

November 14, 1993

"Job"
Book of Job

Couples Class
Wendell Alford,
Teacher

I. Probably the greatest enigma the human mind can ponder is the problem of human suffering. How can an infinite, holy, righteous Creator allow his perfect purpose to be thwarted by that which is less than perfect (complete, whole, or without fault)? Even the innocent suffer while the guilty live in apparent freedom of punishment and apparently enjoy painless lives. Should not the righteous always prosper, and the evil doers always suffer? Is sinning a sure indication that the sinner will suffer? If a person is suffering, is that sure evidence that that person has sinned? (see John 9:1-5) Why can a human's intellect pose questions which that intellect cannot answer? (Who made God? Did God die on a cross? Can life be measured on a scale? Is there a limit to space? When did time begin? How can a perfect God forgive imperfect sin?) The communication of God to mankind (God's Word) looks at the problem of human suffering in the Book of Job. When one attempts to understand the problem from this account, it is extremely important that he or she remember that it was written without internal reference to God's Covenant People or their history. In fact, its origin and date are matters of considerable obscurity.

II. Many Bible scholars believe that Job was written by Moses during his Midian experience. His connections there became Arabian which was Job's setting. Others suggest Solomon or Elihu wrote the drama, but I believe its authorship took place much earlier than Moses or Solomon although Moses or another could have put in writing what had been oral tradition. I am persuaded that the story originated in the Land of Uz where Job(ab) lived. In other words, it is historically factual. Job was probably a native of Idumean Arabia south of the Dead Sea and was a member of the Edomite race. Recall that Edom means "red" in Hebrew, the name given to Esau because of his being covered all over with red hair, Gen. 25:25. The geneology of Job could be traced in Gen. 36:6,8,28,31-33; I Chron. 1:34,42,44. If I am correct, Job(ab) was an offspring of Abraham (a Semite) through his grandson, Esau. Job was a good man who was perfect, upright, a God fearer, and a hater of evil. Not only was he righteous, but he was very rich with 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and a mansion for his home. In fact, he was the richest and best known man in the entire region. His children were well disciplined, and Job prayed for them continually. Job's wife remained with him throughout the period.

III. The stage is set at the beginning of this poetic drama after Job's blameless integrity is established in 1:1-5. God sits in the judgment seat which has brought before it the angels and the perennial adversary, Satan. The Lord asks Satan where he has been, and Satan says that he has been everywhere. "In your travels," the Lord asks, "have you noted my devoted and loyal servant, Job?" Satan replied that Job's devotion is very understandable since he was God's pet upon whom God had lavished exorbitant possessions and given unlimited protection. Satan said further, "Take away

his possessions and Job will curse you to your face." God gave Satan permission to take everything, except Job's body he could not hurt. Satan caused the Sabeans and Chaldeans to steal the stock except the sheep, and God himself burned the sheep. Job's ten children were killed in a storm. Job's reaction was to worship God by declaring that at birth he had nothing, and all his possessions had been gifts from God. During the terrible calamities Job did nothing to offend God. At another tribunal God gave Satan permission to destroy Job's health, but would not give permission for him to be killed. Satan struck Job's body with putrid, open sores over his entire body. Now even his wife counseled Job to "curse God and die." Job rebuked her by saying that when God delivers good and a person accepts it, should that same person not also accept trouble when it comes?

IV. The scene now changes and Job with his health broken is visited by three of his friends, Eliphaz the Temanite (offspring of Ishmael, Gen. 25:15), Bildad (from Chaldaea), and Zophar (probably a Syrian). They sat with Job for seven days speechless because of Job's misery. Job then spoke to say that he wonders about why he was born only to have such an adverse result. The overall position of the three friends was that Job's suffering was a result of his sin, but they could not persuade Job of their case. Elihu, another friend, after hearing the previous discussion, reprimanded the three friends, for he insisted that Job's suffering was not due to overt sin but covert pride (secret sin). Elihu's idea seemed to be that suffering was not so much punishment for sin, but rather to keep people from sinning. Job related his innocence regarding sexual sins, abuse of his power over others, and idolatry, 31:1-12, 13-23, 26-28. Finally God himself answers Job in Chapter 38 out of a whirlwind and tells him of his (God's) exalted position above mankind. Job's response is that he lacks understanding of God but could see himself as in need of repentance. God told Job's three friends that they were wrong and that Job would pray for them. The Lord accepted Job's repentance and restored his wealth, health, family, and he lived happily another 140 years.

