

Genesis & Job, answers to the Big Questions of Life, pt.1

****Why we are here?**

****What went wrong?**

****Is this all there is?**

In this and the next lesson, we'll primarily look at how Job answers our questions, with some references to Genesis. We'll talk more about the people and stories of Genesis in other lessons that follow.

In review, What are the Big, Foundational Questions I'm referring to?

- How did we get here?
- What went wrong?
Sub question: Who is Satan and what power does he have?
- Is there life after death?
- What about people who have never heard of Jesus?
- Why do innocent people suffer?
- How can we help people who are suffering?

We will cover the first three in this lesson and then the next three in the next.

Overview of Job

- The book opens describing Job as God's ideal man.
- Satan appears before God and challenges God that Job only serves him because God blesses him.
- To see if that is true, God allows Satan to harm Job and he loses wealth, family, and finally his health.
- Three friends (and a fourth later) come to comfort Job, but instead, accuse, and repeat false beliefs about God.
- Job consistently defends himself and demands a defense before God.
- God responds and shows his power.
- ***Important to note—God never answers Job's questions.***
- Job repents and is restored.

Question #1

How did we get here? Answered in both books

- "In the beginning God" is how Genesis starts, and the Genesis continues with a record of God's creation of all things.
- God as Creator is confirmed in Job when God confronts him and begins by establishing who He, God is, on the basis of creation, when He says—
- *Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you know so much. Do you know how its dimensions were determined, and who did the surveying? What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone as the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? (Job 38:4-7)*

This reality that God created us is THE foundation for His

claims on us

- And the answer to our questions for meaning and fulfillment in life.
- The rest of the Bible affirms God's creation as in Ps. 100:3 where it says: *"He made us..."*
- And in Acts 17:28, where it says *"In him we live and move and have our being."*
- Rev. 4:11 *You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being.*
- **No such things as a "self-made man or woman."**
- Humanity is not the result of time plus chance.

Not being self-made is a good thing because we know so little

- But God knows what is BEST for us and designed our lives for meaning and purpose.
- We sometime trivialize the description of the Bible as the owner's manual and for the best functioning of life we tell people to "read the directions" **but it is so true.**
- C.S. Lewis put it this way *"God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."*

Question #2

What went wrong?

Genesis tells us that part of the story, Job expands it

- In Genesis 3, an antagonist enters the story—Satan, first introduced as "the serpent."
- God gave humanity only ONE negative command—
- *"Don't eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."*
- But the antagonist, Satan, created doubt about God's goodness and offered an alternative to trusting God— "wisdom" rather than relationship.
- Genesis tells us Adam and Eve chose the alternative—and we call this action "the Fall."

In the story line of the Bible

- The Fall is the conflict that initiates all the following actions of the Bible.
- Everything changes with this event.
- Immediately after the Fall, God promises a Savior and though we don't know the entire story at this time, the actions of that promised Savior would reverse Paradise lost with Paradise regained—but that is a long time from now...
- As we start the story, let's look more closely at the antagonist, at Satan so we can understand his tactics better because unfortunately he is part of many Bible stories and our stories.

Other scriptures to understand Satan more fully

- He was the highest of created beings, an angel who once held a place of honor before God, but he rebelled and was removed from his place.
- *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground—mighty though you were against the nations of the world" (Isa 14:12, TLB).*
- Read Ezek. 28—for more pictures of his fall when you have time.
- We wish we knew more about this extraordinary back story—what we do

know is clothed in symbolic language and there is much we do not know.

- God has told us all we need to know. Satan's past does not concern us as much as what he is doing now, and the book of Job gives us important insight to his current actions and limitations.
- We need to keep these things in mind as we read through the Bible and in our daily lives.

What Job shows us about Satan

- That Satan has access to God.
- He is allowed to initiate:
 - Natural disasters
 - Personal tragedies
 - Crime and death
 - Sickness
- All of these he did to Job.
- No where in the Bible are we given specifics about his ability to do them or how he does what he does.
- However, we do know that when and if they happen, they are ALL UNDER God's control and limitations.
- Not only do we see this in Job but also in the New Testament when Jesus stills the storm with his words in Matthew 8:23–27.

More about how Satan's power is limited

- Clearly in Job, Satan is subordinate to God—no dualism in the Bible—God and Satan are not two equal powers engaged in a cosmic battle.
- Satan is God's creation, not eternal, not all powerful, not all-knowing. He cannot read your thoughts or know the future for certain.
- He is also not omni-present; he can't be everywhere at one time, though he has legions of demonic powers.
- In Job 1 Satan appears before God in an obvious place of submission.
- God questions him, limits him—we see this as a foundational lesson in Job.
- It is an assurance also repeated in the New Testament ***"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them [Satan and his influence]: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).***

Though limited, Satan can still cause a lot of trouble

- Satan is not at all original in his strategies.
- What he used then to tempt Adam and Eve, he continues to use now.
- ***The simple statement in Gen. 3:1 Did God really say?.....Satan continues to use again and again and again.***
- Satan always begins with questioning if God really said something, and it then progresses to suggesting an alternative that sounds good but is ultimately destructive.
- To stand up against that you need to know what God's Word truly says, what He truly wants you to do.
- It is ONLY through God's Word that you will know for certain what God wants because our world, our culture, our values today seem so pleasing in many ways, as the fruit did to Eve, but they are ultimately destructive.

Additionally, what we see about Satan in Job

- Satan is a restless, he wanders the earth and he is an accuser of God's people—then and now.

- In Job 1:7 *“The Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the Lord, ‘From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.’”*
- In the New Testament, we see this hasn’t changed, *“Be careful—watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart” (1 Peter 5:8 TLB).*”

In that wandering, he accuses God’s people

- Job 8, God pointed out the blameless life of Job, and Satan responds, *“Does Job fear God for nothing?”*
- Satan will twist every good thing in our lives (and the lives of others) to something evil.
- That chatter in your head constantly telling you what a mess you are is seldom from God.
- God’s voice of conviction gives you a way to do better, Satan simply pounds you—don’t listen to him.
- Evaluate your life in light of God’s Word, confess your sin if necessary, and press ahead assured of God’s love and forgiveness.
- ***Also, this is why slander, gossip, thinking evil of our brothers and sisters, of anyone is SO wrong—we are listening to Satan, we are doing Satan’s work when we shouldn’t be doing that.***
- We never know what is truly going on in another’s life. Grant them the grace you receive from God and want for yourself.
- Don’t gossip; grant grace. Don’t accuse; pray.

Satan’s interference with people is significant, but it will not last forever

- And we are reminded *“For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world”(Eph. 6:12, TLB)*
- Jesus rose from the dead, defeating Satan, and Satan’s interference with God’s people will also someday come to an end and when Satan will be thrown in the Lake of Fire.
- The accusing chatter in our minds will cease, the interference in our lives and world will be over.
- *‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down’” (Revelation 12:10).*
- Hopeful words, but who will be around to see that?

Question # 3

Is There Life after Death?

- The answer is incredibly important to understand
- Because as the Apostle Paul told us, *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Cor. 15:19).*
- Of the many Big Questions of Life Job answers, the question of *Is There Life after Death* is definitely the most important because it literally puts all else that happens to us into proper perspective.
- If there is no life after death, no salvation from the punishment of death,

there is no point to the rest of the Bible.

- But there is salvation from death, there is a Savior who will conquer death and the effects of his victory will reach back to the earliest days of humanity
- Our God is an eternal God, and He did not create throw-away creatures.
- And Job affirms this truth.

Job provides an early and definitive answer to this question

- Job 14:14-15 affirms physical, bodily resurrection, I'll read it and then I we will take a closer look at the Hebrew words:
- ¹⁴ *If someone dies, will they live again?*
All the days of my hard service
*I will wait for my renewal to come. (**chaliyphah**—a change of garments, a renewal)* ¹⁵ *You will call and I will answer you;*
you will long for the creature your hands have made.
Job: 19: 25 I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.
²⁶ *And after my skin (**basar**) has been destroyed,*
*yet in my flesh (**basar**) I will see God;*
²⁷ *I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another.*
How my heart yearns within me!
- A few notes, on v.14— “chaliyphah” is similar to the Apostle Paul taking about his earthly tent being exchanged for a heavenly one. 2 Cor 5:1
- ***“basar” skin in this life; flesh in the next—SAME WORD. Resurrection to the Christian is tangible; solid; a renewal into what we were created to be.***

Even early in his struggles, Job knew

- As the passage we just discussed shows, Job knew that his earthly pain was not all there was to his story.
- There are sadly many, including some in the church and some who teach the Bible who will say that “in the Old Testament there was no clear belief of life after death.”
- ***That is simply not true*** as this passage in Job and many others show.
- I also have a revised and complete lesson on this topic *Is There Life after Death?* on www.Bible805.com where I go through Old Testament passages that affirm the truth of life after death, plus a shorter lesson that critiques those who deny it. Please see the podcasts, videos, and printed materials on this topic—again, the links for it are at www.Bible805.com

One more hopeful reminder

- As one writer said, if we truly believe in the promised joy of a fulfilling, meaningful eternity spent with those we love and a God who loves us, even the most horrible experiences of life will seem like one night spent in a bad hotel.
- You might be in that horrid, bad hotel now, but be assured that as the book of Job shows us and the rest of the Bible affirms, joy will come—perhaps not in this life, but it will come, and it will last forever.

What's next?

- I pray that what we've covered today are comforting truths to those who know Jesus, yet often the answers to our questions today bring up more questions we'll cover in ***Genesis & Job, Answers to the Big Questions of Life, part three***

- **#4 What about people who have never heard of Jesus?**
- **#5 Why do innocent people suffer?**
- **#6 How can we help people who are suffering?**
- Join me as I lay a solid foundation for studying the remainder of the Bible because The Big Questions covered in this lesson and the next will come up again and again.
- And until then be encouraged with these final words from Job: ***I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. Job 19:25-27***

For notes from this lesson, related resources, and helpful links go to www.bible805.com