

JOB, A GREAT FATHER!

(Scripture: Job: 1:1-5)

Introduction: Our world is entering into a phase of some unknown suffering. This COVID-19 pandemic has shaken our lives totally, and it has affected us physically, financially, economically, spiritually, socially, and of course emotionally. We are seeing suffering everywhere. This is just a start. We do not know how it is going to be in 2021. There is anxiety everywhere. Many have started questioning –

- Why is this suffering?
- Is God the cause of our suffering?
- Why should righteous people suffer with the wicked?

These are hard questions. Book of Job sheds some light on this subject! The heart of this book is about man's suffering!

- Why do people suffer?
- Do they suffer innocently or because of their sins?
- Is God indeed just or righteous?

We must think about these questions always, and I hope and pray that this new series on the book of Job will provide some of the answers for all of us!

In Hebrew, the name of Job is pronounced as Iwob. Some Indian languages make it YOBU in their language.

The author of the book is unknown

1. The text does not identify its author
2. Rabbinic tradition does not attempt to identify an author other than suggesting that the writer must have preceded Moses.

This could have been the first book of the Bible!

But the style of Job is not from Moses; Moses uses the name of Yahweh often whereas Job uses other names for God, such as Elohim. Job uses Arabic words unlike Moses.

The date of the book leans toward Abrahamic time but some say during Solomon period, or during Babylonian captivity. All of them may be true because this book could have evolved over periods of time by different authors. We may see the evidence of it.

There was a time when people assumed that the books of the Bible were written by one author in a reasonably short period of time. Now scholars are saying that ancient books (including books of the Bible) were not produced that way. Rather, ancient books grew from many parts passing through a good many hand.

The writers of the commentary on Job in the Broadman Bible Commentary say this: The book of Job, like a medieval cathedral, was built in stages. Different architects over a century or more used various styles. So it is with the book of Job. It took shape at the hands of many inspired workmen. Some used the rhetoric and argument of the courts. Some moved within the proverbs of the wise. They all made their unique contribution to

the one great theme and built a magnificent literary structure. [17- Bible.org Introduction to Job]

2. The foreign tone of the book seems to have been written by Job himself (Arabic words, nomadic habits, illustrations from sandy plains, awareness of nature and the arts). Job lacks references to historical events and reflects a non-Hebraic, cultural background which is hardly known by anyone.

Location of this story is unclear.

- a. There are different Uz mentioned in the Bible. One was located in northern Arabia. Other locations near Edom, or southern Arabia.
- b. Job's friend, Eliphaz, came from Teman, a city in Edom
- c. Elihu came from the Buzites who lived next to the Chaldeans in northeast Arabia

The date suggests before Moses because the offering of sacrifice by the head of the family rather than a priest reflects a time before the Exodus, and the law of Moses!

There is lot more to know about the book of Job, but we will talk about them when we come to appropriate passages. Since it is Father's Day today, I would like to see the following passages through the eyes of a father and would like to introduce Job as a great father today.

Job:1:1

1There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

Whenever Bible starts with the phrase, there was a man, there is a story behind it!

There was a man! (Simeon - Luke 2:25,26 just, and devout, and the Holy Spirit was upon him! He was waiting for the kingdom of God)

There was a man! (Joseph of Arimathea - Luke 23:50 he was a good man and just, waiting for the kingdom of God. Did not agree for crucifixion).

There was a man! (John the Baptist John 1:6-8) There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light. He was waiting for the Kingdom of God too!

Likewise, **there was a man** in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

This man was from UTHZ. There are different locations with this name! Could be northern Arabia, or southern Arabia, or in the land of Edom, or in Judah. Utz is also

supposed to be the son of Abraham's uncle Nahor, and he was in the land of Edom? Any connection with Abrahamic family is possible because Job was very rich like Abraham!

He was blameless (perfect), upright, and fearing God! This phrase seems to come from the wisdom book of Proverbs, because it clearly teaches us that fear of God is to avoid evil! Who has given this progress report? Is it the author's opinion or is it from God?

We as Christians are taught that there is none righteous, we are all sinners and need the grace of God! There is no one perfect other than God. Period!

There is a huge difference between Old Testament righteousness of God, and the New Testament righteousness of God. In New Testament, it comes as imputed righteousness through our Lord Jesus Christ, but after that imputed righteousness, our righteousness and character are shaped through the presence of Spirit of God within us. But in Old Testament, law of Righteousness was modified and practiced as oral tradition, and they were measurable, and obvious to other people.

The Pharisee in his prayer mentioned some of these laws!

Luke 18:11-12 (KJV)

[11] The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank you, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

[12] I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

The Pharisee was righteous according to their standards. But he failed to have a broken and contrite heart like the publican. That is why John the Baptist called them as brood of vipers! Jews still believe that the Pharisees were very righteous. The Jews still believe they are sinless. Therefore, they are in no need of any more blood sacrifice! Job was judged based upon Jewish view of sin. So whose opinion was this? The author's opinion or God's? We may want to ask these questions often in this book? Sometimes Job would sound like that Pharisee, very self-righteous! But other times, he was genuinely righteous and holy.

Job 1:2,3

2 Seven sons and three daughters were born to him.

3 His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

Job was blessed by God! He had 7 sons and 3 daughters! It reminds us of

Psalm 127:3-5

5. children are a gift of the LORD,

The fruit of the womb is a reward.

4Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,

So are the children of one's youth.

5How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;

*They will not be ashamed
When they speak with their enemies in the gate.*

Iyob (Job) not only had many children, he also had plenty of cattle and servants too! We can say without hesitation that he was a billionaire of his time. Scripture says that he was the greatest of the East! He was indeed a powerful person without the title of a king. I would say Job was a great father also, who nurtured his family, and provided more than they needed. He made them work for him as a family. But above all, he showed them how to live in a righteous manner, and he became a paradigm and exemplar for them!

We will see in the next passage, he became a spiritual father, an interceding priest for them!

Job 1:4,5.

4 His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

5 When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus, Job did continually.

There are three activities every family must practice together even though everyone is grown adult and married:

A family must get together once a week at least and have meal together with their children and spouses. It is very important!

Coming to church as a family is crucial for good bonding.

Family prayer is another important activity together.

The families that do these three things together will be very strong! Iyob's children rotated between their sons' houses for get togethers.

This kind of get together becomes critical when our children are grown and married. It brings the daughter in laws, and son in laws and their children together as one big happy family. The host may have to do a lot of work, but it is indeed a labor of love! We should be comfortable enough to eat in someone else's house, as well as sleep there.

But certain things could go wrong within this happy family! There could be complaints, resentments, and bickering. Or they may have mocked God or taken His name in vain. We must tactfully handle each situation and pray for them. Job (Iyob) expected sinful behavior from his family members. He offered sacrifice early morning for each one of them and sanctified them!

It is interesting to note that Job did not know anything about the laws of Moses. Otherwise, he would not have done it.

In any case, he paid for their sins. He interceded for their sins. He was the reconciler just like Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Conclusion:

1. Job, What a great Father! What a caring spiritual Father. He not only provided for his children, he interceded for them, and paid for their penalties also.
2. He did not live for himself, but he lived for God, and his family.
3. He showed them ethical life by living it.
Best preaching is through action!
4. Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and fear of God is to avoid evil!

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