V. The nature of God and of his creatures, mankind, is treated in the Book of Job. God is in complete control of his creation, Rom. 9:20, Satan himself is subject to God's will, and, although God does not tempt anyone to sin (Jam. 1:13), he is aware of Satan's rebellious activities among people and mankind's weaknesses. God's Son, Jesus Christ, was not immune to Satan's efforts, for Jesus was tempted as all people are, Heb. 4:15. Suffering is universal among all people, whether due to a given individual's own sin or the sin of all humanity's pair of physical parents, Adam and Eve, Rom. 5:12. But God's New Covenant which is sealed by the sacrifice of his only Son once and forever (Heb. 10:1-18), assured God's final triumph over the effect of Satan's power of temptation (I Cor. 10:13) and which ultimately eliminates all human suffering for those who trust in the righteousness of God in Christ, Rom. 9:24-10:3. Trusters in Jesus Christ even rejoice in suffering, Rom. 5:1-5. Tribulations breed patience with believers even as it did with Job, Jam. 5:11, and our reward will be the elimination of all suffering, Rev. 21:4. Mankind cannot understand God's complete nature and must rely on faith in his promise to please him, Heb. 11:6. The best knowledge we have of God's nature is the life of Jesus Christ, for God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, II Cor. 5:19.

Solomon

November 14, 1993

"Job"

Couples Class
Wendell Alford,
Teacher

Job has been called "The Epic of the Sinner's Life" Book of Job
Job's struggle against doubt

I. Probably the greatest enigma the human mind can ponder is the problem of human suffering. How can an infinite, holy, righteous Creator allow his perfect purpose to be thwarted by that which is less than perfect (complete, whole, or without fault)? Even the innocent suffer while the guilty live in apparent freedom of punishment and apparently enjoy painless lives. Should not the righteous always prosper, and the evil doers always suffer? Is sinning a sure indication that the sinner will suffer? If a person is suffering, is that sure evidence that that person has sinned? (see John 9:1-5) Why can a human's intellect pose questions which that intellect cannot answer? (Who made God? Did God die on a cross? Can life be measured on a scale? Is there a limit to space? When did time begin? How can a perfect God forgive imperfect sin?) The communication of God to mankind (God's Word) looks at the problem of human suffering in the Book of Job. When one attempts to understand the problem from this account, it is extremely important that he or she remember that it was written without internal reference to God's Covenant People or their history. In fact, its origin and date are matters of considerable obscurity.

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Lk 10:18,20; John 12:28-32; I John 3:8

III. The stage is set at the beginning of this poetic drama after Job's blameless integrity is established in 1:1-5. God sits in the judgment seat which has brought before it the angels and the perennial adversary, Satan. The Lord asks Satan where he has been, and Satan says that he has been everywhere. "In your travels," the Lord asks, "have you noted my devoted and loyal servant, Job?" Satan replied that Job's devotion is very understandable since he was God's pet upon whom God had lavished exorbitant possessions and given unlimited protection. Satan said further, "Take away

driver of us seeing a few systems

? of Trinity

Sons of Ishmael (Arabs) and Keturah wife of Abraham after Isaac died

Herod was of Idumean Arab + tried to kill Jesus + his own wife killed + 9 years

the book said so in Job 1:8; 2:3

A man who would commit suicide

his possessions and Job will curse you to your face." God gave Satan permission to take everything, except Job's body he could not hurt. Satan caused the Sabeans and Chaldeans to steal the stock except the sheep, and God himself burned the sheep. Job's ten children were killed in a storm. Job's reaction was to worship God by declaring that at birth he had nothing, and all his possessions had been gifts from God. During the terrible calamities Job did nothing to offend God. At another tribunal God gave Satan permission to destroy Job's health, but would not give permission for him to be killed. Satan struck Job's body with putrid, open sores over his entire body. Now even his wife counseled Job to "curse God and die." Job rebuked her by saying that when God delivers good and a person accepts it, should that same person not also accept trouble when it comes?

19:17
with
10:40
10:40
10:40

the strength
see Gen
25:2
return
Abraham's
with his

re-ignite
see Gen
22:21
Abraham's
father's
Gen. 13:10
Abraham's nephew

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Heretics, heretics, floods, fire, acids from blood transfusion & perfumes

the
is not
and
rationally
but to
through
to
37:5
10:12

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why
to
can't
on

41:1
38-9

19:19. LGE factor

The Love, Bruce

How faith in God without regard to circumstances...
See MAT 10:22
that is evidence of all else