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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Job 7.

(2015)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Job 7.

Topics.

- Has not man a hard service on earth, and his days like a hired hand.
- Job's flesh is covered with worms.
- He who goes down to Sheol does not come up or return to his house.
- Am I the sea, or a sea monster, that you set a guard over me?
- When will you look away from me and leave me alone?
- If I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher of mankind?
- Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?
- Now I shall lie in the earth; you will seek me, but I shall not be.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the book of Job is considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece it is an honest discussion of why God allows good people to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, reveals God's sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's four friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone.

In the depths of agony he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion against the truth that He alone is wise (Job chpts. 38–41). Yet he vindicated Job's trust in him (chpt. 42), proving that genuine faith cannot be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 2000 and 500 B.C.

Helpful facts: before reading Job it is helpful to understand when Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu are speaking they are not speaking, "thus sayeth the LORD", they are simply giving their opinions on how they personally perceive things to be. Amongst their conversations there is truth and wisdom, but it must be kept in mind not everything they are saying is true or even wise, in fact God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and tells them they have spoken foolishness, but Job has spoken what is right (Job 42:7-9). The book of Job is not about doctrinal truth, but human suffering and the questions regarding God that arise during a person's calamity and pain.

Job speaks

Has Not Man a Hard Service on Earth, and His Days Like a Hired Hand.

Job 7:1-2 ----- ¹"Has not man a hard service on earth, and are not his days like the days of a hired hand? ²Like a slave who longs for the shadow, and like a hired hand who looks for his wages. ³so I am allotted months of emptiness (vanity in KJV), and nights of misery are apportioned to me. ⁴When I lie down I say, 'When shall I arise?' But the night is long, and I am full of tossing till the dawn.

Emptiness: (vanity in KJV) comes from the Hebrew word (*shav'*) in this context it means useless, destructive, waste and carries the idea of total ruin.

Prior to Job's afflictions he was a very rich and successful business man, but now he not only feels like a slave or hired hand who lives from week to week waiting for their wages, but also realises that life is a struggle and hard work filled with seasons of joy and happiness and seasons of sorrow and suffering. Job feels God has apportioned to him months of emptiness. I am certain that it is safe to say that many at some time while suffering and feeling miserable because of some type of sickness or affliction have felt much the same as Job when such afflictions seem to go on forever and days that could be used for achieving seem to be wasting away.

Job's Flesh is covered with Worms.

Job 7:5-6 ----- ⁵My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt; my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh. ⁶My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and come to their end without hope.

The worms are probably maggots, which are actually good for cleaning wounds even today in some countries they use maggots to clean a wound. Job's disease is so bad that as soon as his skin does heal another sore or boil bursts out in another place on his body. Even worse than this he has been sick for so long now that he is totally without any hope. This is not surprising since unlike us today they did not have doctors, medicines, pain killers and hospitals.

He who goes Down to Sheol does Not come up or Return to His House.

Job 7:7-10 ----- ⁷"Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good. ⁸The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more; while your (Eliphaz) eyes are on me, I shall be gone. ⁹As the cloud fades and vanishes, so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up; ¹⁰he returns no more to his house, nor does his place know him anymore.

Job (as did many of the faithful of the Old Testament) viewed human life as a breath this is because God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2:7). The following Scriptures show that it was common to refer to human and animal life as a breath: -

- I the LORD will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. (Gen. 6:17).
- They went in to the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. (Genesis 7:15).
- The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life. (Job 33:4).
- When you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. (Psalm 104:29).
- What happens to man happens to the beasts as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts. (Eccles. 3:19).
- Thus says God who created the heavens and spread out the earth and gives breath to the people who walk on it. (Isaiah 42:5).

These verse show that all life including that of all animals, birds and fish is but a breath, which means that all who breathe are only one breath away from death. This knowledge should drive all who breathe to realise how fragile their life is and motivate them to seek eternal life. Since God is eternal and has the power to give eternal life those who seek Him are called wise while those who deny him are called foolish. Job feels he will never see good again, because he believes he is about to breathe his last breath.

NOTE: some in Christian circles use Job's words, "He who goes down to Sheol does not come up," to support the theory that those who die outside of Christ will never rise from the dead, but that is reading far more into the verse than what Job is actually saying. We know this because Job is talking about himself being dead and buried in the grave and the following verse clearly shows that Job's faith was such that he knew he would be raised to life eternal.

- I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God (Job 19:25-26).

Job is simply saying once a person dies they cannot go home and enjoy their family the focus is not on the return of Christ and the first resurrection or the Great White Throne Judgment and the second resurrection (called the second death), but the disappearance of life on this earth in the grave. For further information concerning the first and second resurrection, see the title: -

1. The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.
2. In Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Am I the Sea, or a Sea Monster, that You Set a Guard Over Me?

Job 7:11-15 ----- ¹¹"Therefore I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. ¹²Am I the sea, or a sea monster, that you (God) set a guard over me? ¹³When I say, 'My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,' ¹⁴then you scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions, ¹⁵so that I would choose strangling and death rather than my bones.

