

BIG Questions

Job 1:1 – 2:10

¹There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. ²There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. ⁴His 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. ⁵And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually. ⁶Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." ⁸And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" ⁹Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? ¹⁰Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." ¹²And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. ¹³Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁷While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁸While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ²⁰Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshipped. ²¹And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." ²²In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong. ²³Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ²⁴And the LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." ²⁵And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason." ²⁶Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. ²⁷But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." ²⁸And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life." ²⁹So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ³⁰And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes. ³¹Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die." ³²But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

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The BIG questions of the book of Job aren't necessarily our BIG questions

We have many many questions, not least of all about our own suffering:

But Job the book asks two key questions ...

- *"Do people trust God only because He gives them easy lives?"*
- *"Is it as simple as God rewarding the good and punishing the bad in this life?"*

Job

- Where is Uz and at what point in history did it all happen?
- Who is Job, was he even an Israelite, was he even real?
- What did Job know about God then?
- Was he without sin?

Satan

- Who and what is he?
- When and where did he come from?
- Why does he exist and what is his role?
- How much power does he have?
- Should we worry about Satan now?

God

- why, Why, WHY ?
- Why Satan?
- Why let this happen to Job?
- WHY is there suffering in this world?
- Is God morally suspect in regard to Job and other sufferers?

What has this got to do with Jesus and Christianity?

- Long jump and triple jump
- Job sets the stage
 - suffering without blame but not without reason
- Jesus
 - not a random man
 - is this a case of 'dodgy means justifying a good end'?
 - willing and able to lay down his life
 - suffering without blame but not without reason

Trust and Fear

- Our trust is what God has always wanted and required
- Trust has a context
 - promise and/or command in the Bible
 - Eden, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, today
- What about when there is no promise or command, what is wise?
 - healthy fear i.e. respect
 - lion-like-respect should lead those who haven't heard the promise to trust when they do hear the promise of God