

From the Garden to Glory

Job

Author: Unknown

Timeline: c. 2000 B.C.

Location: Land of Uz (North Arabia)

Category: Poetical

Theme: The Sovereignty of God

Overview:

The book of Job describes the testing of Job as he loses everything—wealth, family, and health. He is alone, in pain and desperate as he cries out to the Lord, "Why?" The Lord gives Job, in effect, a single response, "Because, Job, I am sovereign."

One of the questions of mankind is, "Why do godly people suffer if God is loving and all-powerful?" Suffering itself is not the central theme of the book; rather, the focus is on what Job learns from his suffering - the sovereignty of God over all creation.

God is omniscient, omnipotent, and He is good. Sometimes His ways are incomprehensible to us but we learn that He can always be trusted.

Introduction:

As we begin our study of the book of Job, consider the following questions and write your responses:

1. Look up the word *sovereign* in a dictionary and write the definition.

2. What does it mean, in practical terms, to know that God is sovereign in your life?
3. Think of a difficult situation or trial in your life right now. How does knowing that the Lord is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and all-loving encourage and comfort you?
4. Read Romans 8:28-29. Consider a trial you experienced in the past. In retrospect, how can you see that God, in His sovereignty, allowed the situation to be used "to work together for good" in your life?
5. How does knowing that God is sovereign cause you to worship and praise Him?

Satan and the Saint

Read Job 1 and 2

1. How is Job described in Job 1:1? What does this mean? How does this differ from being perfect or without sin?
2. Look at Job 1:8. In what ways would this be an accurate description of your life? How could you improve in these areas?
3. Look at Job 1:9-11. How has the Lord made a hedge around you and your household? How has He blessed the work of your hands and your possessions?
4. Look at Job 1:20-22. What was Job's response to his grief? How can you make this your response when trials come into your life?

Bildad Thinks Job a Hypocrite

Read Job 8

1. Look at verse 1-7. What did Bildad believe Job needed to do?
2. What was Bildad's attitude concerning those who suffer?
3. What is your attitude toward those who suffer? Ask the Lord to search your heart concerning this.
4. Think of a time when you judged another person unfairly. What did you do when you realized the truth? Read Matthew 7:1-5. How do you protect yourself from judging others? Be specific.

Job Answers His Friends

Read Job 12

1. Look at verses 1-3. How did Job deal with his accusers?
2. Think of a time when you were falsely accused. How was your reaction pleasing to God? In what ways was it ungodly?
3. How would you *like* others to treat you when you are suffering? Be specific.
4. Look at verses 13-25. Note everything you learn from these verses about the sovereignty, power and wisdom of God.

Job's Faith

Read Job 19

1. Look at verses 1-2. How did Job describe his pain and anguish?
2. What was Job's response to his "friends" in verses 3 and 21? Look at the following verses in **Proverbs** and make a note of everything the Lord shows you about giving and receiving wise counsel **Proverbs** 1:5, 11:14, 12:1, 12:18, 15:22, 18:13, 18:21, 19:20, and 27:17. Now read James 3:17. How does this add to your understanding?
3. Look at verses 25-29. How does Job describe his confidence in the Lord?
4. Consider Job's statement, "For I know that my Redeemer lives." What does it mean to you to know that *your* Redeemer lives? How does this impact your life? Be specific.

Job and Elihu

Read Job 32 and Job 36-37

1. Look at Job 32:1. Was Job justified in being "righteous in his own eyes"? Why or why not?
2. How could a person be righteous in his/her own eyes without being prideful?
3. Look at Job 32:2. What aroused Elihu's wrath? What was his basic sin? Think of a time you reacted as Elihu did. What was the outcome?

4. Make a note of everything you learn about the Lord from chapters 36 and 37. What is your response to His goodness and majesty?

God speaks to Job

Read Job 38

1. In verse 1 God revealed Himself to Job "out of the whirlwind". The word for *whirlwind* is translated "a tempest or storm accompanied by violent wind." How has the Lord revealed Himself to you during the stormy times in your life?
2. In verse 2 God opens with a rebuke, accusing Job of being a man who "darkens counsel by words without knowledge". What does this mean?
3. In verses 4-41, God asks Job a series of questions which indicate Job's ignorance and inability to judge God's control of the world. Think of a time you questioned God. How did He reveal His sovereignty to you?
4. Read Psalm 104 and note all that you learn about our sovereign Lord.

Job Vindicated and Honored

Read Job 42

1. Look at verses 1-2. What is Job's confession? Write his response in your own words.

2. Look at verse 6. Here we see Job confess his unworthiness. Dust and ashes signified a humbled condition. Job was guilty of the sins of bitterness and pride. Is there an area of your life where you are experiencing bitterness or pride? How can you avoid these sins in your own life?

3. Look at verses 7-8. God rebuked Job's "friends" for the sins of arrogance and insensitivity. How did they misrepresent God? How can you keep from succumbing to this kind of critical spirit?

4. Summarize verses 12-17. Can you share a time in your walk with the Lord when the Lord blessed your latter days more than your beginning?

Summary

As you conclude your study of the book of Job consider the following questions and write your answers:

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from your study of this book? How can you apply this lesson in your life this week?

2. What "new insights" did you learn about the Lord and yourself from your study?

3. List one way in which your study caused you to do each of the following:

Praise and worship the Lord:

Confess an area of sin to the Lord:

Thank the Lord:

Ask for something from the Lord: