

THE BOOK OF JOB

“I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You” (Job 42:5)

St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church

Pre-servants Bible Study

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Book of Job is considered one of the poetic books of the Old Testament
- ❖ Poetic Books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs, Wisdom of Solomon, Son of Sirach
- ❖ He is the writer of the Book.
- ❖ He lived after Abraham: one of his friends – Bildad the Shuhite (from sons of Shuah – son of Abraham from Keturah) (Genesis 25:1-2).
- ❖ He lived long (140 years); not typical of post-Moses time.

THEME

- ❖ God is Caring: The whole book talks about God's care of just one person
- ❖ God is beneficent : He can do nothing but good, even if He "permits" evil to occur for a temporary time
- ❖ Why do the righteous suffer?
- ❖ Is it acceptable to judge someone as a sinner because he fell into a temptation?
- ❖ The difference between the weak comforting word of humans versus the true comforting words and works of God.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF JOB

- ❖ Between Heaven and Earth (chapters 1,2)
- ❖ Human comfort (chapter 3)
- ❖ First debate (chapters 4-14)
- ❖ Second debate (chapters 15-21)
- ❖ Third debate (chapters 22-31)
- ❖ Elihu the wise (chapters 32-37)
- ❖ Heavenly comfort (chapters 38-42)

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

- ❖ “...Blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1).
- ❖ His problem: he was blameless and he knew that! This led to his fall into self-righteousness and pride
- ❖ He offered sacrifices for all his children, but none for himself (Job 1:5)
- ❖ “I am blameless, yet I do not know myself; I despise my life” (Job 9:21).
- ❖ Job was righteous as witness by God (Job 1:8), his wife (Job 2:9), and himself (Job 27:5), but the devil cannot witness that anyone is righteous.

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

- ❖ Satan complained about Job because he was righteous – the more spiritual we get the more the devil attacks us.
- ❖ “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).
- ❖ Job’s love towards his family and others:
- ❖ He loved his family and taught them to love one another (Job 1:4).
- ❖ He cared about their salvation and offered sacrifices for them (Job 1:5).
- ❖ He loved and cared for the poor (Job 29:16).

WHAT HAPPENED TO JOB

- ❖ His temptation was great because he lost everything : possessions, children and has bodily diseases.
- ❖ Then his wife said to him: Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9).
- ❖ She considered death better than a life with temptation.
- ❖ Job rebuked her and corrected her: “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips. (Job 2:10).

HUMAN COMFORT

- ❖ His three friends heard of what happened and they came to comfort him.
- ❖ Job used to bless God even in his temptation (Job 1:21), but they came and added to the temptation by their judgment.
- ❖ Their words caused Job to:
 - ❖ Talk about his righteousness.
 - ❖ Blame God for the suffering of the righteous.
 - ❖ Ask God to remove him from the earth.

THE FIRST DEBATE

Eliphaz the Temanite (Chapters 4 - 5)

- ❖ Was the eldest of the three friends.
- ❖ His words offered no peace, but pain and sadness.
- ❖ The unrighteous suffer: “Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright ever cut off?” (Job 4:7).
- ❖ He said harsh words concerning the sons of Job, forgetting how much Job cared about his children in prayers and sacrifices: His sons are far from safety. They are crushed in the gate, and there is no deliverer” (Job 5:4).
- ❖ At the end of his words he pronounced about the blessings of being chastened by the Lord (Job 5:17-26).

THE FIRST DEBATE

Job's Response (Chapters 6 - 7)

- ❖ He felt the pain: “Oh, that my grief were fully weighed, and my calamity laid with it on the scales! For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words have been rash” (Job 6:2-3).
- ❖ He asked for death, not because of its reward, but because it would be the end of his pains. Note: despite his pains and sufferings, and that he desired an end, he did not commit suicide, but still had hope.
- ❖ He rebuked his friends for not comforting him: “To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. My brothers have dealt deceitfully like a brook, like the streams of the brooks that pass away” (Job 6:14-15).

THE FIRST DEBATE

Bildad the Shuhite (Chapter 8)

- ❖ His ideas were similar to those of Eliphaz, basing his decision on the experiences of the elders.