Since Job feels that his time on earth is enormously limited because he believes death is about to take him to the grave and he cannot speak and express himself from the grave he says he will not restrain himself while he is alive from speaking from the torment and anguish of his mind and the indignation and bitterness of his heart or restrain himself from expressing how he is honestly feeling within his mind, emotions and heart.

He feels that God is treating him as though he is some kind of evil powerful sea monster, by scaring and terrifying him with dreams and visions whenever he thinks he is going to find some comfort and escape from his pain by going to sleep on his bed. Clearly Job is lacking sleep and over-tired and because of this would rather be dead than alive.

When will You Look Away from Me and Leave Me Alone.

Job 7:16-19 ----- ¹⁶I loathe my life; I would not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are a breath. ¹⁷What is man, that you make so much of him, and that you set your heart on him, ¹⁸visit him every morning and test him every moment? ¹⁹How long will you not look away from me, nor leave me alone till I swallow my spit?

Job is extremely suicidal in that he utterly loathes his life and wishes he was dead. Job's words, "What is man, that you set your heart on him," (v17) highlight the truth that Job credits God for all his suffering and affliction and not some so called evil god called Satan, what is even more interesting to notice is that when God does appear before Job in chapter forty-two he does not rebuke him for believing He was the one causing his suffering, but instead said Job had spoken what was right and blessed him with far more than he had prior to his afflictions and calamities. For further information concerning Satan, see the title: -

- Satan in, Satan and his Family. (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Job prays that God would look away from him, leave him alone and let him die he asks Him why does He set his heart on Job and test his faith every moment.

If I Sin, what Do I Do to You, You watcher of Mankind?

Job 7:20-21 ----- ²⁰If I sin, what do I do to you (God), you watcher of mankind? Why have you made me your mark? Why have I become a burden to you? ²¹Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? For now I shall lie in the earth; you will seek me, but I shall not be." (For now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be in KJV).

Job calls God the watcher of mankind and asks Him the following four questions: -

- 1 What does his sin do to God?
- 2 Why has God made him His mark?
- 3 Why has he become a burden to God?
- 4 Why won't God pardon his transgression and take away his iniquity?

If I sin, what do I do to God? (v20) the answer to this question is nothing, our sin does not affect our heavenly Father, but it does affect our neighbour and since God cares about mankind and is a God of justice and love our sin indirectly affects Him in that He is greatly grieved at any harm and hurt our sin brings upon others.

Job of course is unaware that God considers him righteous and blameless (we only know because the writer tells us) so he asks God to forgive his iniquity before death takes him and he goes to the grave because once he dies the LORD will seek him but he will not be found because Job will not exist and therefore it will be too late to forgive his transgressions.

Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? (v21) it seems that Job has brought into Eliphaz argument that the good are blessed and only the wicked suffer and therefore embraced the idea that all his calamity and suffering is a result of some great sin and transgression he has committed and if he were pardoned all his sorrows would pass away, but this is not so since we are told in chapter one that Job was blameless, upright, feared God and turned away from evil.

God Himself said, "there is none like Job a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" And even after Job had been tested and suffered greatly the LORD said, "Job even continues to hold fast his integrity even though I the LORD have almost destroyed him without reason" (Job 1:8) (Job 2:3).

Blameless in this context does not mean that Job was without sin, it simply means he was a decent man who did no harm to another human and that he helped the poor and did right before God. There has only ever been one man who walked on earth without sin before God and his name was not Job, but the Lord Jesus Christ.

If it was possible for any of us to achieve the glorious state of a sin-free life while in this mortal and fallen body then Christ died for no purpose. God's statement, "Job continues to hold fast his integrity even though I have almost destroyed him without reason" (Job 2:3) clearly shows that Job's afflictions had nothing to do with any sin he may have had in his life.

Now I shall lie in the earth; you will seek me, but I shall not be: (v21) this does not refer to the resurrection for on that glorious day Job will certainly be found, rather it carries the idea of one who goes to visit a sick friend in a morning and finds them dead and so they are no longer found in the land of the living.

Job believed he was near death and therefore if the LORD was going to bless him in any way in the present life He must do it quickly, before death takes him to the grave and no one seeking him on earth would find him. Obviously should God set his eternal eyes upon seeking Job it would not matter if he was laying in the deep of the ocean or on the highest mountain or in the lowest valley God would know it.

Throughout Job's discussions there is much language of bitter complaint which some may find difficult to understand, but before judging Job harshly we should first examine ourselves to see how we would fair if we found ourselves in similar circumstances. It is certain that Job without fear has honestly expressed much that has passed through the silent and unspoken thoughts of many afflicted and suffering children of God.

Should the blessing be long delayed or not be awarded before we die it should always be kept in mind that the empire of death has been invaded, and its power has been taken away.

The light of God through Christ has been shed around the tomb and because of this the grave for the faithful is not the end, but the pathway on which the lamp of salvation shines to immortal life and eternal glory.

Whoever is willing to bear trials will receive whatever is lacking in this short life when they pass from the limitations of their mortal body and the corruptions of this life and enter the world of eternal glory with the sure promise that God who cannot lie will meet and bless them. Underneath all Jobs complaints, afflicts and sufferings his underlying mindset and deep faith is expressed in the following words: -

- I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God (Job 19:25-26).

End.