

Having finished our topical study on the Doctrines of Grace last week, I hope this morning, to begin an exposition of the book of Job. But first, I need to suggest three things by way of introducing the book.

(1) Its genre. By genre is meant the kind or type of book. There are basically four genres or kinds of Scripture: Narrative (books that recount history); Prophecy (books that foretell future events); Poetry (books that use poetic imagery and language); and Epistle (books that are letters to people and/or churches). Now, this doesn't mean a book has to be classified as only one of these genres. For example, the book of Job has narrative and prophecy in it. But it's classified as poetry (along with Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon), because it uses poetic language and imagery. In fact, it's failure to view the book of poetic that has resulted in many problems that would otherwise have been avoided.

(2) Its content. The book basically has three parts: the dilemma of Job (1-3); the discourses of Job (4-41); the deliverance of Job (42). After describing his dilemma, the largest section of the book contains various discourses between Job and his three friends, Job and his fourth friend (Elihu), and Job and His God.

(3) Its purpose. There are two related themes in the book of Job: suffering and sovereignty. Why do Christians suffer and how does God relate to that suffering?

John Calvin (159 sermons started in 1554)—"In order to get the most out of the present book, we must first have a summary of it. The story written here shows us how we are in God's hand, that it is he who orders our lives and disposes of them at his good pleasure, that our responsibility is to yield ourselves to him in all humility and obedience, that it is only right that we belong completely to him in both life and death. We even learn that when it pleases him to raise his hand against us, even though we do not know why he does so, we nonetheless continue to glorify him, acknowledging that he is just and impartial lest we murmur against him and bring a case against him, for we well know that we will always be defeated when we take him to task."

Thus, there's three related purposes for the book of Job: (a) to illustrate the reality of suffering (that all Christians suffer); (b) to show our proper response to suffering (worship and trust God); (c) to reveal God's relationship to sufferings (His sovereign majesty).

James 5:11—"Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful (here we find the three purposes of Job I've suggested)."

Before I come to my two main headings, let me briefly point out three ways in which Christ is found in Job. (a) Christ is typified by Job. Job typifies Christ as a righteous sufferer who trusts God in the midst of affliction. (b) Christ is needed by job. Throughout his suffering, Job confesses his need for a loyal friend, comforter, and mediator before God. (c) Christ is prophesied by Job. "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth" (19:25).

I. An Earthly Scene (vv1-5)

II. A Heavenly Scene (vv6-12)

I. An Earthly Scene (vv1-5)

1. This first chapter, as other parts of the book, turns its focus from an earthly scene, to a heavenly scene.

2. With regards to the first, an earthly scene, focus is placed upon a man named Job, from the land of Uz.
3. There are a couple of men by the name of Uz in Genesis, and most understand Job's homeland as founded by one of these.
4. Though the actual placement of Uz is impossible to determine, most scholars suggest somewhere NE of Palestine.
5. There's a number of reasons for this—for example, the places where Job's friends come from and his enemies.
6. Perhaps a more important question to answer is—When did Job live? Again, there's no way to be certain.
7. As the internal evidence is considered, it becomes likely that Job lived in the time of the Patriarchs (or even before).
8. (1) His character, v1—"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil."
9. This point is very important, and it's actually foundational to a right understanding of the entire book.
10. Job suffered, not as a sinner but saint—as we shall see, this is what Job's three friends failed to understand.
11. They assumed because Job was suffering, that he was a secret sinner—that he was being punished by God.
12. It's for this reason, the book begins by underscoring his character—he was a holy man who feared God.
13. (2) His possessions (vv2-3)—verses 2-3 describe his children (v2) and physical possessions (v3)—sheep, camels, oxen, donkeys, and servants (a very large household), v3—"So that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East."
14. Let me simply say in passing, Job was a very wealthy man! His wealth exceeded all the people of the East.
15. Keep in mind, in olden days, riches and wealth were defined in terms of possessions and especially livestock.
16. John Calvin—"We will see later why this is mentioned, for his patience was the more praiseworthy because he was deprived of such great wealth and reduced to extreme poverty."
17. Furthermore, as we shall see—Satan accused Job of serving God because of the possessions (something Job proves to be untrue).
18. (3) His intercession (vv4-5)—from v2 we learn that Job had a total of 10 children—7 sons and 3 daughters.
19. Apparently, it was their common practice to gather throughout the week, at one house, as 10 siblings.
20. We don't know if they met every night of the week, or if they merely took turns on various week nights.
21. But either way, they gathered for the purpose of fellowship and feasting (which including drinking wine).
22. This passage does not say they all got drunk—nowhere do we read that these gatherings were necessarily sinful.
23. John Calvin—"We are told that Job's children feasted every day, taking turns, and called their sisters to eat and drink with them. The feasts that they had were a testimony to their brotherhood and harmony. That is why we are told they sent and invited their sisters: so that their friendship would be known everywhere."
24. Thus, while we have no reason to believe the children sinned, it seems Job anticipated the possibility.

