



The First Cycle of Speeches – Job 4-14

Job and his friends

How the world works:

1. God is sovereign;
2. God is just;
3. Therefore, God will reward virtue and punish vice;
4. So blessing is a reward for virtue and suffering is punishment for sin.

So when they see Job suffering...

Job's response to his friends

1. I demand a hearing. (7:11-21; 10:1-3)
2. Any court case is doomed from the start. (9:1-3; 14-20)
3. Whatever else, I know I am innocent. (9:21; 13:13-19)
5. I need an arbitrator. (9:32-35)
6. Death is inevitable and desirable.(6:8-10; 10:18-22)

Job rejects the way they understand the world

Cruel – 12:1 - 6

Shallow – 12:7 - 12

Tame – 12:13 - 25

Job turns to God

Reflecting on Job as Christians

Is God punishing me?

Hope in God

Reflection Questions – Job 4-14

1. Can you think of a time when friends have been a great comfort to you?
2. Read Job 2:11-13. What is the motivation of Job’s friends? What do they get right?
3. Job’s friends only begin to speak *after* his terrible lamentation of chapter 3. Why do they find his words so troubling? What is it about suffering that is so unsettling?
4. Pick one of the three speeches of Job’s friends (Eliphaz: chapters 4-5; Bildad: chapter 8; Zophar: chapter 11). Where can you see the four elements of ‘how the world works’ in their speech?

	Eliphaz 4:1 – 5:27	Bildad 8:1 - 22	Zophar 11:1-20
God is sovereign			
God is just			
God will reward virtue and punish sin			
So blessing is a reward and suffering is a punishment			
What practical advice do they have for Job?			

5. What does their understanding of ‘how the world works’ lead them to conclude about Job? How do we know they are wrong?
6. In his final speech (chs 12-14) Job rejects the ‘how the world works’ of his friends. He doesn’t have any answers but he knows his friends are wrong. From 13:19-14:22 Job speaks directly to God. What does he long for? What is he afraid of?

Practical reflection

7. Job’s friends were certain he was being punished for sin. As a Christian, do you ever fear God is punishing you? How does it help you to know that this is not the case (Romans 8:1)?
8. Job laments that God has afflicted him. Yet at the same time – his hope is in this same God. How does Job model provide an example of hoping in God – when we don’t have all the answers?