

Job

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[0 : 00] And Job is one of the oldest books in the Bible. Job the man lived some 4,000 years ago, but it's still very real and very relevant for us today.

So we're going to go through, as I say, some of the kind of main verses that tell us about Job and his story. And we're going to start, funnily enough, in Job 1 verse 1.

There was a man in the land of Uz. His name was Job. And that man was perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil or shunned evil.

So here was this man introduced to us the man Job, a man perfect and upright. So he was a righteous man.

Verse 2. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was 7,000 sheep and 3,000 camels and 500 yoke of oxen and 500 she-asses and a very great household.

[1 : 16] So that this man was the greatest of all the men of the East. He was a renowned man, well-known, very wealthy, as we see his livestock.

And verse 4. And his sons went and feasted in their houses every one his day and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

Verse 5. And 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 number of them all.

For Job said, It may be that my sons may have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually. So Job cared for his family.

He was a good father. And he acted as the priest of his home. He prayed for his children. And he gave sacrifices. He honoured God for his family's sake.

[2 : 24] And verse 6. Now enters Satan, the accuser. You know that Satan is our adversary.

And he's called an accuser of the brethren. Verse 6. Now, there was a day when the sons of God, we can understand that to be the angels, came to present themselves before the Lord.

And Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence 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.

So we see there's a certain reporting here from Satan to our Lord. He's answerable.

Verse 8. 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 showeth evil.

[3 : 36] Notice the Lord calls Job my servant Job. Interesting, isn't it? That he was identified as a servant of God.

And we could understand that to be a title of great honour and blessing that he would be called such, my servant. Verse 9.

Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made an hedge about him and about his house and about all that he hath on every side?

We see there's some reference here to a hedge as in a protection, as in God affording providence, affording protection over Job.

And the accusation from Satan here is that Job fears God because of the benefits attached to that.

[4 : 39] We read on. 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. So Satan's putting this out here that Job's only serving God, he's only fearing God, following God because of the benefits of God's hedge, his protection, his provision.

Verse 12. It reads on, And 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. So the Lord allows Satan to afflict Job.

Now we'll see that. Verse 13. And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house.

[5 : 56] And there came a messenger unto Job and said, The oxen were ploughing and the asses feeding beside them. And the Sabaeans fell upon them and took them away.

Yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword. Lord, I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Verse 16. While he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, The fire of God has fallen from heaven and have burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them.

And I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Verse 17. While he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands and fell upon the camels 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. And 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.

And behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness and smote the four corners of the house and it fell upon the young man and they are dead.

[7 : 17] And I only am escaped alone to tell thee. So here, in just a few moments, Job suffered huge, tragic, sudden loss.

Loss after loss after loss. Just within a few hours of time. It was a life-changing day for Job.

And what did Job do? Job 1 verse 20, Then Job arose and rent his mantle, he tore his cloak and he shaved his head, a sign of mourning, of grief.

And he fell down upon the ground and worshipped. He fell down upon the ground and worshipped and 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.

[8 : 21] It's interesting that in hearing this awful news, in this great grief and anguish that he would have felt, he fell down upon the ground and worshipped.

He acknowledged God has given everything the Lord gave, the Lord took away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. And in all of this, Job did not sin. He did not charge God foolishly.

And in his overwhelming grief, Job sought the Lord. He sought God. We read verse 1 of chapter 2 now, Job 2, verse 1.

Again, 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. And the Lord said unto Satan, from whence comest thou?

And 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 assuareth evil?

[9 : 47] And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the Lord and said, skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

Here's Satan accusing again. He's saying that Job has not suffered in his person. He's suffered loss but he's not suffered in his person.

And that will make the difference. As we read on verse 5, Satan says, But put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face.

And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand but save his life. So we see the Lord allows Satan now to afflict Job but save his life.

Verse 7, So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown from head to toe.

[11 : 00] And he took him a pot shirt, this broken piece of pottery, this broken pot to scrape himself with all. And he sat down among the ashes.

What a sight it would have been, this man, top to toe, covered in boils, hussy sores, breaking out in great affliction, pain, sitting on a pile of ashes.

What torment, scraping himself with the itchiness of it. You can imagine how vile it would have been to see such a thing.

