



man. He feared God and hated evil.

Job was extremely wealthy. He had seven sons and three daughters. He owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses (female donkeys). He had a very large household.

Job was not selfish with his great riches. He helped the poor, the widows, and the fatherless (Job 29:12-13). Job was also concerned that his children love and honor God. When his children were grown, they would gather together and have feasts. Job would offer sacrifices to God for each of them, asking God to forgive his children if they had sinned. "Thus did Job continually."

People all over the east knew of Job. He was "the greatest of all the men of the east." God also took notice of Job. On a certain day when Satan came before the Lord, the Lord asked Satan if he had ever considered His faithful servant Job. God told Satan, "There is none like him in the earth." God said that Job was "a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth [avoided] evil."

Satan answered that Job only served God because of the many blessings that he had received. Satan said that God had put a "hedge" (protection and blessings) around Job. If God were to remove that hedge, Satan was sure that Job would curse God. So, God gave Satan permission to test Job. He could do as he liked with Job's possessions, but he could not touch Job's body. Satan then left God's presence.

Job did not know what was about to happen to him. No doubt, that day began as usual. But soon Job began to receive terrible news! A messenger came with news that the Sabeans (*suh-BEE-uhnz*) had stolen all the oxen and asses and had slain the servants who were taking care of the animals. Only the messenger had survived.

While the messenger was still speaking, another

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THE TRIALS OF JOB

Job 1:1 – 3:26; 38:1 – 42:17

servant came to tell Job that fire from heaven had fallen and burned up all the sheep and servants. Only that messenger escaped!

While he was telling this to Job, another servant came with more bad news! Three bands of Chaldeans (*kal-DEE-uhns*) had stolen the camels and killed the servants. He said, "I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

This would seem like too much bad news to bear, but the worst was yet to come! While the third messenger was speaking to Job, a fourth servant came. He told Job that all his children had gathered together for a feast in the home of the oldest brother. While they were there, a strong wind caused the house to fall in. All of Job's children were dead!

Can you imagine Job's grief? He tore his outer garment and shaved his head (signs of great grief), but he did not curse God (as Satan said he would). Instead, Job fell on the ground and worshiped the Lord. He said, "the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Again, Satan came before the Lord, and again God asked if he had considered "my servant Job?" In spite of all Satan had caused Job to suffer, God said "still he holdeth fast his integrity [moral values]."

But Satan was not finished! He told the Lord that Job losing his possessions and his children was nothing compared to suffering pain in his body. If that happened to Job, Satan was sure that he would curse God. The Lord allowed Satan to further test Job. God said, "Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life."

So Satan went from the Lord's presence and smote Job with boils, from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. Job was miserable! He had intense pain, extreme itching, and fever. He was unable to sleep because of his suffering.

Job went outside and "sat down among the ashes" (to show his grief). (It is thought that this was a place outside of the city where the garbage was burned—a dunghill.) While sitting on the ashes, Job used a piece of pottery to scrape his boils.

All of this must have been too much for Job's wife. She, too, had lost her children and possessions. She

asked Job if he still had "his integrity." Then, she told Job that he should "curse God, and die." Job answered her, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh." Job asked his wife, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Through all of that Job still did not "sin with his lips."

When Job's three friends heard of all that had happened to him, they came to mourn with him and to comfort him. At first they did not recognize him. When they realized it was Job, they tore their mantles and threw dust up into the air so that it might fall on their heads (a sign of intense suffering).

Job's three friends then sat down on the ground with Job and did not speak for seven days "for they saw that his grief was very great." Finally, Job spoke first. He said that he was sorry he had ever been born. He begged God to take his life.

When Job's friends spoke to Job, their words were not comforting at all! They believed that Job must have done something wrong and that God was punishing Job. They accused Job of trying to hide his sins. (Read Job 4:7; 22:5.) All of this only made Job's suffering worse.

Job told his friends that he had not sinned (Job 31:1-40), but they did not believe him. They stopped answering Job "because he was righteous in his own eyes" (Job 32:1). But Job begged God to answer him (Job 31:35)! "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind."

God asked Job where he was when God created the

world? Did Job know where light and darkness dwelled? Could Job speak to the clouds and cause rain to fall? Job humbled himself and said to the Lord, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Job now understood that God was in control of everything.

After this, the Lord's wrath was stirred against Job's three friends because they had spoken untrue things about Job. God commanded them to take seven bullocks and seven rams and offer them as burnt offerings. The Lord told them that Job would pray for them, for his prayer would be accepted.

When Job prayed for his friends, God "gave Job twice as much as he had before." Job's brothers and sisters and all his friends came to his house. They gave him money and comforted him. God blessed Job. He had twice as many animals as he had before, and he had seven sons and three daughters also. "In all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job."

After that Job lived one hundred and forty years. He lived long enough to see his sons and their sons, even to four generations. So God blessed Job's end more than his beginning.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**  
*"The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."* —Job 1:21  
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