessing did not come – so Job lost it big time.

On the surface, this ending seems to undo many of the lessons and truths Job had learned through so many trials.

So, because of this – many, many Christians do not like the ending of the book of Job at all.

Yes – God **can** cure chronic illness, messed up marriages, prodigal children – but very often faithful Christians do **not** see such happy endings.

So why did Job get one? Why does Job seem to be special?

I suspect many of you have read these final eleven verses and something didn't seem right.

This is why many Christians are convinced – the book of Job should have ended at chapter 42 verse 6.

They think it should have ended after Job repents – while he is still sick, lonely and an outcast.

His reward will be in heaven – not on earth.

That seems to fit reality much better.

Very few of us get our suffering removed let alone double blessings – so why should Job?

So, you and I have to ask – why does the book have an ending that seems on the surface to undo much of the message of the rest of the book?

I am going to tell you what I think about the ending of Job – but I encourage you to do your own study – to wrestle with the text. To ask – what is God telling us by giving us this ending?

But before we look at these verses again, I want to remind you of something we looked at right in our first message of Job.

It is clear that the author of Job wanted to make the structure of his book obvious for us.

What we saw was that the author of Job used different styles of writing to outline the book:

**Prologue** – written in *Narrative* 1:1-2:13

**Body** – written in *Poetry* 3:1-42:6

**Epilogue** – written in *Narrative* 42:7-13

The book begins and ends with narrative or story.

Then the big part in the middle is given as poetry.

When we look at these sections what we have seen so far is this:

**Prologue 1:1-2:13**

*The earthly picture of innocent suffering*

Job is pictured as an innocent man who suffers greatly.

**Body 3:1-42:6**

*The struggling picture of innocent suffering*

Job is pictured as an innocent man who is struggling mightily with his suffering.

He thinks it is unjust. He wants to know why.

This is very much a picture of the emotions and struggles most of us have with sin and suffering.

The struggle ends only when His view of God is magnified and Job repents.

So, in many ways – it would have been fitting for Job to end at chapter 42 verse 6.

But it doesn't. There is a return to narrative.

What is the point God is making?

Here is what I think the point is:

### **Epilogue 42:7-13**

*The ultimate picture of innocent suffering*

What I want to suggest is that God gave this ending **not** to give us a picture of the earthly blessings of repentance – He gave it to give us a picture of the One to come.

**The mediation and blessing of Job pictures Jesus – the only One who can deal with sin and suffering.**

To show you why I believe this, I want to talk for a moment about what is known as **typology**.

**Typology refers to Old Testament figures which picture a coming New Testament reality concerning Jesus.**

Inanimate things like the Temple can be a type of Jesus.

Animals like the sacrificial lamb can be a type of Jesus.

A number of Old Testament characters such as – Noah and Melchizedek and Joseph and Moses and David – can be types of Jesus.

There is no doubt that we are meant to see types of Jesus in the Old Testament.

However, problems arise when we try and make too many aspects of a type relate to Jesus.

It is important to remember that no type corresponds to Jesus in every aspect – only in some aspects.

For example it sounds obvious – but David was **not** Jesus.

Parts of David's life in no way pointed to Jesus.

But – as an Israelite King – David's life did have a number of aspects that did look forward to the coming of Messiah.

I believe that this is also true of Job.

Consider with me the life of Job and these aspects of his life that do seem to picture Jesus:

- Both were blameless and upright, turning from evil.
- Both had positions of greatness.
- Both were brought to lowly positions.
- Both were tested by Satan.
- Both were falsely accused of being sinners.
- Both were mocked and abused.
- Both were abandoned by their friends.
- Both suffered greatly although blameless.
- Both cried out to God.

Perhaps you won't see every one of these as an echo of Jesus.

But I do maintain that there are enough similarities between the life of Job and the life of Jesus – to say that Job is a type of Jesus.

Again – don't mishear me. There are many aspects of Job's life that most certainly do **not** point to Jesus.

His justification of Himself.

His speaking ill of God.

Job was a good man – but he was not without sin.

Job's suffering was not truly innocent suffering.

Job's trust and obedience were far, far from great.

Job is certainly no Messiah.

However, I believe that as this book ends – there **are** two final pictures of Job given to us that are meant to find their fulfilment in Jesus.

There are **two** wonderful prophetic pictures of the Messiah to come that are a wonderful finale to this incredible book.

**Job as MEDIATOR – points to Jesus. In Him SIN does not have the final word.**

**Job as BLESSED – points to Jesus. In Him SUFFERING does not have the final word.**

Remember our two difficult questions?:

1. **Why did God only accept the repentance of the three friends based on the mediation of Job?**
2. **Why did God bless Job so abundantly after he repented?**

These questions are answered in these two pictures of Jesus.

