

Lesson 97: The story of Job

Scripture: Job 1-42

Memory Verse: "In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

Long ago in the land of Uz, there lived a man named Job. He was not a perfect man, but he feared God and stayed away from evil. Job had a big family; he and his wife had ten children: seven boys and three girls. They all loved each other very much. Even after the children were grown, this large family spent a lot of time visiting each other. Job prayed every day for each of his children. Job was also a very wealthy man; he had thousands of sheep, camels, oxen, and donkeys, and enough servants to take care of them all.

There came a day when Satan, who is God's enemy, and the source of all evil, had a conversation with God. God asked Satan, "Have you seen my servant Job? He is an honest man and a good man. He loves Me and is careful to avoid evil." Satan answered back, "Do You think that Job loves You just because You are God? No. He loves You because of all the nice things You have given him. I'll bet that if You take away all that he has, he won't love You anymore." God replied, "We will see if what you say is true or false. You have my permission to test Job but you may not harm him in any way."

Satan quickly started making Job's life miserable. First, he sent bad people to rob Job's servants stealing all his oxen, donkeys and camels and killing his servants. Next, Satan caused a big fire and all the sheep and all of the servants who were taking care of them were burned up in the fire. Then the worst news of all came. Job's ten children were all together having dinner at the home of his oldest son, when a great wind blew the house down and killed them all. Job was very, very sad. He tore his clothes to show how sad he was. He shaved off all the hair on his head. But he said, "Everything I had was given to me by God. Now it is gone. I will still love and serve Him." Although Job had lost everything, he did not blame God. "

My servant Job has stood the test," God told Satan. "You destroyed all that he owns even though he didn't deserve the evil you caused. Still he has kept his faith in Me." "He's still a healthy man," Satan said to God. "If You let me make him sick, he will be really angry with You." "We will see," said God. "You have my permission to bring sickness on him, only you must spare his life." So Satan caused Job to become very sick with sores all over his body, and it made Job miserable. He was so sick that he couldn't go to work, or do anything. His wife said to him, "Why do you still bother to serve God? Why don't you just tell Him that you don't love Him anymore?"

Three friends who came to offer sympathy proved even less help than Job's wife. They said, "Stop moaning! It must be your fault and God is punishing you. Good people don't suffer like this." Job knew that this was not true. But his friends refused to believe him.

In his misery, Job learned that he didn't understand God as well as he thought. Before all the trouble, Job thought he had earned God's favor; he thought he deserved his wealth and prosperity because of something he had done on his own. Then in his suffering, he felt God had treated him unfairly; he thought that he had done nothing to deserve the suffering he was experiencing. God showed how much He cared for Job by showing up in a whirlwind and explaining that Job was looking at things all wrong. It wasn't a simple matter of being deserving or undeserving. It was a matter of coming to the realization that God's ways are much higher than our ways, and are **"too wonderful" for us to understand** (Job 42:3). God showed Job just how much He loved and cared for him by showing up and explaining this to him in person. As a result, Job humbled himself and repented of his attempts to be righteous in his own eyes.

Job learned, as Proverbs 11:22 tells us that "with the humble there is wisdom."

When bad things happen to us it doesn't mean that God doesn't care about us; God loves us all the time. In fact, God has shown His great love for us in that while we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. (Romans 5:8). **Jesus willingly suffered the greatest of all pains – separation from God the Father –** so that all who put their faith in Him will not suffer but have everlasting life in God's loving presence.