

Session 1

An Introduction to Job and His Trial

Job 1

Scriptures

<i>Job 1:1</i>	<i>Job 1:6</i>	<i>Job 1:12</i>
<i>Genesis 6:9</i>	<i>Job 1:7-8</i>	<i>Job 1:13-20</i>
<i>Genesis 17:1</i>	<i>I Corinthians 3:19</i>	<i>Job 1:21</i>
<i>Job 1:2-3</i>	<i>John 3:20</i>	<i>Mark 8:36</i>
<i>Job 1:4</i>	<i>Job 1:9-10</i>	<i>Ezekiel 18:27</i>
<i>Job 1:5</i>	<i>Job 1:11</i>	<i>Job 1:22</i>

A structure of the book, as detailed by Dr. E.W. Bullinger, gives us a quick overview of the book as a whole.

The Book of JOB as a Whole.

- A | i. 1-5. Introduction. Historical.
- B | i. 6—ii. 10. Satan's assault. Job stripped of all.
- C | ii. 11-13. The Three Friends. Their arrival.
- D | iii. 1—xxxi. 40. Job and his friends.
- E | xxxii.—xxxvii. Elihu.
- D | xxxviii. 1.—xlii. 6. Jehovah and Job.
- C | xlii. 7-9. The Three Friends. Their departure.
- B | xlii. 9, 10. Satan's defeat. Job blessed with double.
- A | xlii. 11-17. Conclusion. Historical.

Job 1:1 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.

Absent getting too technical regarding the historical context of Job, it is enough to know that his lineage descends from Nahor, a brother of Abraham.

Benson Commentary, Job 1:1

We have observed, that it is likely he was of the posterity of Uz, the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham; but how far removed from him can only be conjectured from the age of his friends; the eldest of whom, Eliphaz the Temanite, could not be nearer than great-grand-son to Esau; for Esau begat Eliphaz, and the son of Eliphaz was Teman: so that supposing this Eliphaz to be the son of Teman, (and higher it will be impossible to place him,) he will then be five generations from Abraham; but as Eliphaz was very much older than Job, nay, older than his father, as appears from chap. Job 15:10; and, considering that Abraham was very old before he had a son by Sarah, and that Rebecca, grand-daughter to Nahor, by Bethuel, perhaps his youngest son, was of an age proper to be wife to Isaac; we shall, probably, not be wide of the mark, if we allow Job to be at least six, if not seven generations removed from Nahor. The age therefore in which he lived must have coincided with the latter years of the life of Jacob, with those of Joseph, and the descent into, and sojourning in Egypt: his afflictions must have happened during the sojourning, about ten years before the death of Joseph, and his life must have been prolonged to within fourteen years before the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, that is, the year of the world 2499.

And that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Job was not perfect in that he had no flaws; rather, his inward heart was sincere in his reverence for God and his distaste for evil.

The Lord delivers and teaches those who fear Him and seek to live their lives as perfectly before Him as their weak flesh permits.

He does not work with any who do not inwardly desire to be both upright and blameless before Him.

For the true Christian, not even one sin will be deemed small and allowable. Though the righteous do sin, and far more than they would ever desire, no sin will be deemed by them as either permissible or justifiable.

Job in his pursuit of walking righteously before the Lord was like Noah.

Genesis 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Abraham's pursuit of righteousness also was similar to Job's upright walk.

Genesis 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

There is no evil greater than sin, and if men do not flee it and understand what an affront it is to God, then it will prove impossible for them to have any true and lasting relationship with Him.

The Lord is righteous, so that for any to be numbered among His people, they must pursue His own righteous integrity.

Although Job feared God and eschewed evil, he was not in any way spiritually mature, nor did he fully understand how God deals with man. If Job were so, then he would not have needed to undergo both Elihu's and God's correction, evidenced later in the book.

The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, but surely it should never be considered the end of it. A fear of God puts men in a position of coming to know the Lord, but only He knows how far they have come on this journey.

God's Word also teaches us that with true faith, along with the fear of the Lord, Christians should seek to add other virtuous characteristics to their lives.

Although the Scriptures praise Job for his holy character, they in no way imply that he knew all he needed to know about God and His ways with man.

This applies to us as well: although we may have one good quality, this does not mean that we are not lacking in other areas in our life.

Thus, for any who deceive themselves to believe that they do not need some form of spiritual reformation, they are ignorant at best.