And verse 9 it says, Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die.

What a thing to say. It wasn't much comfort from his wife there, was it? But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.

[12:10] What shall we receive good at the hand of God? And shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips? So even Job's wife tells him to curse God and die.

It's a horrific situation isn't it? That your nearest and dearest would give you such counsel. But Job sat and waited for God to redeem his life.

He trusted God's goodness in the midst of this great trial. He waited for God to redeem his life. He trusted in the goodness of God in the face of all that was not good.

Then we read further, of course we can't touch on every verse of this, we're only really scratching the surface. we see then three friends of Job.

They come to mourn with him and comfort him and they sit with Job and say nothing for seven days and nights. Really that was the best thing they did was not to speak.

[13:15] But then when they did open their mouths it was really just to blame Job and accuse him. They believed that health and prosperity were signs of God's blessing and to lose health and prosperity was this sign that Job must be being punished for some sin.

That it was somehow Job's just punishment to lose his health and prosperity he must be a sinner.

And it's been said over 80% of the book of Job is poor advice that Job's friends gave him.

So really much of what they said was poor advice. It was really they were doing the devil's accusing weren't they still? The accuser was working through the wife and through Job's friends.

They really misunderstood God's purposes and I suppose it speaks to us when we might endeavour to comfort someone to be alongside to help not to be an accuser as these miserable comforts were as Job called them.

And yet Job did not sin with his lips. We do read in chapter 3 that he cursed the day of his birth. He was broken.

[14:40] He was spiritually, mentally and emotionally broken. His life was consumed with misery, with agony and he cursed the day of his birth.

So he knew great trouble and he acted humanly in that but he still did not sin with his lips.

We can learn as the Bible speaks of the patience of Job, the endurance of Job, that he would persevere, that his faith did not fail. As much as humanly he reacted as yeah, his faith was not shaken, as much as his lot in life was greatly troubled.

And it is true that trouble can be our lot in life as it reads in Job 5 verse 7 it tells us that a man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward it's like this is the norm is that we will have trouble of life a lot in life will include some time of trouble we can expect trouble we can know that it's a sure thing that trouble will come it's also true that we can face God's discipline we know sometimes affliction and trouble is really God trying to get our attention and at times it could be because of us that we have trouble in life of course we can make foolish choices we can make unwise choices about our health and suffer for it and there's a consequence we reap what we sow and it tells us yet that happy is the man whom God corrected therefore despise not thou the chastening of the almighty we know there's other verses that speak to us of how we are as God's children and as children loved by our father he does discipline us there is times of such the word of God says in Psalm 18:30 that as for God his way is perfect so God's ways are perfect and we can trust whatever God does whatever he allows is perfect even when we go humanly through great suffering and tragedy and loss and difficulties of life yet he is with us yet he holds us Job refers to a mediator in Job 9:33 he talks of how there's a daysman which means a mediator betwixt us that he might lay his hand upon us both because we know for us today we do have a mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus and so it's like Job speaks of such a person yet to come and now we have that person we have the mediator between

[17:48] God and man the man Christ Jesus who intercedes for us Job's faith yet held fast we see in Job 13:15 that he says though he slay me yet will I trust in him but I will maintain mine own ways before him so through all of the suffering Job could still say though he slay me yet will I trust in him yet will I trust in him no matter what I will trust him we can see the faith of Job held steady I will trust him I will trust him no matter what no matter what I will not lose my hope in him we can trust our Lord Job knew what trouble was another verse speaking of trouble it says man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble so our earthly lot will include trouble we know we are flesh

and we're mortal and eventually this flesh will fail we will we will suffer ultimately that affliction that will take us to our grave unless the

Lord comes first but we see that man's days are few and full of trouble and yet there is the comfort for us that Job speaks of in Job 14 14 he says if a man die shall he live again all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come we know the word of God tells us of a change to come where in the twinkling of an eye we shall be changed this mortal is going to put on immortal this corruptible is going to put on incorruption this vessel of clay will be remade that body of flesh will give way to the resurrected body and we shall be changed we shall all be changed in the twinkling of an eye which has got the sense of just the most minute moment of time just the smallest fraction of time you could measure in that moment in that twinkling of an eye we shall be changed of course speaking of that resurrection we shall be raised we can have faith that outlasts these earthly days of trouble even though our days of trouble and these days in comparison to eternity our days are few and yet and full of trouble yet one day the change will come and Joe expressed that faith in that that my change will come and we can have a faith that outlasts all the earthly days of trouble we have an eternal hope and

