

Job 14 – “If a Man Dies, Shall He Live Again?”

14:1–6—Life Is Short and Full of Trouble

“Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; he flees like a shadow and does not continue.” (vv. 1–2)

Job opens this chapter with a sober, poetic reflection on the brevity and fragility of life. He pictures human existence like a delicate flower that blooms briefly before it is cut down, and like a fleeting shadow that quickly vanishes. He’s not just talking about himself—he’s speaking about *all humanity*.

Job’s view here is accurate but incomplete. It captures the earthly reality of life “under the sun” (to borrow from Ecclesiastes), but it doesn’t yet include the full redemptive hope found in resurrection.

Application: Life is short, and it is often hard. But that doesn’t mean it’s meaningless. God knows your days and has appointed them (v. 5). You’re not an accident—you’re on assignment. Live with eternity in view.

7–12—Job’s Crisis of Hope

“There is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again... But man dies and is laid away; indeed he breathes his last, and where is he?” (vv. 7, 10)

Job compares man to a tree. Even a tree that’s cut down might regrow. But when a man dies—when he breathes his last—what then? Job is wrestling with the permanence of death. He’s not denying God; he’s grieving deeply, searching for meaning in what feels like injustice.

Job’s honest inquiry as one of the most important questions ever asked in the Bible: *“If a man dies, shall he live again?”* (v. 14)

This is the central cry of human history. It’s more than philosophy—it’s deeply personal. When someone we love dies—or when we’re staring into the face of death ourselves—this question becomes everything.

Application: Have you asked that question yourself? If you haven’t, you will. Death is the universal equalizer, and Jesus is the universal answer. Job didn’t yet know the full answer—but you do. *“I am the resurrection and the life,”* Jesus said (John 11:25). Because He lives, we live also.

13–17—“Appoint Me a Time and Remember Me”

“Oh, that You would hide me in the grave... until Your wrath is past! That You would appoint me a set time, and remember me!” (v. 13)

Here we see a flicker of faith. Job’s grief is real, but so is his hope. He longs for God to remember him—even after death. The phrase “appoint me a set time” echoes the idea of resurrection: “Give me rest for now, God—but call me again when Your purpose is complete.”

Job's first glimmer of belief in something beyond the grave. It's a longing, not yet a full theology. But it's there. And for us today, we live in the full light of the gospel that Job could only dimly sense.

Application: Suffering makes us long for something more. That's not weakness—it's wisdom. God has appointed a time of resurrection, and He will remember you. You are not forgotten.

18–22—The Weight of Grief

"But as a mountain falls and crumbles away... so You destroy the hope of man." (v. 18)

Job sinks again into sorrow. He sees life as wearing away like rocks eroded by time. Death, to him, is a final severance—cut off from loved ones, unaware of their triumphs or trials (vv. 21–22). He doesn't yet see the eternal connection we now know through Christ.

This passage teaches not doctrine but Job's honest processing of grief. Don't take these verses as theological statements about the afterlife—take them as raw expressions of pain.

Application: Grief clouds your view. It's okay to say what Job says—to wrestle with hard questions. But don't stop there. Let your grief drive you to the One who holds your future.

Gospel Bridge: "If a Man Dies..."

The pivotal verse in this chapter is *Job 14:14*:

"If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, till my change comes."

Job didn't know what we now know. He waited in mystery; we wait in certainty.

- Jesus has destroyed the finality of death.
- He is the resurrection and the life.
- In Him, we don't sleep in soul-oblivion—we are absent from the body, present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

The gospel gives what Job longed for: a Mediator who guarantees our resurrection.

Job's statements here are not divine declarations about death; they are emotional expressions. God will later correct Job's misunderstanding in chapter 38.

Don't base your beliefs about the afterlife on Job's moment of despair. Instead, let Scripture interpret Scripture—and trust the New Testament revelation to give the final word.

Reflection: Your Life Is Not Over—It's Appointed

Job speaks for many of us when he wonders if death is the end. But we live with greater light. The gospel assures us that life does not end in the grave. It begins anew. Until then, wait like Job—but wait with hope.

Key Verse:

“If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, till my change comes.”
(Job 14:14)