*First* – the picture of:

**Job as MEDIATOR**

**Which points to Jesus. In Him SIN does not have the final word.**

Look again at Job 42:7–9.

While the main difficulty here is why Job functions as a mediator – there is another difficulty in verse 7:

After the Lord had spoken these words to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”

When you hear the Lord say to Eliphaz – My servant Job has spoken rightly of Me – our first thought is ... what?

Have I entered some parallel universe? In what way has Job spoken rightly of God?

Job has been angry at God – accused Him of injustice and ignoring his plight.

Job said some things that were not just wrong but close to blasphemous.

Elihu, a prophet of God, turned up and said – I am burning with anger at you Job. You have justified yourself and not God.

God turned up and told Job he darkens counsel by words without knowledge – that Job made God out to be unjust in order to justify himself.

So, when did Job actually say something that was right about God?

It is interesting the gymnastics many commentators go to in order to find something Job said that the friends did not say – and then show that somehow this speaks right of God.

I believe that the way to understand this is that Lord is specifically speaking of Job what Job said in chapter 42 verses 1-6.



Job repents. He says:

I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. ... I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. ... I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Lord – your ways are beyond man’s ways. You can work all things – including evil for good. These divine purposes cannot be thwarted by anything let alone the whim of man.

I did not know how great your majesty and power were.

Now I repent of my foolish, ignorant words.

In this – in his repentance – Job spoke what is right of God.

I think what Job said earlier in the book about God was **not** right. But now he **has** spoken what is right.

It is at this point that the focus turns to the three friends.

The point is that the three friends have **not** repented of *their* foolish, ignorant words.

Pause here for a minute.

We don’t know if Eliphaz and his friends heard all of God’s words to Job.

It seems they at least heard Job’s repentance.

I suspect that as they heard Job repent – they were feeling pretty good.

We knew the problem was Job. Finally, Job has realized it too.

So, I imagine that when God said – Eliphaz – My anger burns against you and your two friends – they would have been stunned.

Us??

What did we do wrong?

They should have known.

A prophet of God – Elihu – turned up in chapter 32 and told them:

I am burning with anger at you because although you had no answer – you declared Job to be in the wrong.

The only way they could make sense of the situation was to say – Job must have some huge hidden sin that God is punishing him for.

But Job didn't.

Here is the point – in their minds if God was punishing Job without some huge hidden sin – God *would* be unrighteous.

They had no category – no place for innocent suffering.

They could not imagine that God could have a purpose for suffering beyond punishment.

Their view of God is too small.

Like Job – they needed to repent of this false and ignorant view of God.

Now it is them who is face to face with the whirlwind.

Now it is them suffering the fate of Isaiah – Woe is me – I am a man of unclean lips – I am undone!

I can assure you that right at that moment – Eliphaz and his friends knew for a fact – they had sinned against a holy God and they were lost.

They were going to hell.

They had no hope.

**But** ... then God gives them hope.

God says to the three friends – take seven bulls and seven rams (a perfect sacrificial number of animals) – take them to My servant Job. Then he will mediate for you. He will pray for you.

And based on this blood sacrifice and the mediation of My servant – then I will accept his prayer and I will **not** deal with you according to your folly.

So let me summarise what this means for everyone involved.

As chapter 31 ended – these men had declared Job to be a sinner, a deceiver, a fool.

These men were miserable counsellors who caused Job much pain.

Bildad had told Job – your children were sinners who deserved to die (chapter 8).

Zophar had accused Job of finding evil sweet and something he refused to let go (chapter 20).

Eliphaz had said to Job – your evil is abundant – there is no end to your iniquities (chapter 22).

Bildad ended by telling Job he was a maggot and worm (chapter 25).

The sin of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar was not minor.

A prophet of God burned with anger at them.

God Himself burned with anger at them.

I want you to realise the significance of this.

Your wife gets angry at you – you make your own dinner.

God gets angry at you – you spend eternity suffering in hell.

If they are **not** reconciled to God – the suffering of Job will be nothing compared to what they face.

They were sinners.

The penalty is eternal damnation.

Now they are told – for them to be made right with God – they have to come to Job – the one they had so mistreated – and Job has to intercede for them.

They did come to Job and Job graciously agreed to pray for them – and the Lord accepted Job's prayer.

What is the point?

There is a whole sermon here on the need to forgive enemies, to pray for enemies – that is an important sermon that I will preach some time.

But I believe the real point behind this passage is a picture of how you and I come to salvation.

Like the three friends – we are sinners.

