

Studies in Job-01 Job-1

by William MacDonald

Job's story teaches believers how to trust God in suffering and reveals God's character in a powerful way.

Duration: 30:52

Scripture: Job 9:33, Job 19:25-26, Job 33:24, Job 36:27-28

Topics: "Suffering And Faith", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the book of Job and the suffering that Job endures. He highlights the remarkable precision of the heavenly bodies and how they serve as a reminder of God's power. Job, despite his suffering, finds comfort in God's revelation of His greatness and humbles himself before Him. The preacher emphasizes that reading the book of Job leads to great thoughts of God and teaches us about His dealings with mankind and His triumph over evil.

Transcript

Job, chapter 1. Job, chapter 1 and verse 1. There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household, so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

And his sons went and feasted in their houses every one his day." It means every one in his birthday. They had birthdays in those days, too. "...and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

It was so when the days of their feasting were gone about that Job sent and sanctified them and rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings according to the numbers of them all. For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continue it.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, When comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Dost Job fear God or not? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on

every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. The Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself. Put not forth thine hand.

So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, and there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them, and the Sabaeans fell upon them, and took them away. Yea, they have slain the servant with the edge of the sword, and I only am escaped alone to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camel, and have carried them away. Yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house.

Behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, fell down upon the ground, and worshipped. He said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." When did Job live? It is generally believed that Job lived way back in the early days of the book of Genesis.

You can't go by the place of this book in the Bible to tell when he was on the earth, but Bible students generally believe he lived just before Abraham. Where would they ever get such an idea? Well, for one thing, Job lived to be over 200 years. When did men live that long? Well, they go back into the tables of longevity, and they find that just before Abraham, around the time of Terah, men lived to be that age.

Also, there's no mention of Job being a Jew, is there? There's no mention of the law of Moses in the book. There's no mention of the priesthood that God instituted. If you read this chapter carefully, you'll notice that Job was the priest.

The father was the priest in the family, and he offered a sacrifice to God just in case his sons and daughters had done anything wrong. Also, there's one mention of money in the book of Job, and they go back and ask, when did they use that kind of money? And all of these internal evidences in the book of Job lead people to think that he lived before Abraham, and I believe that myself. Now, what is the significance of that? Well, to me the significance of it is this.

Probably no man in the history of the world suffered as much loss in one day as Job did, apart from the Lord Jesus, of course. Do you have any friends who suffered more loss than that? Anybody in your family? And mind you, we only read the first chapter. We didn't get to that place where his body was wracked with the most loathsome kind of boils, and here the richest man in all the east is sitting on an ash heap and picking up broken pieces of hot shirt and trying to scrape the boils off his arm.

The itching and the puff coming out of the boils. It was really a terrible situation, and God allowed that to happen in the very dawning days of civilization, so that people of all susceptible generations could go to this book and find comfort and instruction from the book. I think that was very gracious of the Lord.

And just remember that this man Job didn't have a Bible. He didn't have the New Testament. He had a very partial revelation from God.

The revelation of the Lord didn't cover him as the waters cover the sea, believe me, but that man used the revelation of God that he had, and he was one of the great patriarchs of all time. Now, the Bible tells us here at the very outset that he was a righteous man. God says of him perfect, upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil.

This does not mean that he was sinless. He was not sinless, but he was probably the most righteous man on the face of the earth at that time, and the wealthiest, too, and I have no doubt that all of those possessions that he had were given to him by God as an indication of God's favor upon him. It says that later on in the chapter.

And as we said before, he served as the priest for his family. He was a God-fearing man, and he thought, God can't look with favor on my children if they're living in sin. And so, on their behalf, he went and prayed and offered burnt offerings to the Lord, saying, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

Thus did Job continue it. Now, verse 6 gives us a very wonderful insight into the word of God and into the dealings of God. We mentioned this morning that we live in a physical world, but we also live in a spiritual world.

We live in a visible world where we see cars and buildings and people, but we live in an invisible world, too, a world of the spirit. And here God pulls back the curtain, and you see a scene in heaven where angelic beings are coming before the Lord, sons of God. I don't think there's any question at all that in verse 6 the expression sons of God refers to angels.

I don't know anybody who disputes the fact. The sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came over. Now, this is interesting.

Here you have Satan, the accuser of the brethren, the enemy of God's people, and the enemy of God, and yet he has access to the presence of God. Does Satan still have access to the presence of God? Yes, he still does. It's amazing.

You say, How can a wicked person be in heaven in the presence of God? He is. The first sin took place in heaven. Did you ever think of that? The first sin didn't take place in the Garden of Eden, it took place in heaven when Satan said, I will be as God, and pried with his downfall.

And that's why the heavens have to be cleansed. Scripture speaks of that, of a future time, the restitution of all things, and the heavens themselves will be cleansed when Satan is taken care of finally and effectively. And so, Satan is there before the Lord, and a conversation takes place.