25. V5—"So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them."
26. This means, at the end of the 7 days, once a week, Job gathered his family together early in the morning for worship.
27. From the end of v5, we learn, that Job did this regularly—that is, he promoted family worship weekly.
28. (a) He sanctified them, v5—"So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them."
29. Job would send for his family and "sanctify them"—that is, he would prepare them for corporate worship.
30. While we are not told exactly what this sanctification entailed, we have light shined upon it from Exodus 19:7-15.
31. Ex.19:7—"Go to the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people."
32. Here we learn that Moses was sent to the people to "sanctify them" or to prepare them for corporate worship.
33. Sam Waldron—"Job's sending and sanctifying his children implies they were required to attend the worship Job led. Even though some were adult children, Job brought all the holy pressure he could to bear on them as he assumed his right to lead them in the worship of God."
34. (b) He sacrificed for them, v5—"and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all."
35. While there's no way to know for sure where or when Job lived, most suggest he lived before the OC.
36. The sacrificial system began before the OC; it was started in Genesis 3, after the pronouncement of judgment.
37. Thus, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, although they lived before Moses, they all offered sacrifices in worship.
38. It's important to remember the purposes of sacrifices—they all pointed to the promise of the coming Messiah.
39. They basically taught two truths; first, the sacrifice reminded the worshiper what he deserved; second, the sacrifice reminded the worshiper who God would send.
40. John Calvin—"Now it is a good and useful lesson when men acknowledge and confess that they are guilty before God and face squarely the fact that when an animal is killed in sacrifice, that is what they deserve because of their sins. That is how God wanted to lead men to humility. At the same time, He also wanted to give them hope that, despite their being so wretched, a sacrifice would be offered which would wash their sins away."
41. (c) He interceded for them—though we are not told in v5 that Job prayed for his family, it's very likely.
42. Job 42:8—"Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."
43. Lesson 1—A lesson about OT piety—Job is an example of a Christian person in a world that hates God.
44. Notice his piety is described in four ways: (a) blameless (perfect)—this refers to his inward integrity.
45. The Hebrew word literally means "perfect or complete"—it refers to a blameless or sincere conscience.

46. (b) Upright—this refers to his lifestyle or conduct—it's actually the result or consequence to being blameless.
47. Because he was blameless or sincere, he lived or walked in a straight or upright way as defined by the law.
48. (c) One who fears God—this refers to his relation to God—he feared God (which includes trust and love).
49. (d) One who shuns evil—this is the consequence of fearing God—he shunned evil because he feared God.
50. Thus, Job's piety related to himself (blameless), God's law (upright), God Himself (he feared God), and the world (he shunned evil).
51. This illustrates the nature of true holiness—it starts on the inside, shows itself on the outside, and has direct relation to God
52. Lesson 2—A lesson about wealth and riches—here I want to underscore riches and wealth are not evil.
53. Job is described as blameless, upright, a God-fearing and shunner of evil, and yet, a man of great means.
54. We live in a day when riches and wealth are villainized—when affluent people are viewed with scorn.
55. But having riches doesn't render you evil—what matters is how you got riches and what you do with it.
56. Let me put this as plainly as I possibly can—Job was a part of the 1%--in fact, Job was in the 1% of the 1%.
57. Lesson 3—A lesson about OT religion—here I want to point out that Job played the part of family priest.
58. Sam Waldron wrote a book entitled, A Man as Priest in his Home, wherein he describes Job as an intercessor (Job interceded sacrificially, specifically, and consistently).
59. (a) Sacrificially—by this is meant, Job offered up prayers in relation to sacrifices—prayers were attached to blood.
60. This means, because the sacrifices pointed to Christ, our prayers must be offered up for the sake of Christ.
61. (b) Specifically—Job interceded specifically for his beloved children (he prayed for his sons and daughters).
62. (c) Consistently, v5—"Thus Job did regularly"—dear brethren, parents (fathers) must pray for their families.