As long as we remain on this earth, we believers also remain unfinished products until such time that through the power given to the Son of God, we are transformed to be made like unto Him.

Job 1:2–3 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

³ *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.*

We first observed the man Job, and now we are instructed in what he possessed. He had a large family and retained a great amount of material abundance, yet even what Job physically possessed could not protect him from the spiritual trials he would soon face.

Benson Commentary, Job 1:3

The account of his piety and prosperity comes before the account of his afflictions, to show that neither of these will secure us from the common, no, nor from the uncommon calamities of human life.

As with all men, regardless of their earthly prosperity, they are still vulnerable to Satan's attacks.

This teaches us that human affluence, whether it be status in community, the number of friends we have, or the wealth we have accumulated, will do nothing to protect them against spiritual assaults, if it is God's divine will to allow them.

What is true of sinners, is also true of saints, that material abundance and earthly esteem, can do nothing to protect the life, if it is either God's will that men are chastened, or even destroyed.

Hence, regardless of whatever worldly abundance men possess they should never be misled into believing that these earthly possessions will protect them from spiritual assault.

For all true believers, who are in fact strangers and pilgrims on this earth, the world is always a dangerous place. Job is described as the greatest of all the men of the east, but even this could not protect him from the designed calamities that were to come.

Job 1:4 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.

While Job's character is described as noble and worthy of respect, we learn that his children manifested a taste for worldly pleasure and entertainment. This is often the case with those raised with material abundance.

No doubt, Job's children never learned the greatest attribute of their father, which was his holy, sincere, and religious fear of God—a fear that led him to seek to avoid all paths that led to sin and a departure from God and His will. In regard to Job's children, sadly they desired none of their father's fear of the Lord, nor did they seek to worship Him as they should. They were carnal, worldly, and fleshly in every sense, and ultimately reaped as they had sown.

They would not have the Lord to protect them, simply because in their sinful lives, they desired no sincere relationship with Him.

What is also observable is that when Job potentially detected sin in his children, or thought it may have been committed by them, he sought the Lord for its forgiveness. This response would prove highly profitable later in the book.

For when Job came to understand his own sins, he very quickly and with great sincerity, repented of them.

Job 1:5 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 have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Fathers, especially God-fearing fathers, know far more of the Lord and His dealings with sinners than their children do.

Because Job was concerned about his children's spirituality, he did his best to sanctify them by rising early in the morning and offering sacrifices to God for their sin.

Ultimately, Job was abundantly aware that for all sin there must be worthy sacrifice presented to atone for it.

Benson Commentary, Job 1:5

And rose up early in the morning—Thereby showing his ardent zeal in God's service. *And offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all*—Well knowing himself, and hereby teaching them, that all sin, even secret unbelief, ingratitude, and vanity of mind, merited condemnation from God, and could only be expiated by the shedding of blood, and offering of sacrifice, in a spirit of true penitence, and humble, lively faith. *It may be my sons have sinned*—His zeal for God's glory, and his love to his children, made him jealous; for which he had sufficient cause, from the corruption of human nature, the frailty and folly of youth, the many temptations which attend feasting, and men's proneness to slide from lawful to forbidden delights.

Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 1:5

That Job sent—Sent for them, and called them around him. He was apprehensive that they might have erred, and he took every measure to keep them pure, and to maintain the influence of religion in his family. . . . What father is there who loves God, and who feels anxious that his children should also, who does not feel special solicitude if his sons and his daughters are in a situation where successive days are devoted to feasting and mirth?

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

We now shift from the historical record of Job, to Satan's assault and Job being stripped of all. This account begins with the sons of God (God's created beings) coming to present themselves before the Lord, with Satan also among them.

God is sovereign; consequently, those of His government and in His creation must report directly to Him. This appears to be customary and a standard part of heaven's policy, wherein the Lord's ministers must give reports and accounts of their movements and activity in the earth.

Benson Commentary, Job 1:6

...that the affairs of earth are much the subject of the counsels of the unseen world, to which we lie open, though that world is in a great measure concealed from us. And such representations may also be intended to discover to us, in part, at least, the causes of

many of those things which happen on earth, and which appear to us unaccountable, namely, that they arise from our having some connection with, or relation to, other orders of beings through the universe, on whose account, and through whose ministry, many things may happen to us, which otherwise would not. Thus the dreadful calamities and afflictions which befell Job, in such quick succession, are utterly unaccountable according to the ordinary course of human things, and seem almost without reason, if he were considered merely as a human being, having no connection with, relation to, or influence upon, any world but this.

