

....And Cursed God in their Hearts ~

Job 1:1 – 5

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~ Our Spiritual Safari begins a new leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God in this report; an examination of life that will expose the depths of our soul, and lift us to the heights of the majesty of Heaven — as we begin to examine the ancient text and first poetical book in the canons of Scripture. The poetical collection includes Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations. Poetic does not imply we have imaginative or capricious content, though; nor does it mean there is a rhythmic aspect or rhyming characteristic. Hebrew poetry is achieved by repetition of an idea; which is a technique called *parallelism*. The dialogue this book is set in was poetic discourse at the time in which we are studying. If you have ever read the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer, you'll know they are examples of the same thing in secular literature; because it was common practice in that day.

Authorship of the book of Job has been speculatively ascribed to various scholars, from Moses, Ezra, Solomon, Job to Elihu. In chapter thirty-two verse sixteen and seventeen, Elihu says, “... *when I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more) I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.*” So, it seems most likely Elihu was the writer of Job, because of the use of the term “*I*” so many times. Ultimately, it's not unreasonable to say we do not know who the author of the book of Job is.

Two additional facts that remain uncertain are the time period in which Job lived — and the place. Of course, verse one tells us he lived in the “land of Uz” — but exactly where the land of “Uz” was is simply not known. Certain suggestions can be made, but a dogmatic pinpoint on a map would be pure speculation. My personal feeling is that this is set in the same time period as the patriarchs. One reason for that assumption is the length of Job's life span — which was quite a long time. Chapter forty-two verse sixteen reads, “... *after this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations*” — which would certainly place him in

the patriarchal period. We also know that Job acted as the high priest in his family, and that there is no mention of the children of Israel in this book; indicating this all took place before they came into existence.

Eliphaz, one of Job's friends, was a descendant of Esau's eldest son. Genesis chapter thirty-six verse ten tells us about that. Some historians date this to the time of Jacob – which is plausible. However, none of that has much to do with the myriad problems raised and settled by the Book of Job. What we are considering in Job is philosophical discourse; and one of those subjects is to determine why a righteous person suffers so greatly in this world. Of course, there are many reasons why the righteous suffer in this present, evil world, and Job addresses all but one of those reasons. Some people view suffering as the primary teaching of Job – but I do not accept that – and I'll explain why Scripturally as we progress in this and subsequent reports.

Some believe Job was written to refute the slander of Satan against mankind. Others opine this was written to reveal Job to himself. Others yet estimate this was written to teach patience. Well, I don't buy any of those conclusions, and I do not find Job being patient, either. People talk about the patience of Job – but – having read this book several times, I haven't read of the patience of Job. Patience just doesn't happen to be part of what we're going to learn.

The doctrinal message of Job, and we will consider all aspects of this truth exhaustively as we spend time with him, his family and his friends, teaches *REPENTANCE*. When modern man writes a book on repentance, they *always* seem to choose a main character with a sinful beginning. They choose characters like Manasseh, the *MOST* ungodly king in the historical books. Well Manasseh repented, to be sure; in the way most people think of repentance. We'll come back to that. Then, there is Saul of Tarsus who was the greatest enemy the Lord Jesus Christ ever had – and he repented, too. Some might choose Saint Francis of Assisi, that thoroughly debauched nobleman of his day – who repented. Jerry McCauley was a drunken bum on skid row in New York who, likewise, repented. Well, God could have picked a man like any of these men to demonstrate and teach repentance – but He didn't. No, God picked the best man in the land of Uz – and

possibly the most upright man who ever lived in Old Testament times — to teach him — and *US* — that we *ALL* need to repent! At the end of this book, Job will say he “.... *abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes.*” That’s when everything in his life changes.

We need to recognize that, irrespective of how good we think we are, our righteousness, in God’s estimation, is filthy rags. *Y-O-U*, my friend, need to repent. Repentance is for the church — not the lost man. Repentance is only for believers. That reality makes this series of reports in our safari a profound philosophical pursuit. The Book of Job is going to bring us the harshest lessons we have had thus far in our so-called Spiritual Safari; so, if you don’t like what you have read before — you’re not going to appreciate this teaching in any way, shape or form. Naturally, however, I realize those who do not sincerely love the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God stopped reading my reports — a *LONG* time ago; and that suits me just fine, too.

Alright, Tennyson said of this book it was the “.... *greatest poem, whether of ancient or modern literature.*” Carlyle, the great Scotch philosopher, said, “.... *Job is the grandest writing ever produced with pen and paper.*” Luther called Job, “.... *more magnificent and sublime than any other book in Scripture.*” Moorehead said, “.... *the Book of Job is the noblest poem in existence.*” Well, despite rave reviews, Job remains absolutely neglected, misused, misunderstood, mischaracterized, and is an utterly abused writing; recklessly and irresponsibly quoted by the utmost of ignorant Christians.

Many years ago, a Broadway production entitled “*JB*” was written by Archibald MacLeish, the then-Librarian of Congress; and he attempted to make an analogy between Job and a modern man. He mentioned the human predicament — and he seemed to know all about the despair and hopelessness of mankind — but he didn’t know much about Job; in fact, he didn’t know *ANYTHING* about this section of Scripture! Frankly, that embarrassing play missed the point on every level; just as most Christians do with Job today.

See, this book reveals a man who is conscious of God, but failed to see himself in the light of His presence! Job simply could not find anything wrong with himself. Job is, actually, egotistical about his righteousness; and he maintained that self-righteous, pious nonsense in the presence of those around him. Job felt he was alright with God, and he even deigned enter the presence of God to defend himself. That's when Job found out his dire need for repentance. That's just *NOT* how modern man operates, friends. The psychiatrist today tells us our mothers didn't love us enough, or nurture us as she should have – and they attribute almost all of our problems to something like that. Well, the reality is momma didn't paddle most of us the way she should have. That's undeniably the problem causing the deep trouble with the generation we currently have growing up.

Parental neglect and abandonment is a huge problem; but *NONE* of us can blame our problems on other people. Modern man has a predicament and problem — but blaming our deficiencies and inabilities — and our *SIN* — on our parents or anyone else is a fool's game that won't work out. There is no refuge for comfort when we blame others for our sins. Until each of us recognize we are materialistic, secular sinners who need a Savior — and then turn to the Lord Jesus Christ — we may as well blame the man on the moon for our problems.

Actually, only the most debauched and degenerate person would ever blame their mother for their problems. Unfortunately, many, many, many people do. To add insult to injury, we have myriad ridiculous gadgets that people now lose their minds in looking for an answer they will likely *NEVER* find; because the only correct answer is in the Lord Jesus Christ — and they're not interested in Him. The devil isn't stupid, friends – and Satan is laughing at those who think you can fight him, bind him, reason with him, or defeat him; if you believe those things, you have *ALREADY* lost the battle with evil.

Modern man creates a phony philosophical security blanket because he doesn't have a God he can turn to in times of trouble and crises. That's what people do when they don't have a Savior. Well, Job did have that assurance of a Savior — even as God puts him through the mill of evil in his life. That's what will finally bring Job into rest in the glorious presence of

the Almighty. Each of us, with our technical gadgetry and devices, are also being put through fiery trials and tribulations today; and most men are utterly adrift on a piece of a broken ship floating in the middle of a vast ocean totally disoriented and helpless. Mankind just doesn't happen to have any idea where he is going at this moment, friends. That's terrifying to me, by the way.

Most reasonable people acknowledge there is at least some degree of evidence for the existence of deity present in the world; but, by and large, those same people refuse to admit they are a sinner who needs a Savior. That denial leaves them right back at square one. Others simply talk of making a "commitment." I ask those people: what is your "commitment?" If Christ is simply your "Lord and Master" – or "King" – well, you should know there are going to be many who called Him "Lord" but whom He never knew. No, friends, you don't make Him your Lord or Master or King first – you make Him your *Savior* Who died for you *FIRST!* If you don't begin with Him at the cross, then you just don't begin with Christ – ever. That's the problem with modern man — but that was *NOT* the problem with Job.