This is interesting to me. God says, Have you considered my servant Job? There isn't any like him in all the earth. And Satan says, Yeah, I know.

He says, He loves you for what you've given him. The only reason Satan loves you and fears you is no wonder. You've given him all these possessions, a big family.

He's really got it made. God says to him, Put forth your hand, just don't touch his body. You can touch all that he possesses.

We'll see what happens. I learned from this, first of all, that Satan has access into the presence of God. I learned, secondly, that Satan has a great deal of power given to him by God.

For instance, Satan has a great deal of power in controlling wicked men. Did you notice that in this chapter? Satan has a great deal of power in controlling wicked men, the Sabians, you get it? And the Chaldeans in verse 17? Yes, he does. He really does.

And not only so, Satan has power to control supernatural forces, fire from heaven. People think that all miracles are of God. Not all miracles are of God.

Here you have a miracle. He controls fire from heaven. He controls the... he has a certain amount of control over the weather.

Did you ever think of that? A great wind. A great wind from the wilderness smote the four corners of the house that fell upon the young man, and really, as far as his possessions and his family were concerned, with the exception of his wife, he was wiped out. And yet, he said, The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

I think this is very helpful to us in adopting a healthy attitude concerning events in our lives as believers. Who did it? Was it Satan, or was it the Lord who did it? It was Satan who did it, with the Lord's permission. That's who it was.

The Lord didn't send those Sabians. The Lord didn't send the Chaldeans. The Lord didn't send the fire from heaven.

The Lord didn't send the great wind, and later on, the Lord didn't send that loathsome disease on Job. Satan sent it. God permitted it.

And this is going on today. I personally don't believe that any evil comes from God. Sickness, suffering, death, they don't come from God.

They come from Satan. But God allows it, and then overrules it by his glory. That's the wonderful part.

But you say, just a minute there, Job said, The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away. That's right. In the Bible, the Lord is often said to do things that he permits to be done.

It says, for instance, an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul. Could God send an evil spirit? Not directly, but he permitted an evil spirit to come upon Saul, and what God permits, he is often said to do. I find this very, very helpful in thinking of the calamities, seeing calamities in life that come, and it gives me great thoughts of God to realize, for instance, that there's a hedge about every true believer.

Satan says that in verse 10, and it's true, And Satan couldn't get at those things unless the Lord lowered the hedge and let him get at it. That's true of you and me tonight, too. There's a hedge about every one of us who is a believer in the Lord Jesus, and Satan can't get through that hedge except with the Lord's

permission.

You say, Why would the Lord permit him ever to do that? God has his ways of working, and we're in the school of God. This world we live in is a school, and God is teaching us lessons, and there are some lessons he can't teach us in any other way. Now, before we go any further, I'd like to just range through the book of Job.

There are several verses in this book that can be applied to the Lord Jesus, and I think it's worth the time just to go over them tonight. One of the ways in which we study the Bible is to look for references to the Lord Jesus, or to verses that can be applied to him. In Job 9, verse 33, Job is speaking here, and he says, Neither is there any dazed man betwixt us that might lay his hand upon us both.

Neither is that, but there is. Job didn't know it, but there is a dazed man. What is a dazed man? Well, a dazed man is a go-between.

It's an intermediary, and Job says, Oh, I wish there was somebody who could stand between me and God, and lay his hand upon us both. Actually, Job wanted somebody to plead his case with God. He felt pretty sure if he had a good advocate that he'd come out clean.

We'll see that as we go through the book, Lord willing, this month. But, after all, Job didn't have the revelation that you and I had, and he longed for the dazed man, and that dazed man has come in the person of the Son of God, one who lays his hand upon God, as it were, lays his hand upon the guilty sinner, and brings reconciliation between them both. Job, chapter 16, verse 21.

Job, chapter 16, verse 21. Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor. Isn't that beautiful? He, a mortal man, here on earth, realized the need of someone to plead with God.

We have the answer, don't we? There's one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Job 19, verses 25 and 26. Job 19, 25 and 26, and this is really a startling passage of Scripture.

Job, in the depths of his suffering, in the depths of his degradation, and he really was cast very low, he said, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. Actually, the saints in the Old Testament had very dim and indistinct views of life after death. They didn't know very much, but a few times in the Old Testament you get beams of light coming in, and this is one of the most unusual of those beams of light.

Job said, I know that my Redeemer liveth, I know there's one to vindicate me, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. It's that point way forward to the second coming of Christ. Now, I'm not saying that Job knew a lot about the second coming of Christ, but by inspiration he spoke those words.

He said, even if my body should return to corruption, in my flesh shall I see God. You don't find that very often in the Old Testament, I'll tell you very frankly. You don't find any such clear intonation of life after death, of the resurrection, as you find in this version.

There's no other way of explaining it apart from the fact that it was given by inspiration of the Lord. One other passage that's commonly used in connection with our blessed Savior is Job 33. It speaks about how

God deals with man.

