

The Book of Job

Chapters 1-3

Introduction

- The book is considered the oldest book in the Bible in terms of when it was written.
- The author of the book is unknown.
- The nation of Israel is not mentioned at all in the book.
- The book has language from ancient times and unique terms not found elsewhere in the Bible.
- Most of Job is written in parallel lines which is indicative of poetry; however, Job is a drama that reflects on how justice can be misunderstood in a fallen world.
- The book of Job does not mention Moses, or events in Exodus, and Job's life span is much longer than what was common in the days of Moses. Job was probably over 200 years old when he died. This is based on Job 42:10, where it says that God "gave Job twice as much as he had before." If Job lived an additional 140 years after his trials, he may have been 70 years old when they started, which would Job at 210 years old when he died.

The main characters in Job are:

- Job
- Job's three friends "comforters":
 - Eliphaz,
 - Bildad,
 - Zophar,
- Elihu, and
- Job's wife and 10 children. (They are briefly mentioned at the beginning of the book, but not by name.)

Job's Major Themes: "Disinterested Righteousness."

1. An important theme in Job is the idea of "disinterested righteousness." Satan claims that Job behaves righteously **only** for the blessings, rewards, and favor of God, but if these incentives are removed, then Job would stop behaving righteously. Disinterested righteousness means that a person behaves righteously **not** solely for the blessings. A disinterested righteousness believes that righteousness is a way of life that has its own reward. As Christians, we know that we must believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrew 11:6), but seeking righteousness is not solely motivated by God's rewards.
2. Why do the righteous suffer?
3. It shows how spiritual growth occurs when God shows Job his spiritual shortcomings, such as self-righteousness.
4. The Book of Job shows the value of patience and trust in God in times of tribulations.

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The Book of Job

Chapters 1-3

Job 1:1-5

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. ² And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. ³ Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East. ⁴ And his sons would go and feast *in their* houses, each on his *appointed* day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly.

Question:

1. What are some of the things that are being established about Job in the first five verses of Job chapter one?

Job 1:6-12

⁶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷ And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." ⁸ Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" ⁹ So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰ "Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹ "But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" ¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Questions:

1. Does Satan question the righteousness of Job?
2. What is Satan's claim against Job?

Job 1:13-22

¹³ Now there was a day when his sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; ¹⁴ and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ "when the Sabeans raided *them* and took them away-- indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" ¹⁶ While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" ¹⁷ While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" ¹⁸ While

he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,"¹⁹ "and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"²⁰ Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped.²¹ And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."²² In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Questions:

1. What was taken from Job?
2. How was it taken?
3. Who is behind these occurrences?
4. How do we understand verse 16 "the fire of God fell from heaven"?
5. Did Job respond to his losses as Satan predicted?

Job 2:1-7

¹Again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. ²And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." ³Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause." ⁴So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵"But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" ⁶And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life." ⁷So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

Questions:

1. In the eyes of God, is Job still a righteous man?
2. Did God have any cause against Job for allowing Job's catastrophe?
3. What is Satan saying against Job in Job 2:4-5?
4. How does God respond to Satan's claim about Job in Job 2:4-5?

Job 2:8-13

⁸And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes. ⁹Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" ¹⁰But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips. ¹¹Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place-- Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him. ¹²And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust

on his head toward heaven. ¹³ So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

Questions:

1. Did Job respond to the attack on his body as Satan predicted?
2. How does Job respond to his wife's temptation in Job 2:9?
3. What does Job's response to his wife say about Job's righteousness?
4. Did the way Job's wife responded to the catastrophe show another form of loss for Job?
5. What does Job's response to his wife say about Job's understanding of God?
6. Job's three friends said nothing to him in seven days. What does this say about comforting and mourning with others?

Job 3:1-26

¹ After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his *birth*. ² And Job spoke, and said:

³ "May the day perish on which I was born, And the night *in which* it was said, 'A male child is conceived.'

⁴ May that day be darkness; May God above not seek it, Nor the light shine upon it.

⁵ May darkness and the shadow of death claim it; May a cloud settle on it; May the blackness of the day terrify it.

⁶ *As for* that night, may darkness seize it; May it not rejoice among the days of the year, May it not come into the number of the months.

⁷ Oh, may that night be barren! May no joyful shout come into it!

⁸ May those curse it who curse the day, Those who are ready to arouse Leviathan.

⁹ May the stars of its morning be dark; May it look for light, but *have* none, And not see the dawning of the day;

¹⁰ Because it did not shut up the doors of my *mother's* womb, Nor hide sorrow from my eyes.

¹¹ "Why did I not die at birth? *Why* did I *not* perish when I came from the womb?

¹² Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?

¹³ For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep; Then I would have been at rest

¹⁴ With kings and counselors of the earth, Who built ruins for themselves,

¹⁵ Or with princes who had gold, Who filled their houses *with* silver;

¹⁶ Or *why* was I not hidden like a stillborn child, Like infants who never saw light?

¹⁷ There the wicked cease *from* troubling, And there the weary are at rest.

¹⁸ *There* the prisoners rest together; They do not hear the voice of the oppressor.

¹⁹ The small and great are there, And the servant *is* free from his master.

²⁰ "Why is light given to him who is in misery, And life to the bitter of soul,

²¹ Who long for death, but it does not *come*, And search for it more than hidden treasures;

²² Who rejoice exceedingly, *And* are glad when they can find the grave?

²³ *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hidden, And whom God has hedged in?

²⁴ For my sighing comes before I eat, And my groanings pour out like water.

²⁵ For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, And what I dreaded has happened to me.

²⁶ I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes."

Questions:

1. From the expressions of Job's despair, what else did he lose besides his health?
2. What is Job 3:13 saying about what Job thought would be better for him?
3. What do verses Job 3:19-22 say about the realities of life sometimes?
4. What does Job 3:25-26 say about Job's thinking prior to his catastrophe?
5. Is there anything in Job's lament that indicates he cursed God as Satan predicted?