

## LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Job 1:6-12**. From Roy H. Enoch (07/04/1993).
- B. The OT Book of Job is one of the most remarkable literary works in the world.
  - 1. It is characterized by exalted themes, depth of its arguments, and an ageless character of its teaching that makes it superior to man's literature.
    - a. Its pathos and tragedy is beautiful beyond the Greek classics of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*.
    - b. The Roman poet Virgil, *Aeneid* doesn't approach Job's sublime theme of divine justice.
    - c. John Milton's sublime epic poems of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* do not approach the scope and depth of Job's pondering of suffering, death, and the resurrection.
  - 2. We believe it to be the oldest book of the Bible and one of the oldest complete documents in existence.
    - a. The setting is in the patriarchal period.
    - b. The offerings and worship is like that of Abraham and Jacob.
    - c. The modes of living, manners and customs are those of the patriarchs.
    - d. The location is the land of UZ and Job is referred to as of the people of the East.
  - 3. No mention is made of the Law of Moses, nor of the form of society of the Jewish nation which came into existence about 1500BC. There are many allusions in the Book of Job to historical events in early Biblical history, such as the building of the Pyramids, the flood, and the destruction of the "cities of the plain."
  - 4. The length of life assigned to Job also indicates an early date.
    - a. We do not know how old he was when the tragedy came upon him, but he lived 140 years after God restored him.
    - b. He had amassed great wealth before it was taken away (Job 1:3).
    - c. The Septuagint Version has the words, "And all the years that Job lived were two hundred forty."
    - d. This would have made him one hundred when afflicted.
  - 5. Chronological data would make him contemporary with Isaac in the time frame described in Gen. 22.
    - a. Uz was the oldest son of Abraham's brother Nahor.
    - b. Eliphaz the Temanite was a descendant of Esau.
    - c. Bildad was descendant of Shuah, a son of Abraham and Keturah.
    - d. Zophar was a Mamathite, a city in Judah in days of Joshua.
    - e. Eusebius, who wrote the first Church History in 325AD, says that Job was written 200 years before Moses or about 1800BC.
- B. Bible writers treat Job as a historical character.
  - 1. Ezekiel lists Job with Daniel and Noah as righteous men (Ezek. 14:14).
  - 2. James mentions the "patience of Job" and it is proverbial.
- C. We want to study the Book of Job in the following outline.
  - 1. The historical setting. 01-02
  - 2. Job's discussion with his three "friends." 03-30
    - a. Was God the source of Job's sufferings? 04-14
    - b. Do the wicked always suffer in this life for their sins? 15-21
    - c. Was Job guilty of hidden sins? 22-31
  - 3. Elihu declares God's justice. 32-37
  - 4. God's addresses. 38-41
  - 5. Job's vindication and recovery. 42

### I. THE HISTORICAL SETTING IS GIVEN IN THE FIRST THREE CHAPTERS.

- A. Job's righteousness, wealth and dedication to his children is described.
  - 1. God points Job out to Satan as an example of righteousness (Job 1:8).
  - 2. Satan says that Job serves God for selfish reasons (Job 1:10-11).
  - 3. God allows Satan to test him (Job. 1:12).
- B. Satan takes all that he has but his health.
  - 1. His oxen and donkeys were taken by the Sabeans in a raid, and all servants killed but the one that brought the news.
  - 2. Fire from heaven burned up the sheep and servants except the one that brought the news.
  - 3. Three bands of Chaldeans took the camels and killed all of the ones except the one who brought the news.
  - 4. His seven sons and three daughters were feasting and a great wind struck the house and killed all and the servants except the one who brought the news.
  - 5. Job remained faithful (Job 1:20-22).
- C. God again points out Job's faithfulness to Satan.
  - 1. Satan says that he is faithful because he has his health (Job 2:4-5).
  - 2. God said, spare his life (Job 2:6).
  - 3. Job is afflicted, perhaps with elephantiasis, one of the most loathsome forms of leprosy known in the ancient world.
  - 4. His wife loses her faith: "Do you still hold to your integrity? Curse God and die."
  - 5. Job rebukes her (Job 2:10).
- D. Job's three "friends" come to console him. They are astonished when they see that his grief is so great (Job 2:12,13).

## II. **JOB DISCUSSES HIS SITUATION WITH HIS THREE "FRIENDS."**

See chapters 3-30.

- A. Many questions are raised and discussed.
  - 1. Why do some in this life enjoy great prosperity and others only need and endless physical suffering?
  - 2. Does God have any direct interest in the affairs of men, or did he create the world and then abandon it to its own devices?
  - 3. Are human beings motivated solely by selfish interests?
  - 4. Is there really any such thing as piety and goodness engaged in for their own sake?
  - 5. If God does indeed feel an interest in the affairs of men, and exercises providential care for them, does he do so on principles of justice and right or by arbitrary actions only?
  - 6. What is the divine purpose for men in this world?
  - 7. Is there life beyond the grave?
  - 8. How may man be just before God?
  - 9. Do disasters and misfortune result from the sins of those who thus suffer, and do they evidence God's displeasure with those so afflicted?
  - 10. How may man know God?
- B. The first question that Satan attacks is Job's integrity.
  - 1. God said that Job was "perfect and upright, one who fears God and shuns evil" (1:8).
  - 2. Satan says Job serves God for selfish reasons--God blessed him more than anyone else.
  - 3. But Job remains faithful to God w/out material blessings.
  - 4. And God blesses Job "twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:10,13,16).
- C. It was inevitable that Job's "friends" discuss the matter of sufferings and righteousness.
  - 1. For their own contentment and satisfaction they had to believe that God would always bless the righteous w/good health and prosperity.

- a. But Job rejected the idea, as the Lord did centuries later in Lk. 13:1-5.
- 2. Zophar attempted to answer the question by saying that God's ways were beyond man's understanding, and question (Job 11:7-9).
- 3. Elihu later proposes that God allows hardship for chastisement for our good and eventual salvation (Job 33:18,28).
- 4. James develops the values of hardship in his epistle (Jas. 1:2-4,12).
- 5. Job finds hope in an analogy from nature: Job 14:7-14.
  - a. An especially beautiful expression of hope considering the time and limited revelation of the time (Job 19:25-27).
- 6. Later revelation confirm this yearning and hope (Jn. 11:25-26; 2Cor. 5:1).
- C. Another question is raised in 9:2 "How can a man be righteous before God?"
  - 1. Job is painfully aware that he not only could not bargain w/God, but that he could not approach Him: he needed a mediator or arbiter (Job 9:32-35).
  - 2. God gave us that mediator, His own Son.

### III. GOD SPOKE TO JOB OUT OF A WHIRLWIND.

- A. He asks Job about forty questions about God and His creation.
  - 1. They show man how little he knows.
  - 2. They included questions about nature as how God "stretched out the north over the empty space and hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7).

### IV. GOD REBUKES JOB'S FRIENDS AND RESTORES JOB.

- A. See Job 42:7.
- B. Many blessings from God are shown in the book and we are enlightened by reading it.

### CONCLUSION.

- A. Let us study these Scriptures that we might learn to avoid the same fallacies of Job's "friends."