It says in verse 23, If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man what is right for him, then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom. Why, that's lovely, isn't it? God looks down upon the believing, repentant sinner, and he says, Deliver him from going down to hell, I found a ransom. Where did he find him? He found him at the cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus, bearing the sins of man on the cross of Calvary.

Now the believer doesn't have to go down to the pit. God has found a ransom. Also, before we go on, I think there are several passages in this book that reveal a very advanced knowledge of science.

Well, you know, the evolutionary hypothesis is that man began as a glob and evolved into what he is today, but the Bible doesn't teach that. The Bible teaches that primitive man was of a very high order, and through the entrance of sin, he has gone down and down and down to Jonestown. Really, that's what the Bible teaches.

And here is Job living way back before Abraham. Let's go over some of the allusions to scientific truth that are in this book. Chapter 36, verses 27 and 28.

Job chapter 36, verses 27 and 28. I'm going to read it in the revised version. It says, For he draw up the drops of water which distill in rain from his vapor, which the skies pour down and drop upon man abundantly.

What's he talking about? Well, he's talking about what you might call the evaporation, distillation process by which we're getting our rain right now. It's not bad, is it? You say, is that what it means? It's exactly what it means. Well, how did he know if he was just two steps removed from an ape? The answer is he wasn't two steps removed from an ape, and those men had a very advanced knowledge.

Adam, when the animals came before him, he was able to name them all. Chapter 37, verses 9 and 17. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the north.

How thy garments are warm, verse 17, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind. In other words, he knew about, these men knew about the directions of the wind, the colors of the wind. They had made a study of these things.

Chapter 33, and verse 6, it says here, Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's dead. I also am formed out of the clay, the composition of the human body. How did he know he was formed out of the dust of the earth? We know it today, don't we? We know that when a man dies and his body is placed in a grave, the body returns to dust as it was.

But Job didn't have the Bible. Job didn't have Genesis 1 or Genesis 2 to tell him these things. Chapter 26, and verse 7. Job, chapter 26 and verse 7, the suspension of the earth.

The earth leaning on Atlas' shoulders. It says, He stretches out the north over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. Now, who by human wisdom would have ever said that such a thing? He hangeth the earth upon nothing.

It would be easier to believe that it was on the back of a great hippopotamus or a turtle or something like that, wouldn't it? No. We know today. We know something about the planets and the stars and all the rest.

But how was he to know that? A very advanced knowledge of science. Chapter 38, and verse 16. Chapter 38 and verse 16.

Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds? The wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge. That's a lovely expression, isn't it? The balancing of the clouds. In connection with that, verse 11.

Yea, and I'm reading again from the Revised Version, verse 11, chapter 37, verse 11. Yea, he laideth the thick cloud with moisture, he spreadeth abroad the cloud of his lightning. In other words, he knew the relationship between clouds and lightning.

This was revealed to him, and he reveals it to us, is the word of God. Finally, in Job chapter 38, verses 32 and 33, it says, Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens? Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? I like verses 31 and 32. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Maseroth in his season? Canst thou guide Arturus with his sons? What's he talking about? He's talking about the influence of the orbit of heavenly bodies and their influence on the earth.

The orbit of heavenly bodies and their influence on the earth. Well, we know that today. We know that the moon is the moon that causes the tides on the earth today.

We know that the heavenly bodies move with remarkable precision, so that they can be charted and so that navigators can hear according to them. I think this is most remarkable, and here is a man suffering almost inexpressible suffering. He has three comforters coming to do him more harm than good, and God reveals himself to him, the greatness of God, and he's humble to the dust, and God restores him in a very wonderful way, and in the course of it all, God is greatly glorified.

You cannot read the book of Job without having great thoughts of God. So, I hope that in the days ahead, as we go through this book, it will be a real blessing to us, and that we'll learn something about God's dealings and why he does allow suffering, and how he triumphs over all of the evil of the enemy. As the enemy plots against men, you might say, what good could ever come out of Jonestown? Over 900 people, half the enemy's army.

Well, I know some of the few martyrs, but a lot of little boys and girls in heaven today, they might have grown up and gone to hell. Man has his wickedness, but God has his way, and he triumphs over Satan and demons, the hosts of hell, and God is vindicated in this book, and he will be vindicated at last. Shall we pray? Our Father, we thank you for the book of Job.

We thank you that it was given so early in the history of man that others suffering not as greatly as Job might take comfort from the timeless words that we find here. We pray as we study this book together that you might even prepare us for difficulties ahead, for the onslaughts of the evil ones. We might be able to say with Job, naked came I out of the womb, the Lord has given, the Lord has taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. And we pray, Lord, that you'll teach all of us that you can be loved for just who you are, and not because of the favors you bestow upon your people. We pray that you will silence the accusation of the captor that men love you just because you're good to them.

We pray that you'll write these lessons deeply on our hearts. In Jesus' name, amen.

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