

MAKING “SENSE”

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21 JULY 2024

OF SUFFERING JOB



INTRODUCTION

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THE REALITY OF SUFFERING



In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was **blameless and upright; he **feared God and shunned evil**.**
² He had seven sons and three daughters,



3 and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was **the greatest man among all the people of the East.**



4 His sons used to hold feasts in their homes on their birthdays, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.



5 When a period of feasting had run its course, **Job would make arrangements for them to be purified.** 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.



6 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.



7 The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the LORD, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.”



**8 Then the LORD said to Satan,
“Have you considered my servant Job?
There is no one on earth like him;
he is blameless and upright, a man
who fears God and shuns evil.”**



9 “Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. 10 “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.



¹¹ But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.” ¹² 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.”



**¹ On another day the angels came
to present themselves before the LORD,
and Satan also came with them
to present himself before him.**



**² And the LORD said to Satan,
“Where have you come from?”
Satan answered the LORD,
“From roaming throughout the earth,
going back and forth on it.”**



³ Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.”



**4 “Skin for skin!” Satan replied.
“A man will give all he has for his own life.
5 But now stretch out your hand and strike
his flesh and bones, and he will surely
curse you to your face.”**



6 The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.”

7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head.



**8 Then Job took a piece of broken pottery
and scraped himself with it as he sat among
the ashes.**



THE REALITY OF SUFFERING

- **The reality is that the righteous do suffer.**



THE REALITY OF SUFFERING

- **The reality is that the righteous do suffer.**
- **Job's faith in God was not superficial and shallow.**



2 THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Job's response:**



20 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship



21 and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.” **22** In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.



7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. 8 Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes.



⁹ His wife said to him, “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!” ¹⁰ He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **God does not owe us any blessing.**



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Job's 3 friends' responses.**



11 When Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him.



12 When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads.



13 Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Job spoke first in Job 3 cursing the day of his birth (**Job 3:1**)**



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Job spoke first in Job 3 cursing the day of his birth (Job 3:1)**
- **Job 4-25: Speeches of Job's Friends**



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Retribution theology is the belief that good deeds are rewarded and bad deeds are punished by divine intervention.**



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Retribution theology is the belief that good deeds are rewarded and bad deeds are punished by divine intervention.**
 - **It is often associated with the idea that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked.**



**After the LORD had said these things to Job,
he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am angry
with you and your two friends, because you
have not spoken the truth about me, as my
servant Job has.**



THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- **Job 32 – 37 (Elihu's response)**



**But you have said in my hearing —
I heard the very words —**



⁹ ‘I am pure, I have done no wrong; I am clean and free from sin. ¹⁰ Yet God has found fault with me; he considers me his enemy. ¹¹ He fastens my feet in shackles; he keeps close watch on all my paths.’



¹² “But I tell you, in this you are not right, for God is greater than any mortal. ¹³ Why do you complain to him that he responds to no one’s words?”



THE REVELATION OF GOD IN SUFFERING



**“Where were you when I laid the earth’s
foundation? Tell me, if you understand.**



5 Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? 6 On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone – 7 while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?



**“Can you raise your voice to the clouds and
cover yourself with a flood of water?”**



35 Do you send the lightning bolts on their way? Do they report to you, 'Here we are'?

36 Who gives the ibis wisdom or gives the rooster understanding?



**37 Who has the wisdom to count the clouds?
Who can tip over the water jars of the
heavens 38 when the dust becomes hard and
the clods of earth stick together?**



**“Does the hawk take flight by your wisdom
and spread its wings toward the south?”**



27 Does the eagle soar at your command and build its nest on high? 28 It dwells on a cliff and stays there at night; a rocky crag is its stronghold.



**29 From there it looks for food; its eyes
detect it from afar. 30 Its young ones feast
on blood, and where the slain are, there it is.”**



The LORD said to Job: ² “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!” ³ Then Job answered the LORD:



**4 “I am unworthy —how can I reply to you?
I put my hand over my mouth.**

**5 I spoke once, but I have no answer —
twice, but I will say no more.”**



⁶ Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm: ⁷ “Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.



**8 “Would you discredit my justice?
Would you condemn me to justify yourself?**

**9 Do you have an arm like God’s, and
can your voice thunder like his?**



**¹⁰ Then adorn yourself with glory and
splendor, and clothe yourself in honor and
majesty. ¹¹ Unleash the fury of your wrath,
look at all who are proud and bring them low,
¹² look at all who are proud and humble them,
crush the wicked where they stand.**



THE REVELATION OF GOD IN SUFFERING

Quote from Bible Project:

“Job will find the task impossible. It would require a second-by-second micromanagement approach that would essentially result in no more human beings on the planet.



3

THE REVELATION OF GOD IN SUFFERING

Quote from Bible Project:

**Job doesn't know what he's asking
for when he demands that God uses
the strict principle of retribution
to reward every good deed
and punish every bad one.**



3

THE REVELATION OF GOD IN SUFFERING

Quote from Bible Project:

In theory it sounds right, but in execution, it would create a universe where no human would ever have a chance for trial and error or, more importantly, for growth and change.”

CONCLUSION



Then Job replied to the Lord: ² “I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. ³ You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans 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.”**



**10 After Job had prayed for his friends,
the LORD restored his fortunes and
gave him twice as much as he had before.**



11 All his brothers and sisters and everyone who had known him before came and ate with him in his house. They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the LORD had brought on him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.



12 The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the former part. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys.



13 And he also had seven sons and three daughters. 14 The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch.



15 Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.



¹⁶ After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. ¹⁷ And so Job died, an old man and full of years.