## II. A Heavenly Scene (vv6-12)

1. From verse 6 to 12, the focus is taken from this earth into heaven—from Job and his children to God and the angels.
2. V6—"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them."
3. By "sons of God" are meant the angels—Scripture often describes the angels as sons of God (Job 38:7).
4. They are "sons of God" by creation, whereas, Christians are "sons of God" by redemption (only Christians are sons in this sense).
5. By presenting themselves "before the LORD" they were acknowledging their allegiance to God as Creator.
6. From v6 we learn "Satan also came among them"—that is, Satan, as a fallen angel, presented himself before God.

7. Now, it's very important to keep in mind, this doesn't necessarily mean, they literally came before God.
8. Satan and the angels are spiritual beings who are not omnipresent—that means, they are limited in location.
9. Angels and demons (Satan included), are not able to be in more than one place at a time—they are limited.
10. V7—"And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'"
11. Again, this does not necessarily mean, that God actually or literally had a verbal conversation with Satan.
12. This is figurative and poetic language, and yet, it does underscore, as intelligent beings, angels can communicate.
13. James Durham—"This is figurative and borrowed speech, expressing God's dominion over angels, devils, and all creatures, and His commissioning them for His errands, and not as if the words were to be understood literally. For spirits need not use words to communicate their mind."
14. Thus, God isn't ignorant about Satan's actions, nor does Satan actually or literally walk upon the earth.
15. But the main points are two: first, Satan has a direct relation to the earth; second, Satan acts beneath God's sovereignty.
16. John Calvin—"The Holy Spirit wanted to show us that not only the angels of paradise, who willingly obey God and are fully inclined to do that, are answerable to him, but that the devils of hell, who are his enemies and rebel against him to the extent they can, who try to deface his majesty, who connive to distort everything, must also, like it or not, be subject to God and give him account of everything they do. They undertake nothing without his permission. That, then, is how Satan appeared among the angels."
17. V8—"Then the LORD said to Satan (adversary), 'Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?'"
18. And then within vv9-12, there's this dialogue between God and Satan concerning God's servant, Job.
19. Satan suggests that Job feared God purely because of his blessings, v9—"Does Job fear God for nothing?"
20. V11—"But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"
21. In other words, Satan is saying—if God took away Job's possessions, he would cease to serve and fear God.
22. V12—"And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.'"
23. That is, Satan was given the ability to remove from Job his possessions, but he could not take his life.
24. This means, God uses Satan for His purposes, and yet, Satan acts freely and will be held accountable for all eternity.
25. (1) Satan is a literal being—just because the book is poetic, doesn't mean Job, Satan, and God are not real beings.
26. The book is a poetical recounting of actual events—Job really suffered, Satan really hates, and God really rules.
27. (2) Satan is a destructive being—there is a sense in which this entire world is Satan's territory (field).
28. Scripture speaks of Satan as "cast down to the earth" (Rev.12:12) and "the god of the age" (2Cor.4:4).

29. Now, let me clarify—he's given a measure of authority (or power) within this world under God's control.
30. Furthermore, because Satan is not all-present, his influence is felt throughout the world through demons.
31. Thus, while Job dealt directly with Job, he deals indirectly with most Christians through fallen angels (demons).
32. (3) Satan is a controlled being—this, in many ways, is one of the most important points of the entire book.
33. In fact, it's interesting to notice that Satan is only mentioned in chapters 1-2—he's nowhere found in chapters 3-42.
34. My point is this—though Satan had a direct hand in Job's dilemma, it was ultimately the loving and wise will of God.
35. God intentionally used this intense suffering, for the express purpose of sanctifying Job and glorifying His grace.
36. Because, if you think about it brethren, this entire thing is initiated by God, and not actually by Satan.
37. God said to Satan—"Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"
38. God gives Satan power to bring affliction upon Job—it was a part of God's sovereign and loving purpose.
39. Thus, if we were to turn to the end of the book, we would find that God gave Job double all that he had (in terms of possessions), and 10 children (7 sons and 3 daughters).
40. But that wasn't the main blessing or benefit Job received—the most important thing he received was spiritual.
41. He came to see God more clearly—he came to know God more intimately—he came to imitate God more consistently.