Joe declared his faith of that yet to come and he declared his faith in his redeemer he says in Job 19 25 another telling verse from the book of Job as I say we're only snatching little snapshots here through the book but he says this I know I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth of course we can know as believers in this day who the redeemer is Christ the redeemer the one who redeems he buys us from slavery's ownership and he transfers us into his ownership he makes us free truly free he redeems us he ransoms us and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth my redeemer liveth of course we know our lord is risen he's alive he's forever alive and he is the redeemer who lives ever lives and

Job expresses his faith again Job 23 verse 10 but he knoweth the way that I take and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold so even as he felt like he was in this crucible as he was in this burning trying of fire of gold in the furnace he says he knows the way that I take when he hath tried me in his own good time when he has finished the trial as gold as gold so believer today I know it's something we often can at times feel the difficulty of life troubles of the earthly stage that we're in this these few days that are full of trouble we can know as Job declared

I know my redeemer liveth I know he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth he knows the way that I take when he's ready when he's tried me when he's done I shall come forth as gold trust him through your suffering I know it's easy for me to say that and I know there's loved ones of mine as I've talked about going through quite a difficult time time of affliction and who knows what tomorrow brings for you and me when we come to a message like this often God puts you through it to make sure you know it that lesson of suffering that learning of suffering that walking with him that through your suffering as Job went through he knew!

[23 : 49] he would! come forth he knew that he could get through and we can too it says Job 23 11 my foot have held his steps his way have I kept and not declined neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food so Job learnt to esteem the word of God he says that his foot held steady he's not declined he's kept strong he's kept walking he's kept going forward he's not gone back he's held the word of God esteemed it as necessary more necessary than food Job revered and honoured his Lord and the word of God and his maker and his creator we see he expresses that awe of God as there's various verses speaking of his vision of the stars and of creation and the wonder of it from the telling of the account of various creatures and the wonder of

God's creation and one that speaks a lot is Job 26 verse 7 that he stretcheth out the north over the empty place and he hangeth the earth upon nothing of course we can see that in our day when we have pictures of the earth hanging as a ball in space and we can know that yes Job by faith could see that that that's what God does he hangs the earth upon nothing and the wonder of creation Job honoured God even in his pain and Job 28 verse 28 it says unto a man he said behold the fear of the Lord that is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding Job came to that declaration of faith again behold the fear of the Lord that is wisdom we talked about that earlier today that the true wisdom is heavenly it's knowing him it's fearing

God that is wisdom in a world where there's claims of information and knowledge but there's a loss of wisdom a lack of wisdom and yet Job declared that faith of the fear of God that is wisdom so depart from evil that is understanding so Job's three friends spoke and then finally a fourth man

Elihu finally spoke and Elihu gave some counsel that was useful he talked about how suffering is God's way to teach to discipline and refine we can learn from suffering that there's a learning process there and Job 33 4 it says the spirit of God have made me and the breath of the almighty have given me life when we come to that place we realize our maker our creator our sustainer he's given us the breath that we breathe he's given us life he is the author and finisher of life and God speaks out of the storm! in these last chapters Job 38 God speaks after all the wisdom of men of philosophy of human comfort really they were miserable comforters of Job's friends and his wife Elihu gave some help but yet now God speaks and he answers Job out of the whirlwind Job 38 verse 1 and much that Job said was not really wise but finally the one who is wise speaks out of the whirlwind and God finally did appear to Job but he did not really explain Job's suffering so we could see even at the close this some unanswered questions and that can be such for you and me in life's turmoil and trouble at times we don't always understand we don't always get the answers that we want

