



Thru the Bible in 2012

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God endures forever. Isaiah 40:8

Ladies for Jesus Thursday Bible Study Reflects

Readings for March 19, 2012 – March 22, 2012

Emailed: Monday, March 19, 2012

For our reflects, consider the questions listed below in regards to what we have read during the days of Monday, March 19th– Thursday, March 22nd.

(Job 1:8, 12) Job was a model of trust and obedience to God, yet God permitted Satan to attack him in an especially harsh manner. Although God loves us, believing and obeying Him do not shelter us from life's calamities. Setbacks, tragedies, and sorrows strike Christians and non-Christians alike. But in our tests and trials, God expects us to express our faith to the world. How do you respond to your troubles? Do you ask God, "Why me?" or do you say, "Use me?"

(Job 2:4, 5) "Skin for skin" was Satan's comment concerning Job's response to the loss of his family. Satan still held to his opinion that Job was faithful only because of God's blessings. Satan believed that Job was willing to accept the loss of family and property as long as his own skin was safe. Satan's next step was to inflict physical suffering upon Job to prove his original accusation (1:9). In our lives, Satan will turn up the heat to prove his accusations of us before the Lord. God allows this for our own growth in Him because it teaches us that we must be totally dependent upon Him and it molds us into being more Christ-like. In what ways have the trials in your life become more and more burdensome? What lessons have you learned and built upon from these burdens?

(Job 2:11-13) Upon learning of Job's difficulties, three of his friends came to sympathize with him and comfort him. When they arrived they just sat quietly for seven days and night. Why? According to Jewish tradition, people who come to comfort someone in mourning should not speak until the mourner speaks. Often the best response to another person's suffering is silence. Job's friends realized that his pain was too deep to be healed with mere words, so they said nothing. Later we learn that their words of comfort were not helpful – but at least they came. Often, we feel we must say something spiritual and insightful to a hurting friend. Perhaps what he or she needs most is just our presence, showing that we care. In what ways have you been using pat answers and trite quotations when trying to comfort someone? Consider the fact that these words say much less than empathetic silence and loving companionship.

(Job 3:1) Job's response to his second test – physical affliction – contrasts greatly to his attitude after the first test (1:20-22). Job still did not curse God, but he cursed the day of his birth. He felt it would be better never to be born than to be forsaken by God. Job was struggling emotionally, physically, and spiritually; his misery was pervasive and deep. Do you underestimate how vulnerable you are during times of suffering and pain? Be careful to hold on to your faith even if there is no relief.

(Job 4:7-8) Part of what Eliphaz (and the other two friends) said is true, and part is false. It is true that those who promote sin and trouble eventually will be punished; it is false that anyone who is good and innocent will never suffer. All the material recorded and quoted in the Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16). Some is a record of what people said and did but is not an example to follow. The sins, the defeats, the evil thoughts, and misconceptions about God are all recorded in God's divinely inspired Word, but we should not do them. Eliphaz's comments are an example of what we should try to avoid — making false assumptions about others based on their own experiences. In what ways do you make false assumptions? Consider assumptions you have made in the past, how have they worked out? Do you think you pleased God in acting upon assumptions you may have made?

(Job 7:12) Job stopped talking to Eliphaz and spoke directly to God. Although Job had lived a blameless life, he was beginning to doubt the value of living in such a way. By doing this; he was coming dangerously close to suggesting that God didn't care about him and was not being fair. Later we will see that God reproved Job for this attitude (38:2). In what ways have you entertained tempting thoughts from Satan that have made you think God doesn't care about your situation? Satan always exploits these thoughts to get us to forsake God. Our suffering, like Job's, may not be the result of our sin, but we must be careful not to sin as a result of our suffering.

(Job 8:14-15) Bildad wrongly assumed that Job was trusting in something other than God for security, so he pointed out that such supports will collapse. One of the people's basic needs is security and many will do almost anything to feel secure. Eventually, however, our money, possessions, knowledge, and relationships will fail or be gone. Only God can give lasting security. What have you trusted for your security? How lasting is it? If you have a secure foundation with God, feelings of insecurity will not undermine you.