

"God's Love Story Sermon Outlines"

by Doug Hamilton

Section 19: "Without Suffering and Patience There Would Be No Love Story" (The Book of Job)

Date of Writing, Date of Story and Author

Job is one of the more difficult books of the Bible to date. The date of the account of Job has varied from the 2nd millennium BC to the 5th century BC, with the traditional being the former.

- Evidence of the early date is found in the life span of Job. In Job 42:16 it states "*And after this Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons, and his grandsons, four generations.*" In the beginning of the book, we find Job presented as a well-established middle to upper age individual, having 10 grown children, an experienced relationship with God and a thriving business. (Job 1:1-5). If you add 50-75 years prior to chapter one and 140 years from the end of the book, you have 190 to 215 years of age. Based on the decreasing ages of the post flood ancestors, we find the approximate age of Job in comparison with Serug to Isaac, all of which lived to an old age. This would place the record of Job in the area of the second millennium B.C.
- This early account date would also explain the prominence of the Sabeans (1:15) and Chaldeans (1:17), for they were roving bands of thugs from the second millennium BC. It most certainly lends to the historical context of the time period.
- This would also be the reason we do not find the Law having a presence among the text, for it would have been yet to come. The name Job appears to be that of Edomite origin and most of the references to God are El Shaddai rather than Jehovah. It really is not something that would be found in a post-Law account.

Based upon this internal evidence, the date of the account of the Job would appear to be in the second millennium BC, however the date of writing would have to be sometime after this for the account of Job ends in past tense.

Authorship

There really is not a clear author for the writing. The author: He would have had been recognized as a prophet to be considered for the canon. He would have been familiar with Egypt and the areas of the desert. This has led some to speculate Joseph, Moses or Solomon to be the author. One thing for sure, the writer would have been appreciative of human suffering.

What can we learn from the Book of Job?

The Apostle James lists two examples of "*suffering and patience*" in 5:10-11, being the prophets and Job. Specifically of Job he says "*We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.*" James was encouraging the persecuted Christians to be patient in the suffering. He wanted them to hang onto God's Love Story with all their being and was using the life of Job as motivation. Let us look at the life of Job and see if we can apply the same to our lives today?

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Job was a good man (1:1-5)

It says that Job “*was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil.*” He was a respectable businessman in the community who had many flocks and herds. He was a family man, having 10 children and a wife (1:2). He even went as far as offering a burnt offering for each one of his children (1:5). Job was a caring and concerned man of God. He really did not have a care in the world for he was right with God on every level.

Satan attacks.

The angels of God came to present themselves before the LORD. The devil, a fallen angel, also comes. He is looking to tempt someone for evil and he requests to test Job. He has an entire set of moves that he used to attack. Like a piece of wood, the devil seeks to whittle away Job’s faith and render him useless to God. The LORD authorized the devil to carry out a series of tests of faith on Job, knowing that the trials would be passed and His Love Story would be intact. We must never forget that God believes more in us than we believe in Him. He never gives us more than we can handle (1 Cor 10:13). Nobody can say that God tempted them to fail (James 1:13), for God only allows tests we can pass. God authorizes tests with the intention of you passing it and the devil wants us to fail it. Same test with two different intentions.

What were some of these assault mechanisms carried out on the faith of Job? They were as follows:

A. The “Loss of Wealth” Trial

- Satan attacked Job’s faith through the “The Loss of Wealth” trial. All the oxen, donkeys and the servants who tended them were overrun by the Sabeans (1:13-15). All the sheep and the servants that tended them were consumed by fire (1:16). The camels and the servants whom tended them were overrun by the Chaldeans (1:17). All of Job’s sons and daughters were killed in a freak storm that demolished the house they were in (1:18-19). Job lost everything, the livestock, the home, his cars, the Roth IRA, the 401K, the employees, his property and his children.
- What was his reaction? Did he lose his trust in God’s Love Story? The scripture tells us that Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head, fell to the ground and worshiped God. He said, *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."* Job did not blame nor curse God in the “Loss of Wealth” attack. He would not let go of God.

B. The “Loss of Health” Trial

- The devil attacked with a “Loss of Health” trial, thinking that Job would most certainly curse God to His face. Verse 7 states *"Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head."* Unless one has experienced a boil, an appreciation for this affliction of Job cannot begin to be respectfully grasped. The boils would have

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maimed his face, making him unrecognizable (2:12). There was no rest for him because of the continual burning (3:26). Maggots infested these sores (7:5) and he was detestable to everyone (19:17-18). Job completely lost his health.

