

KNOWING GOD IN TIME OF SUFFERING

JOB 1:1-4

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JOB WAS RIGHTEOUS AND A GENTILE

“In the land of Uz modern day Saudi Arabia, there lived a man whose name was Job” (Job 1:1). Job was not an Israelite. “His non-Israelite status explains the absence of many key theological elements in the book, including law, covenant, temple and reference to Yahweh,”

Other than being from Uz, the first thing the **Bible** tells us about Job is that he was righteous and godly, “blameless and upright,”

a man who *“feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:2)*. One might assume from these first two verses that Job was a simple man of humble means because it’s a rare person whose heart is fixed on God and has everything this life has to offer. But Job was a very rich and great man by the world’s standards.

- He had 10 children, many servants, and his livestock numbered in the thousands. “He was the greatest man among all the people of the East” (**Job 1:3**): great by man’s standards and by God’s. Incredible. We can surmise that every need Job had was met and every desire was fulfilled.
- **Job 1:4-5** tells us that Job’s sons were also rich and would annually, on their birthdays, invite their sisters to partake with them in lavish feasts lasting for days.
- Job served as the family priest. He feared God so much that he made sure his children were purified following the feasts in case, in their revelry, they sinned against God. “Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, ‘Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.’ This was Job’s regular custom” (**Job 1:5**).
- Job’s life, depicted in the exposition of the story, is picture perfect. The unknown author is depicting the main character’s goodness and

innocence, setting the audience up for the climax in which “Satan” is granted permission by the Lord to test Job’s faith and faithfulness.

- Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. “Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.

“The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger” ([Job 1:9-12](#)).

And then later in the story...

- *“Skin for skin!”* Satan replied. *“A man will give all he has for his own life. But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.”*
- The Lord said to Satan, *“Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life” ([Job 2:4-6](#)).*

JOB’S FRIENDS COME TO COMFORT HIM.

- **ELIPHAZ:** continue his consolation by saying that God never makes mistakes. What you have done, you deserve because you have brought it upon yourself.
- **BILDAD:** Theme is that God is just and that job should confess his sin
- **ZOPHAR:** The third comforter says that God is a wise and that he knows man, Zophar boasted of his knowledge of how God works and presumed to know all about God
- **ELIHU:** the youngest of job friend who says the wisest thing. He encourage job to look up and trust God, for God his good. We need more people like Elihu

WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER JOB 21:7

- **JOB:** Had No Way Of Knowing The Purpose Of God.
- **ELIPHAZ:** Suggested That Job Had Sinned.
- **BILDAD:** Suggested That Job Suffers Because Of His Sin
- **ZOPHAR:** Adds That Sin Was The Cause Of Job Calamities.

- This Causes Job To Remind Them That Many Ungodly Do Not Reach Ripe, Old Age In Both Prosperity And Honour and Inspite Of Their Wickedness And Rejection Of God, God Still Appears To Prosper Them
- Eliphaz in chapter 15 has accused Job of being a windbag rebel against God
- Job friend endorsees Satan view of job as a hypocrite. They thinking they are defending God but becoming the tool of Satan. How many people have used the lame excuse that they do not go to church because its filled with hypocrite! Such an excuse is an effective tool of Satan to keep people from God.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM JOB'S SUFFERING?

1. **SUFFERING IS A WAY FOR GOD TO DISPLAY HIS POWER AND GLORY.** “...Suffering cannot be explained by the simple principle of retributive justice, where each person gets what he deserves: suffering for the evil and prosperity for the good,” *John Piper* said. Often in life, it is the righteous who suffer and the wicked who prosper.

“Why do the wicked live, reach old age, and grow mighty in power?

They spend their days in prosperity, and in peace they go down to Sheol. They say to God, ‘Depart from us! We do not desire the knowledge of your ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit do we get if we pray to him?’” (Job 21:13-15).

In the following New Testament story of suffering, we see that suffering can mean that God is wonderfully at work in a person’s life, producing something miraculous.

“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him’” (John 9:1-3).

2. SUFFERING IS A RESULT OF GOD’S LOVE.

- God was not Job’s enemy, as he may have wondered. God had a purpose and a plan; Job simply didn’t know it yet.
- “Suffering is not dispensed willy-nilly among the people of God. It is apportioned to us as individually designed, expert therapy by the loving hand of our great Physician. And its aim is that our faith might be

refined, our holiness might be enlarged, our soul might be saved, and our God might be glorified,”.

CONCLUSION

- Who was Job? Job was a man greatly tested by God and even more greatly blessed by God!
- God restored Job’s fortune with “14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys” (**Job 42:12**).
- God restored Job’s family with seven sons, three daughters, and four generations of grandchildren (**Job 42:13-16**).
- “And Job died, an old man, and full of days” (**Job 42:17**).