Job 1:7–8 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.

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 escheweth evil?

Undoubtedly God singled out Satan by directly speaking to him, to ultimately use him for the Lord's own great design.

Indeed, God has used, and will use, even evil spiritual agencies to accomplish His own divine purposes.

The crucifixion of the Son of God is an example of this, whereby through Jesus' death on the cross, His death brought many new sons to glory. Hence, whereas Satan desired to murder the Son of God, and eventually did, the Lord's wisdom used the devil's attack on His only begotten Son, to actually atone for the sins of all mankind.

Indeed, the Lord taketh the wise, or those who think themselves to be wise, in their own craftiness.

I Corinthians 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I Cor. 3:19

The word rendered "taketh" here denotes to clench with the fist, grope, grasp. And the sense is:

(1) However crafty, or cunning, or skillful they may be; however self-confident, yet that they cannot deceive or impose upon God. He can thwart their plans, overthrow their schemes, defeat their counsels, and foil them in their enterprises, Job 5:12.

(2) He does it by their own cunning or craftiness. He allows them to involve themselves in difficulties or to entangle each other. He makes use of even their own craft and cunning to defeat their counsels. He allows the plans of one wise man to come in conflict with those of another, and thus to destroy one another. Honesty in religion, as in everything else, is the best policy; and a man who pursues a course of conscientious integrity may expect the protection of God. But he who attempts to carry his purposes by craft and intrigue—who depends on skill and cunning instead of truth and honesty, will often find that he is the prey of his own cunning and duplicity.

When God drew Satan's attention to Job and praised him for his holy character, He surely knew that this would arouse great envy and jealousy in Satan. But since the devil remained unaware of the Lord's final purpose for His servant, Job, he was unsuspectingly led to assist God in bringing about God's will for Job's life.

Little would arouse Satan's indignation more than God bringing this attention to a man, a mere frail human being, who was everything Satan was not—someone who feared God and eschewed evil.

By the Lord's asking Satan to consider Job and his righteous character, He undoubtedly knew that this would remind Satan of his own lack of any true righteousness.

As with all evil men, Satan hated Job because his own deeds were evil, while the deeds of this righteous servant of God were good.

John 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, John 3:20

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light. . . . Not only does the man that doeth evil love darkness rather than light, but he hates the light. (Comp. note on John 7:7.) Its presence makes manifest and reproves his works, which he would hide even from himself. It illumines the dark and secret chambers of the heart, and reveals thoughts and deeds which conscience, seeing in this light, trembles at, and turns away to darkness that it may hide itself from its own gaze.

Job 1:9–10 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?¹⁰ 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.

It took only the mere mention of Job to ignite an indignant response in God's adversary, Satan. He replied that the only reason Job feared God was that he had been blessed and protected by God.

This claim would ultimately be proven false—as tragedy did not change Job's heart but only revealed what truly lay within it. Trials also do not actually form men's character but only reveal what it consists of.

Those also who engage in sin will never recognize or give true respect for religious piety. Satan is the very first example of this.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Job 1:9

fear God for naught—It is a mark of the children of Satan to sneer and not give credit to any for disinterested piety.

Ellicott's commentary also adds some interesting thoughts on this verse.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 1:9

Doth Job fear God for nought?—Manifesting the worst kind of scepticism, a disbelief in human goodness. Satan knows that the motive of an action is its only value, and by incrimination calumniates the motives of Job. The object of the book is thus introduced, which is to exhibit the integrity of human conduct under the worst possible trial, and to show man a victor over Satan.

Though Satan did not know it, all the harm he would inflict upon Job would one day be reversed by God. In the end, through God's wisdom and heavenly power, he was made to overcome every wicked plan devised by Satan.

Job 1:11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

The vehemence in the devil's reaction reveals the hatred that lives within him. All creatures, including fallen angels like the devil, see things primarily through their own distorted and warped eyes.

Since cursing God is what defined Satan's character, he foolishly assumed that if Job lost all, then he would follow the same pattern as himself, and rebel against His Creator. Yet this was only wishful thinking; in fact, Satan's assaults on Job's life would eventually produce a completely different response in Job. In the end, Job's trial only increased his faith in the Lord, and purified his worship of God.

Benson Commentary, Job 1:11

It was a great truth that Job did not fear God for naught; he got much by it: for godliness is great gain. But it was a false lie that he would not have feared God if he had not got this by it, as the event proved.

