

Job's Conversion Part 1

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 1/6/2018

The Book of Job is an ancient book. It is difficult to understand and it is little used, even among the people of God. The Book of Job is about how God ultimately brought Job to conversion – Christian conversion. Job is a remarkable book. John, Peter, James and Paul were moved and inspired by Job—as was King David (Hebrews 12:6-7). This principle that Paul writes here, comes from Job's experiences with trials. John says, Satan is "the accuser of the brethren," (Revelation 12:10)

Romans 8:28 We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Job is often quoted in their writings.

Ancient Job was an amazing man. He was a rich man and a great man. Job was a priest who offered sacrifices, high ruler and judge, a brilliant scientist, an engineer, a miner and geologist, meteorologist (36:27), agriculturalist, mathematician, and architect. He was an astronomer – and knew that the earth was round (22:14). Study those out – Job was a fascinating and well educated man. He owned caravans, ranches and farms. He was a manufacturer and a merchant in the mercantile industry, and a faithful husband.

Job was world renown - and he was on top of the world. You know the story – God allowed Satan to take everything away from Job. Job didn't just come down a notch or two – he came all the way down to **zero**.

He lived **between** the time of Noah's flood and the calling of Abraham. Job lived to be approximately 250 years old; Noah 950. The flood changed everything. Shem 600 years. After the flood the **lifespan of man** rapidly began to decrease by 90% - from nearly 1000 down to less than a hundred. God has preserved the numbers for us – and that helps us to determine how far back Job lived. It was a very strange time when all the dinosaur-like creatures had not yet completely died out after the flood...

Of Noah's three sons, **Shem** (Semitic and Semite) was the father of all the sons of Eber – the Hebrews (Genesis 10:21) Each generation having a shorter and shorter lifespan – (read about them in Genesis 11).

Seven generations later we come down to: Serug lived 230 years, and was great-grandfather of Abraham. Abraham lived 175 years; of whom God made nations and a great nation. Joseph 110 years and finally David 70 years – like today lifespan.

Unfortunately, today we most commonly hear Job being referred to as, self-righteous Job. A self-righteous person has a lot to hide because he is wrong – but he comes across as sanctimonious, holier-than-thou, self-satisfied, smug, pious, preachy, superior, in general a goody-goody...when in fact he has a lot to work on.

Too many religious people come across as possessing an attitude of smug **moral superiority** derived from a sense that their beliefs and actions are of a higher ethical caliber than those of the average person. There are denominations that are known for their self-righteous – look down their noses – disposition. They do God a dis-service with their "**Better than thou**" attitude.

But, was Job like this??? No he was not. Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, certainly believed that he had some secret faults that he was concealing – but they were wrong. You remember the old saying, "With friends like that , who needs enemies?"

Eliphaz the Temanite was not receiving his inspiration from God, but from a demon. Remember that when you read these men's accusations. Eliphaz says:

Job 4:12 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

Job 4:13 In thoughts from the **visions of the night**, when deep sleep falleth on men,

Job 4:14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

Job 4:15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the **hair of my flesh stood up**:

Job 4:16 It stood still, but I could **not discern the form thereof**: a shapeless image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice saying...

When you read what these three "friends" have to say – consider the source... because this is actually a quote from a demon spirit putting down on the way God interacts with His creation, and Job in particular.

Job's friend Bildad **is just as bad** saying that Job should repent of his wrong doings.

Job 8:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

Job 8:2 How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the **words of thy mouth be like a strong wind**?

"You are a bag of wind, Job - just a lot of hot air," implying that Job was anything but pure and upright.

Job 8:6 **If** thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Job could not fathom why God would remove his blessings in a single stroke against him. Job's friends surmised that he must have done something seriously sinful and wrong to deserve it. And yet, Job continuously maintained that he was doing everything that God required of him. What was the answer to Job's dilemma? Why did God allow Job to suffer a trial so horribly painful that he regretted the day he was born? Why did **blameless** Job have to suffer?

Job knew and practiced **what Christ taught** to the New Testament Church – even though he lived before Moses codified the Law at Mt. Sinai.

Satan and the demons constantly accused Job of wrong-doing, for which Job defended himself.

Job's opinion was that he was doing absolutely everything that was required as a righteous Godly man.

Job 13:15 Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him: but **I will maintain mine own ways** before him.

Job trusted that his evaluations were always **spot on** - and for the most part - they were. And according to God – **he was**. But Job was not yet converted in the beginning of this Book. Job’s evaluations were not **spot on** when it came to God. Job greatly underestimated the benevolence of God and how superior God was to Him. Job was blameless, but he did not start to realize how awesome God is – and that God is always Just, fair and Right.

Job had a lot to learn. And God was working in Job’s life to bring him to the highest notch. The truth is that Job was the **epitome of human righteousness**: Let’s read a little here and get a picture of what is going on:

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 avoided evil.