Job will not understand why God permitted him to be sifted by Satan. Job's failure to recognize his need to repent is the reason – plain and simple. Even so, Job is very conscious of the presence of God all the way through this very long and tedious book! Today, modern man is absolutely devoid of that consciousness. Our safari has spent quite a bit of type and space on this introductory subject, because I consider it very important. That is the viewpoint we're going to examine this section of Scripture from. We all need to pray here: gracious Father in Heaven, as we come to Your Word we recognize there is a tremendous lesson for us today that we are likely missing. In our affluent society of comfort and ease, we do not realize that if they were all removed from us, as they were removed from Job in his day, we would be stripped and stand bare naked in Your universe. Many of us would have no place whatsoever to turn! Let the message in these safari reports be received afresh and anew to our own hearts; in Jesus Name we pray ~

Profound principles and deeply divine truths lay directly in our safari path now. Our study does not outline the books of the Bible as a normal Bible

study would, because we are not interested in doctrine or theology; we're only interested in the spiritual aspect of the Word of God on this expedition. We have one great scene of drama which will unfold; opening on earth with Job in prosperity and serenity. Then, we're going to Heaven — where Satan will slander God and man — all permitted by God, too, by the way. After Job loses his children and his wealth, we go back to Heaven with God and Satan. Following that, we return to the land of Uz where Job loses his health and his wife's sympathy. All of that was done by the devil to attempt to make Job deny God. From there, we see a great dialogue between Job and his so-called friends that ensues; seemingly into a vortex. But, mercifully, after all of that, God will break forth mightily on the scene....

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

² And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

³ His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

⁴ And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

~ It is a wonderful scene our Spiritual Safari closes this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God with — in the land of Uz. This land and place could be Florida, California — or *YOUR* home. All we really know for sure is that “Uz” was someplace in the Middle East. Outside of that, we cannot know. Josephus gives us a glimmer of light in accord with Genesis chapter twenty-two verse twenty-one; where the first born of Nahor — Abraham's brother — was Huz — that is, Uz. He was the founder of the ancient city of Damascus — which is believed to be the oldest continuously inhabited city on the world; although I realize there are other cities that make that claim, too. I think it is safe to say that Job lived somewhere in the Syrian Desert; where the Lord will later send Paul the

apostle for his post-graduate studies. Your land of Uz and my land of Uz are certainly going to be two geographically different locales, to be sure. However, the lessons we both learn in our own lands of Uz are exactly the same.

Job was perfect in the sense that his understanding of God was correct and true. The sacrifices – burnt offerings – were all made properly for his sons and daughters; as Job functioned as high priest in the family. Job feared God; and his concept of God was high and holy. As a result, Job hated evil. The problem is: Job didn't see any need to make an offering for himself. And even with all of the other proper characteristics Job had, a daily confession of our sins is absolutely critical. Job agreed, relative to everyone else — but didn't see that need within. That's a huge problem for Job, because it necessitates a steep learning curve. If you neglect confession of sins in your prayer life — it will be a be a problem for you, too.

Of course, Job was a very wealthy man with a wonderful family. The children lived in luxury and, apparently, they didn't do much except eat and party all day long. The camels and oxen and everything else tell us Job was in the transportation and agriculture business. All of those animals Job possessed produced a whole bunch of milk, food, and other bi-products. Job was the Hughes, Rockefeller and Ford of his day all rolled into one. This family had it very easy, friends. Well, even in the midst of all of that there was a nagging fear in the heart of Job....

⁵ And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

~ Again, the problem for Job is that Job didn't feel he needed an offering for *HIMSELF!* Job felt as if he was right with God in every way. Obviously, Job didn't feel like his children were as close to the Lord as they should be; and he couldn't quite cope with that problem by himself. Therefore, Job went to God with the sacrifices, but they were all for them – not him. Many people today have troubled children with problems they cannot solve for

them. What a remarkable picture we have drawn for us in these first few verses. Well, that concludes scene one; and it also concludes report one in our safari through Job. It was a gorgeous scene of a wealthy man living in the lap of luxury and plenty. In our next report, however, we're going to Heaven. I hope you can go with us ~

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