God showed that the many things that he does cannot be understood by humans and we humans cannot do what God does we really can only see a glimpse of eternal things and God really criticized Job for talking so much about what he knew so little about really Job really couldn't grasp these eternal things fully but despite Job's lack at least he is still called a servant my servant Job and Job remained that that faithful servant Job 42 verses 1 through 2 it says then Job answered the Lord and said I know that thou canst do everything and that no thought can be withholden from thee here we see Job come to that at least that partial realization that we can know that

[29 : 25] God can do all things we're ultimately in his charge we're ultimately at his mercy and we can yield to his will he has the power to take our suffering away if he so chooses but yet he may choose not he may choose not to for some time no matter what yet will I trust him yet we can trust him though he slay me yet will I trust him he's always in control we can know that he is watching over he is super intending what is happening his plan is overarching we can trust him despite our lack of understanding of what is going on and the Lord will sustain us as his people through it all we shall come forth as gold he is working that which is his purpose and for his glory!

we read on that Job says I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee perhaps that trouble will help us to see more clearly perhaps that trouble perhaps those moments perhaps those learnings will help us that we will see more clearly what God is doing and to come to that place of surrender that Job came to is the ultimate really isn't it verse 6 of Job 42 wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes Job comes to the end of himself he comes to that humility that place of abasement he comes before this holy God and we come before him with humility with surrender that we are completely dependent upon him and let us come ourselves to God we have questions we have needs come to him totally trust lean upon him

Job finally turned to God in humble repentance and I suppose that's the ultimate place to be isn't it when God intervenes and we don't understand we can't fathom the difficulties we're going through yet we can still trust him we can depend upon him Job finally turns in this humble repentance we see our true standing before our God thou canst do everything no thought can be withholden from thee I've heard of thee with the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes we realise his true holiness we realise our limitation the blessing of the book of Job is

Job kept his faith his faith was not diminished it was strengthened his faith was not hurt it was helped and Job prayed Job 42 verse 10 we could think of the unhelpful advice he received of those miserable comforters of his friends he probably would have felt justly angry yet he prayed for his friends Job 42 10 the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed we see that through the whole book

Job prayed he struggled eventually he overcame he never stopped having a relationship with God Job did not curse God as his wife had encouraged him to Job lost just about everything but he did not lose his faith in God and really that was the most important thing we could lose everything but faith is everything isn't it it is everything he did not lose his faith in God Job's faith held steady and sure even in times of great despair and trouble even though he did not understand what was happening and for all his faults Job was my servant Job and we can have that heart too Job in his frailty in his human despair in his cursing the day of his birth yet he did not sin with his mouth he did not blame!

[34 : 47] He did not lose faith his faith endured the patience of Job the endurance of Job he held steady his faith held steady and even for us too we can have moments where life could be very hard and trouble can strike us we lose loved ones we lose possessions and we suffer loss but our faith is strong our faith will hold us steady it's the same for us no matter what life circumstances bring we can realize God's hand is over us and under us so Job's aunt was blessed Job 42 12 so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning the

Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning we can learn from the endurance of Job I pray that you be encouraged in your own relationship with God it's it's a book that I like to turn to when trouble comes and you think of loved ones of difficult times of stages of grief of trouble trial know that God is with you know that Job's story speaks to us today the endurance of Job let us pray Lord we thank you that you give us lessons to learn and sometimes those lessons might include trouble we pray for loved ones in our hearts today and Lord we pray for strength and faith pray Lord help us whatever lies ahead yet for us we'll know that strength that

Job still had that his faith held steady Lord help us to have that same endurance of faith give us Lord the grace to know you that we can have the heart to know my redeemer liveth he shall stand that latter day Lord we know you're coming back we know your word tells us that we shall be changed our change shall come this mortal will give way to that which is immortal that corruption that is our corruptible body will give way to incorruption Lord we know that there is that hope that endures beyond the grave and Lord even in the present day we can know a faith that is eternal eternal life by faith in Christ

Lord we thank you that we can know my redeemer liveth and Lord we thank you that even though trouble strikes we can yet trust you and we will continue to trust you make our faith stronger Lord that we can face even more trouble if it be your will and not to shy away from it but to know your sustaining power in it Lord and all to your glory we know it's not for us to claim any any credit for any measure of strength it's all to you it's all to you and to your praise we thank you Lord in Jesus name Amen