Job's Response (Chapters 9 - 10)

- ❖ Job analyzes his state and realizes few things:
- ❖ God is all mighty (Job 9:4-14).
- ❖ He is amazed at the wisdom of God, who allows the righteous to suffer (Job 9: 22-23).
- ❖ He did not sin: “Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me. Though I was blameless, it would prove me perverse. I am blameless, yet I do not know myself; I despise my life” (Job 9:20-21).
- ❖ He needs an intercessor (another verse about the intercession of the saints): “For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him, and that we should go to court together. Nor is there any mediator between us, Who may lay His hand on us both” (Job 9:33).
- ❖ But He finds favor to stand before Him: “Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate unity; yet You would destroy me” (Job 10:8-13).

THE FIRST DEBATE

Zophar the Naamathite (Chapter 11)

- ❖ He was the youngest and least ready to comfort anyone.
- ❖ He humiliated Job greatly and called him a liar and disrespectful person (Job 11:1-6).

Job's Response (Chapters 12 – 24)

- ❖ Pointed their ignorance
- ❖ Did not go down to their level and tell them that he is wiser than they, but rather, that he is wise like them: “But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Indeed, who does not know such things as these?” (Job 12:3)
- ❖ Their silence is better: “But you forgers of lies, you are all worthless physicians. Oh, that you would be silent, and it would be your wisdom!” (Job 13:4-5)
- ❖ Blames himself (13:20-28).

THE SECOND DEBATE

- ❖ Eliphaz: Showed his anger at Job.
- ❖ Bildad: Used every emotion of Job to make him bitter.
- ❖ Zophar: Attacked Job and concluded that he is an evil person.

THE THIRD DEBATE

- ❖ Eliphaz: asks Job to return to God that he may receive goodness.
- ❖ Bildad: Man will not be justified before God.
- ❖ Job: Remembers his goodness prior to his temptation (Chapters 26-31)
 - ❖ He helped the poor (Chapters 29:15-16, 31-32).
 - ❖ Protected the innocent (Chapters 29:17).
 - ❖ His purity (Chapters 31:1,9)
 - ❖ His fairness to his servants (Chapters 31:13)
 - ❖ Did not rely on his richness

ELIHU, THE WISE YOUTH

- ❖ We did not hear of/from him until all the elders have spoken but did not reach any solution.
- ❖ He was a patient person (Job 32:1-10).
- ❖ He rebuked Job for his self-righteousness (Job 32:2).
- ❖ He explained that salvation and righteousness are only acquired through One (Job 33: 23-28).
- ❖ He spoke of the greatness of God, and that we can not understand Him (Job 37:5-17, 23-24).

HEAVENLY COMFORT

- ❖ After Job requested of God to explain to him his sins, God answered him
- ❖ God spoke in a strong tone: “Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: “Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me” (Job 38:1-3).
- ❖ God revealed to Job that he is not “God” and pointed out his sin for him.
- ❖ He asked him if His judgment was right “Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said: Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it” (Job 40:1-2).

HEAVENLY COMFORT

- ❖ “Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?” (Job 40:8).
- ❖ Job could not answer: “Then Job answered the Lord and said: Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further” (Job 40:3-5).
- ❖ God showed and questioned him about the greatness of “His creation and asked him if he had anything to do with it” (Job 38-39).
- ❖ The Glory of the Creation (Job 38): Many concepts that scientists still do not understand until this day were mentioned by God to Job more than 4000 years ago.

JOB'S CONFESSION

- ❖ After God questioned Job and showed him his weakness, Job confessed it.
- ❖ He confessed his foolishness (Job 42:3) and he repented (Job 42:6) “Then Job answered the Lord and said: “I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak: You said, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer Me.’ I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:1-6).

LESSONS FROM BOOK OF JOB

- ❖ God cares for our salvation. He may allow some tribulations to edify us and purify us but He never forsakes us.
- ❖ Expression of grief & trouble is appropriate, but not to pass judgment on God
- ❖ God is in control, even when it is not obvious to our eyes
- ❖ God has a purpose in what he allows, even if we do not know what it is