God's anger burns against us.

We are lost and without hope.

We are dead in our trespasses and sins.

One day we would face the whirlwind.

**But God!**

But God ... being rich in mercy ... gave us a Mediator, He gave us an Advocate, He gave us a Redeemer.

1 Timothy 2:5-6:

For there is one God, and there is one **mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.

1 John 2:1-2:

If anyone does sin, we have an **advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins.

Galatians 4:4-5:

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to **redeem** those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Remember – Job had thought that what he needed was an advocate, a mediator, a redeemer – but in his mind it was someone to lay out for God how righteous he was.

We saw that Job was asking for the wrong kind of mediator. What he actually needed, what we actually need, is a Mediator who will reconcile us to God – wipe away our sin – make us right with God.

This is a picture of that Mediator.

And like these three friends – the One who is our Mediator is the One we have scorned and rejected. The One our sin nailed to the cross.

We need to go in humility and ask Jesus our Mediator – to pray for us – to reconcile us to God.

And based on the sacrifice of Jesus – based on His death – God delights to accept that prayer and to wash us clean.

Throughout this book we have seen a question asked in many ways. How can mortal man be made right – be made clean – before a holy God?

Throughout this book – the answer keeps coming. It seems impossible. It can't be done.

No one can be good enough – perfect enough – righteous enough.

What this picture tells us is this.

With man it might be impossible – but not with God. In Jesus – SIN does **NOT** have the final word.

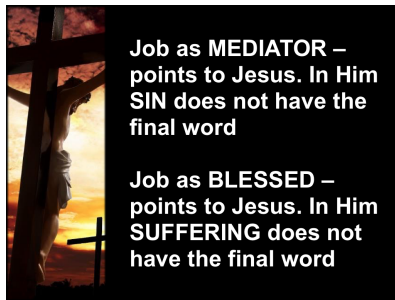
Jesus is a Mediator who actually destroys sin once and for all eternity.

He who knew no sin became sin – for our sake – that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

**This** is our gospel and this is the greatest news it is possible to hear.

But – the good news is not done yet.

There is one final picture.



### **Job as BLESSED**

**Which points to Jesus. In Him SUFFERING does not have the final word.**

Before we look at these verses – I need to point out something.

The picture is *not* – repent and be blessed in this life.

When Job repented there was no promise of healing or restoration or blessing.

When Job prayed for his three friends there was no promise of healing or restoration or blessing.

As far as Job knew – it was the will of God to leave him in the ashes, sick and suffering.

The view of Satan concerning Job in chapter 1 is ultimately shown to be false. Job does not love God in return for blessings.

At this point – Job loves God and all he can see is suffering.

But – he had come to know that God is enough. God's grace is sufficient for him.

It seems that this blessing – this exorbitant over the top uber-blessing – in this life – would have come as a surprise to Job.

So, again I stress – this is **not** meant to be a picture of how God will bless in this life if you repent or serve God.

To see what this **is** a picture of – let's look first at the text.

Job – who was a great man and was humbled is now restored.

In fact he is more than merely restored to his former place. The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before his suffering.

His family – who had deserted him come to him with gifts – which seem to recognize the exalted place Job holds.

Job's wealth is doubled. Do the maths. Before his trials – Job had 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys.

Then he lost everything.

Now his wealth is not just restored – it is doubled.

He has 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys.

Twice as much.

He also had seven sons and three daughters.

Now he is blessed with a further seven sons and three daughters.

The assumption is that his first seven sons and daughters are alive in glory – so in effect his children are doubled.

Then comes something unusual. The custom of the day was to exalt the sons. Daughters were an afterthought.

In chapter 1 it was the sons who were in the forefront. They had a birthday party every year, and they invited their sisters to come and share with them.

Here, at the end the focus is on the daughters of Job.

We know their names not the sons. Their names probably mean something like Dove, Perfume and Adornment – it sounds better in Hebrew – but the names are not significant apart from indicating Job's great love for them.

Notice also that contrary to the custom of the time – Job gave his daughters an inheritance among their brothers. Usually only sons inherit.

We are also told that Job lived 140 years – this probably means Job lived to be 140 years – double the normal 70 years Moses speaks of in Psalm 90.

He saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations. And Job died, an old man, and full of days.

What is the point of all of this?

In a way that echoes Job – Jesus who was great – then was humbled – is restored by God to a glory even beyond that which He had.

Philippians 2:8–10:

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

Hebrews 1:3-4:

After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Jesus was always God. On one level it is hard to imagine how you can be exalted above being God.