- Surely the devil would convince him to curse God and die! What does it say in 2:10? In all this Job did not sin with his lips. Job would not and could not let the circumstances allow him to curse God. He could not explain why it was going on, but he knew that God was in control. He trusted in God's Love Story.

C. The "Spousal" Trial

- *2:9-10 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!"¹⁰ But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?"*
- It was not bad enough that the devil used the "wealth" and "health" trials on Job's faith, but he used a "Spouse" trial as well. The one person on this earth whom should have been the most supportive in this time of trial ended up being used by the devil to gnaw on his faith. Yes, she suffered loss of her children. Yes, she suffered loss of the property. Yes, she suffered the momentary loss of the health of her husband. Did this mean it was okay to curse God? The devil was using her to chip away at her husband's faith and trust in God's Love Story.

D. The "Self-Esteem" Trial

- Instead of turning his frustration toward God, he turned it to himself. Listen to some of the excerpts from Job 3.
 - *3:1 Afterward Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his {birth.}*
 - *3:3 "Let the day perish on which I was to be born, and the night {which} said, 'A boy is conceived.'*
 - *3:4 "May that day be darkness; let not God above care for it, nor light shine on it."*
 - *3:7 "Behold, let that night be barren; let no joyful shout enter it."*
 - *3:11 "Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire?"*
 - *3:16 "Or like a miscarriage which is discarded, I would not be, as infants that never saw light."*
 - *3:24 "For my groaning comes at the sight of my food, and my cries pour out like water."*
 - *3:25 "For what I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me."*
 - *3:26 "I am not at ease, nor am I quiet, and I am not at rest, but turmoil comes."*
- This is called the "Self-esteem" trial. His emotions are worn down and turning against him. He is on very shaky ground, losing the vision of God's Love Story.

E. The "Friendship" Trial

- Job sat scraping his sores while sitting among the ashes. While suffering that first week, three friends came and sat with him for seven days (2:8-13). Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar

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were there to comfort him as the scriptures say. Their entire intention from the beginning was to be that group of friends to lean on. They did not say a word for the seven days at Job's side, for they were in shock. Sometimes it is good to just be silent and listen. When they do finally speak it is with great assault. For 29 chapters, instead of encouraging Job with God's Love Story, they end up being a yet another trial for him.

- a) They attacked his words.
 - b) They attacked his integrity.
 - c) They attacked his salvation
- Even a young man named Elihu, who waited until the end to comfort Job, actually did the same. *32:2-3 But the anger of Elihu...burned; against Job his anger burned, because he justified himself before God. And his anger burned against his three friends because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*
 - Through all this Job did not give up on God's story of love. He questioned it, but did not doubt it.

Conclusion

Job did not cave into the attacks on his faith, the wealth trial, health trial, spousal trial, self-esteem trial and friendship trial. In chapters 38-41, we find something remarkable. God began a thorough interrogation of Job. From the whirlwind comes wisdom, perspective and comfort.

God Speaking:

Job 38:3-11 *"Now gird up your loins like a man, and I will ask you, and you instruct me! 4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell {me,} if you have understanding, 5 Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? 6 "On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 "Or {who} enclosed the sea with doors, when, bursting forth, it went out from the womb; 9 When I made a cloud its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, 10 And I placed boundaries on it, and I set a bolt and doors, 11 And I said, 'Thus far you shall come, but no farther; and here shall your proud waves stop'?"*

There were three more chapters of this interrogation by God. Why was God doing this? I am persuaded this occurred because Job needed a good dose of the awesomeness of God to bring him back to the initial trust in God's Love Story. Even though Job did not curse God, his faith had been lowered through the attacks of the devil. It was necessary for God to humble Job so that he could see the awesomeness of God.

Job's Response to the Interrogation:

Job 42:1-6 *Then Job replied to the LORD: 2 "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. 3 [You asked,] 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. 4 ["You said,] 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' 5 My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. 6 Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."*

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What was the result of the interrogation of God? Job once again had the highest reverence for the God's love for him. By the end of the book, *"the LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold"* (Job 42:10).

Application

We in the Christian faith must understand that trials will come to us in this life. There are forces out in the world that are working overtime at having us pull away from God and His love for us. *"We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful."*

- We can lose all our possessions, but that does not mean we lose God's love!
- We can be on our deathbed, but know that God still loves us!
- We can have many of the people we counted as friends and family bail out on us in our time of need, but God still loves us!

Jesus loves me this I know
For the Bible tells me so
Little ones to Him belong
They are weak but He is strong.

Yes Jesus loves me
Yes Jesus loves me
Yes Jesus loves me
the BOOK OF JOB tells me so.