Job 1:12 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.

What is observed here is that in respect to the Lord's people, Satan is only given power over them, if in accordance with divine will.

It is God Who is sovereign, and He alone, Who oversees the lives of His people.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 1:12

All that he hath is in thy power . . . —Mighty as the principle of evil is in the world, it is nevertheless held in check by One who directs it to His own ends. Such is the uniform teaching of Scripture. We are not under the uncontrolled dominion of evil, strong as the temptation may be at times to think so. (See 2Corinthians 12:7; 2Corinthians 12:9; 1Thessalonians 2:18, &c.)

Satan initially claimed that Job was loyal to the Lord because he had been blessed by Him. In response, God yielded more power to His adversary to destroy the very things that Satan had surmised were the reasons for Job's religious piety.

The record of Joseph being sold by his brothers into bondage is also a wonderful example of how God will use evil intentions, by evil men, for the good of His people (Gen. 37:23–28). Thus, though Joseph's brothers intended to cause him harm, the Lord used their brotherly betrayal to exalt Joseph and ultimately even to save their own lives.

God's thoughts are higher than man's, and even every angelic creature God has created. Undoubtedly, Satan's own thoughts and schemes are included in this spiritually verifiable biblical truth.

Job 1:13–20 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

¹⁴ ***And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:***

¹⁵ ***And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.***

¹⁶ ***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.***

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.***

¹⁸ *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:*

¹⁹ *And, 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.*

²⁰ *Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,*

Although Job loved his children, he did not curse his God, even after their sudden and tragic deaths.

While lesser men, perhaps even we ourselves, might have been tempted to lay blame upon the Lord, or at the very least to doubt God's goodness, Job did the exact opposite. He rent his mantle and shaved his head, which were signs of spiritual mourning, and then fell upon the ground and worshiped.

What a great example this man of the East is, who possessed true religious piety, who instead of cursing the Lord after tremendous physical loss, worshiped Him!

The truly righteous and God-fearing also will regularly prove that the most important aspect of their lives is neither their bodies, nor their earthly possessions, nor even their earthly families—which, no doubt, they cherish much—but their God.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 1:20

Moments of intense sorrow or trial, like moments of intense joy, force us into the immediate presence of God.

Job 1:21 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.

Job wisely knew that whatever he had gained after birth would be surrendered immediately upon the time of his death. This reminds us that no matter whatever any possess while alive on the earth, it must be both forfeited and relinquished at their death.

Mark 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

The soul is the only real treasure any man truly possesses. It will one day leave the body, and the only question is where it will go.

There are but two eternal options: either heaven or hell.

It is also only as men repent for living lives of sin, that their souls can be saved by God.

Ezekiel 18:27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

Benson Commentary, Job 1:21

and naked shall I return—I shall be as rich when I die as I was when I was born; and therefore have reason to be contented with my condition, which also is the common lot of all men. We go naked out of the [womb] into the [world] or lap of our common mother the earth, as the weary child lays its head on its mother's bosom. Death strips us of all our possessions and enjoyments; clothing can neither warm nor adorn a dead body: a consideration which silenced Job under all his losses. The sanctified soul, however, goes out of the world clothed, (2 Corinthians 5:3,) and when it appears in the presence of God is not found naked.

Job 1:22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Even in the agonizing loss of his children and the plundering of his goods, still *Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*

So sincere was Job's faith and trust in the Lord, that he did not even lay blame upon Him, when faced with complete personal loss.

Satan was undoubtedly wrong in surmising that Job would curse the Lord; thus, the Lord was proven right, that Job was a man of high religious integrity. Mutiny had been purposed by Satan, and all his efforts had failed, because of Job's spiritual uprightness and strong religious loyalty to the Lord.

When men murmur and raise their voices against the Lord, it reveals that they are dissatisfied with His rule. Ultimately, Satan's main goal has always been to lead sinners into rebellion against God, and murmuring against the Lord is one of the very first evidences of spiritual insurrection. But because God is just and righteous in all His ways, He will never, nor can He ever, sin against man, as man sins against Him. To foolishly claim sin on God's part, only reveals the spiritual ignorance of ourselves.

Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Job 1:22

...true piety will bear the removal of property and friends without murmuring. Religion is not based on such things, and their removal cannot shake it. It is founded deeper in the soul, and mere external changes cannot destroy it."