But it seems that as His love and sacrificial saving work are displayed to the universe – the full glory of Jesus is shown – and in this way He is highly exalted – and received the name above every name. A name related to His work in salvation.

And just as the friends and family came to Job – so we come to Jesus too recognize His exalted place.

And for those who come to Him – Jesus does something amazing.

Although He is God and we are but sinful men – He washes us clean and adopts us as sons and daughters.

As the family ate with Job – so we will eat with Jesus at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And Jesus will uber-bless us in amazing ways – ways beyond imagining.

He will give us an inheritance for eternity.

I think the focus here on Job's daughters – the contrast between how they are portrayed in chapter 1 and chapter 42 – is to emphasise the **greater** blessing – the incredible inheritance – that Jesus will give to **His** children in eternity.

Revelation 20-22 outlines some of those blessings.

We get to reign with Christ.

We get to watch Jesus judge death and Satan.

We will *not* suffer the second death.

Jesus will wipe away every tear because there will be no more mourning or crying or pain in eternity.

We will get to drink of the waters of life and enter the eternal city.

As Job lived with the generations of his family – the day will come when we will live with the generations of our family and friends.

And we will be perfect. And they will be perfect.

The disabled, the ill, the suffering, the hurt – all of us – will be restored – made perfect and together we will enjoy Jesus for all eternity.

Job may have died as an old man full of days – **but** the day will come when we will never die.

Throughout this book of Job – we have talked about the pain of life in this fallen world.

You have heard testimonies of suffering.

Every one of us has suffered and will suffer.

Death, illness, broken marriages, broken friendships, disabled children, hunger, natural disasters, pain.

*This* is the legacy of sin in our world and in our lives.

At times it seems hopeless.

At times it seems this is the final word.

But here is the great truth – suffering does **not** have the final word.

**Jesus** has the final word.

The day is coming when **He** will destroy sin and suffering forever.

If any here have not trusted Jesus. If He is not your Mediator – If you have not received His blessings – today is a great day to trust Him. To come to Him like Job's friends – to ask Him to Mediate between you and a holy God – and to give you *every* blessing in the heavenlies.

That is the truth of these verses.

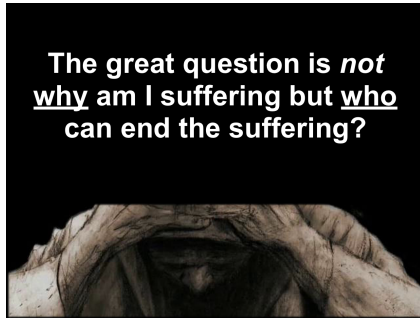
Brothers and sisters we have come to the end of Job.

I want you to note that Job reached the end – and he never received a direct answer to why he suffered. As far as we know Job never even found out the conversation between God and Satan.

But he didn't need to.



Job finally learned the point.



**The great question is *not* why am I suffering but who can end the suffering?**

Jesus is the One – the *only* One who can end the suffering. And He already has won the victory and the day of the end of sin and suffering is certain.

Many don't like the end of Job.

But rightly understood, I think it is a picture perfect ending. A picture of the complete and final victory of Jesus over sin and suffering.

What is the point of the end of Job? 1 Corinthians 15:54–58 says it so well:

When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

## **A Picture Perfect Ending (Job 42:7-17            December 4, 2016)**

**Main Point: The mediation and blessing of Job pictures Jesus – the only One who can deal with sin and suffering.**

1. Read Job 42:7-17. Are there things about this ending that sit awkwardly with you? What?
2. Why is Job as a mediator awkward?
3. Was is Job being so abundantly blessed awkward?
4. Why is it the reality that most of us don't get a happy ending – no matter how much we repent, pray or obey?
5. If you don't get a happy ending – why is it wrong to say that you must not have not truly repented, dealt with sin, or got right with God?
6. Why is it wrong to say that the lesson of the ending of Job seems to be – when you are suffering – find the sin – find the lesson God wants you to learn – repent – and then wait for incredible blessings to flow?
7. Why would expecting blessing after a season of suffering lead to the wrong motive for endurance?
8. What is typology? What type of types do you know?
9. What are the dangers with typology?
10. In what ways is Job a type of Christ?
11. How do Job as mediator and blessed point to Jesus?
12. Is there a better way to understand the end of Job than as a picture of Christ? If so what?
13. In what way did Job speak right of God (42:7)?
14. In what way is Jesus our Mediator?
15. In what ways does this demonstrate that sin does not have the final word?
16. In what way does Jesus bless us?
17. In what ways does this demonstrate that suffering does not have the final word?
18. Why is Job doubly blessed?

19. How does this relate to us?

20. Why are these pictures a fitting end to Job?