

Summary of the Book of Job

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss the book of Job. There were times when we talked about (1) a group of chapters, (2) one chapter and (3) a portion of a chapter. Today, we will have a brief summary about the book of Job.

I hope this project encouraged you to review the valuable history and lessons found in the book of Job.

Two common misconceptions

As I mentioned in the first article in this series, it is my perspective that many religious people have two common misconceptions about the story of Job.

- First, many people say that Job's trials occurred because he was a horrible person.

In fact, the opposite is true. Read Job 1:1 and Job 2:3.

- Second, many people say that Job had a wonderful reaction throughout his two trials. Such people base their conclusion upon Job 1:21-22 and Job 2:10.

If the book of Job ended after chapter 2, then we could conclude that Job's reaction was exemplary. However, the book of Job has 42 chapters and an opportunity for Job to reveal his humanity.

What was Job's sin?

As I mentioned on several occasions in this series, here are three verses that gave succinct statements about Job's sin.

- The servant Elihu said: "Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain; he multiplies words without knowledge" (Job 35:16).

- God began his first confrontation of Job by asking: "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 38:2).

- God concluded his first confrontation of Job by asking and saying: "Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it" (Job 40:2).

Is self-righteousness the worst sin?

I wish I had a dollar for every time I heard people say the following: Self-righteousness is the worst sin.

Frankly, I don't agree with that opinion.

■ I certainly realize that the Bible mentions some strong words against the sin of self-righteousness. Here are just a few places: Matthew 5:20, Matthew 6:1-18, Luke 18:9-14, Romans 10:2-3 and Philippians 3:3-11.

■ However, my general view is that unrighteousness is worse than self-righteousness.

■ I would rather have a neighbor who avoids sinning against me because of self-righteousness than a neighbor who sins against me because of unrighteousness.

Why did God initiate the trials?

Have you ever considered why God initiated the two trials (of Job 1 and 2)?

Why did God unleash Satan upon this blameless and upright (Job 1:1) man?

What was God planning to accomplish in the life of Job through these two trials?

What did God want to see in the life of this man (whom God described in Job 2:3 as "there is none like him on the earth")?

To the next level

Bible students are quick to acknowledge that God had a positive view of Job. However, it is my perspective that God wanted to take him to the next level.

- Inhabitants of the earth are like grasshoppers to God (Isaiah 40:22).
- There is a great gulf between physical and spiritual (Luke 16:26 and 1 Corinthians 13:11-12).
- Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50).
- We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).
- We shall be like God and we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).