He was **not perfect** and sinless as only Jesus is. A better translation is that he was **blameless** and upright. As all men do – Job would slip-up and sin – but he did not live a **life of sinfulness**. He walked in God’s way to the extent that in the book of Ezekiel, God goes beyond saying that Job is “**blameless and upright**,” and calls **him righteous**. (Ezekiel 14:14, 20)

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

Job was an extremely rich man – more so than Donald Trump or Bill Gates is today.

Job 1:3 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.

Job 1:4 And his sons went and feasted in their houses, everyone his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

Job was of the righteous line that descended from Noah – and he knew how to **sacrifice** and **give offerings** to God.

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.

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God [good and bad angels must give an accounting to God] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

Job 1:7 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.

Job 1:8 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 fears God, and eschews evil?

Satan says, “Yeah, I know him – but he’s off limits to me because you bless him every which way he turns – he can do no wrong in your sight.

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? [nothing]

Remember how Jesus once told Peter that Satan desired him.

Luke 22:31 The Lord said, Simon, [Peter] Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you. In the same way, Satan sought the destruction of Job.

Satan says to God, "I can't even get near to Job."

Job 1:10 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.

Satan says, "It would be an entirely different story if Job wasn't constantly protected by you – God,-- Job would drop you like a hot pancake."

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

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.

God told Satan – you can touch all that he possesses. Then Satan proceeds to take Job's property and Children. Disaster after disaster strikes Job.

Satan tempts us so that we will fail.

God tests us so that we will succeed.

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

Job 1:14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the donkeys feeding beside them:

Job 1:15 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.

Job 1:16 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.

Job 1:17 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.

Job 1:18 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:

Job 1:19 And, behold, there came a [tornado] 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.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and **worshipped,**

Brethren, notice that Job did not curse God as Satan said he would.

Job 1:21 And Job 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 1:22 In all of this **Job sinned not**, nor charged God foolishly.

And though he examined himself closely—and here is where Job came short—he did not have an “I need you God**, attitude,” making his **conversion** one of the most difficult that we find in the Scriptures.

In the Book of Job we see a righteous man seriously reflecting on his **sore trial**, trying to reconcile his miserable circumstances with what he feels to be his exemplary life style.

Sin, at least in the beginning, is not the issue in the book of Job, nor is sin the reason for Job’s trials.

Job knew so much of God’s plan and the resurrection of the righteous. The knowledge of God had come down to him through **Noah** who was a righteous man, blameless in his generation, and **he too** walked with God. That knowledge traversed the flood and down to Shem—and down to Job. The Book of Job shows us just how much Godly **knowledge** was retained by a righteous line—down to Abraham.

Job 2:3 God said, “There is none like him in the earth, **a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God**, and eschews [turns away from] evil? And still he **holds fast to his integrity**, although thou [Satan] moved me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

What then is the Book of Job all about? What are the lessons we are to learn? The Book of Job is an incredible spiritually and historically revealing book! The Book of Job is a little hard to read and understand because it is an ancient manuscript – but it is well worth studying. Use a few different Bible translations for better clarification.

Through his own **force of will**, Job had determined that he would be a man of **blameless integrity** and virtue, obtaining the highest of moral values.

Job 2:4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

Job 2:5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will **curse thee to thy face**.

God allowed Satan to pull out all the stops. God allowed Satan to turn up the heat on Job.

Job 2:6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but **save his life**.

Job 2:7 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.

Job 2:8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

Job did not even have the comfort of his wife.

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? **curse God, and die**.

Job 2:10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this **Job did not sin** with his lips.

Job is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with **strong pain**: (Job 33:19)

The sore trial of Job was not because of a deliberate and habitual sin in Job's life, but he was chastised because **God knew** that he lacked a quality of spiritual understanding and substance. Paul said that he learned a lot from Job's ordeal. We see here one of the principles of God that Paul learned from God's dealing with Job:

Hebrews 12:6-7 *For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and severely disciplines every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons.*

Hebrews 12:10-11 *For [our dads] verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

That is our final goal. The reason for the trials; so that ultimately we can become Holy as He is; that we may gain Salvation.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation[same word as "trials" in verse 2]; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

There were an abundance of Christian principles that Job understood so well – so early on – even before Moses codified the Law. Nevertheless , Job had got to thinking that he was a self made man. He believed that: He made his opportunities; He planned; He sacrificed; He worked hard; He produced; He saved; slaved and worked hard for every penny he had; He did everything right.

As a priest Job offered acceptable sacrifices to God. He cared for the poor, the maimed and fatherless. He was very generous. Job did not trust in his riches and wealth. He said:

Job 31:24-25 I have not made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence; I did not rejoice because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much.

But, Job continuously attempted to **justify** himself. What follows is how God worked with Job to bring him to the point where he finally humbled himself and learned that **he must be judged and God justified**. Let's just glance at the end of the story:

Job 32:2 Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because **Job justified himself rather than justifying God**.

That was Job's fault.

End: Job's Conversion Part 1