

WISDOM FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

BIBLE TEXT : Job 14:1-22; 19:23-27; 21:1-34; 31:23-40

LESSON 373 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Job 14:1-22

1 Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble.
2 He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.
3 And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?
4 Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.
5 Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;
6 Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.
7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;
9 *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.
10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he?
11 *As* the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:
12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.
13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!
14 If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.
15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.
16 For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?
17 My transgression *is* sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.
18 And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.
19 The waters wear the stones: thou wastest away the things which grow *out*

Bible References:

Notes:

God, the Giver

Job was a great man who lived many, many years ago. He was very rich and he honoured God as the giver of that wealth. But when Job lost all his wealth, and also all his children, he still served God. His faith was fixed in the eternal God, and he knew that in the end God would make all come right.

Briefness of Life

Job did not feel that he was the only one in the world who had trouble. He said: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (Job 14:1, 2). We know that those words were inspired by God, because the Apostle Peter said much the same thing many hundreds of years later: "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (I Peter 1:24). King David, who was also a rich man and had everything in this world that would satisfy the earthly desires of any man, realised too how unimportant this life is. He said: "Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee" (Psalm 39:5).

Even if people live to be 80 years old, "yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psalm 90:10). Life in this world, at its best, is not satisfying. The poor need not envy the rich, saying that if they had money and the comforts of life they would be happy. True happiness comes only to the one whose heart is fully given to the Lord. The poor man who has the love of God overflowing his heart is as happy as any rich man can be as a Christian, and far happier than the rich sinner.

Job was very little concerned about his life here. If it was short, why worry about it? Life after death — that which will endure forever — is what is all-important.

Dust to Dust

Job spoke of the finality of our physical death. If a tree is cut down, new branches may sprout from the root. But when a person is laid to rest in the grave, that body does not grow again. He knows nothing of the big funeral that is held, of the flowers that are laid on the grave, or of the honour that his friends and loved ones are paying to his memory. He is dead. The life he has lived on earth is past, and nothing anyone can do for him will change his standing before the great Judge. As he died, so will he have to face God in eternity.

The body returns to dust, but the spirit lives on and on, going back "unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). However, that still is not the end of our existence.

Job asked the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). Men of all ages have pondered that question. What grief and sorrow have come to people who had no hope of eternal life when they laid to rest their loved ones! People who have lived their life without God have no hope when death comes. All wealth, honour, and fame are nothing when life ends.

of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.
20 Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.
21 His sons come to honour, and he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.
22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

Job 19:23-27

23 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!
24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!
25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

26 And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

Job 21:1-34

- ¹ But Job answered and said,
² Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations.
³ Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.
⁴ As for me, *is* my complaint to man? and if *it were so*, why should not my spirit be troubled?
⁵ Mark me, and be astonished, and lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth.
⁶ Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.
⁷ Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?
⁸ Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.
⁹ Their houses *are* safe from fear, neither *is* the rod of God upon them.
¹⁰ Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.
¹¹ They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.
¹² They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.
¹³ They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.
¹⁴ Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
¹⁵ What *is* the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?
¹⁶ Lo, their good *is* not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
¹⁷ How oft is the candle of the wicked put

The Resurrection of the Dead

The true Christians, like Job, have faith in the resurrection of the dead in that latter day when Jesus will come again, and the "dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the LORD" (I Thes-salonians 4:16, 17). Job was content to wait for that change to come. Job lived, perhaps, well over 3,500 years ago; and when he died his spirit returned to God who gave it, but his body is still waiting for that change.

The true believers of all ages are bound together in that hope of the resurrection. The Apostle Paul wrote: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [dead], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thessalonians 4:13, 14).

The Apostle Paul was willing to suffer anything that he might attain that first resurrection. He perhaps never had boils, as Job did, but he suffered over a longer period of time. He was beaten five times with a whip, three times with rods; he was shipwrecked, stoned; threatened by robbers, by the heathen, by his own countrymen, and by false brethren; he suffered hunger and cold. But after all that, he could say: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

King of Kings

Job knew that he needed the **Redeemer**, the One who had saved his soul. Jesus had not yet come to earth to die as the Lamb of God, yet by faith Job knew that He would come. He said: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25). Job was looking beyond the time that Jesus would come as the Babe in Bethlehem, to live among men, to suffer and die, and rise again. He could see the day when Jesus will come as King of kings and lord of lords, to rule the world. Job's body will rise from the grave in the first resurrection, and come back with Jesus when He comes with "ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14, 15).

Abraham's Faith

It is thought by some that Abraham and Job lived at about the same time. Abraham had the same faith that Job did. He was a rich man, as riches were counted in those days, but he wandered through the land as a stranger, living in tents. He knew his life here would soon be over, and he was preparing for eternal life, that city "which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:9, 10). That was the New Jerusalem, in which we can all live throughout eternity if we prepare our hearts now to be ready for the first resurrection.

All the injustice in this world will be taken care of when Jesus comes again. He knows every man's heart, and will reward him for the way he has lived in this world. Though the wicked may prosper by getting more riches and worldly honour in this life than the righteous, if they do not repent of sin, they will suffer bitterness and eternal judgment at the end. Job said that when all goes well with the wicked they may say to God: "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?" (Job 21:14, 15). But God is taking note of it all, and "His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty" (Job 21:20).

Though the good and the bad go to the grave alike, what a

out! and *how oft* cometh their destruction upon them! *God* distributeth sorrows in his anger.

¹⁸ They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.

¹⁹ God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know *it*.

²⁰ His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

²¹ For what pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

²² Shall *any* teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

²³ One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

²⁴ His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.

²⁵ And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

²⁶ They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

²⁷ Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine against me.

²⁸ For ye say, Where *is* the house of the prince? and where *are* the dwelling places of the wicked?

²⁹ Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,

³⁰ That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

³¹ Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him *what* he hath done?

³² Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb.

³³ The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.

³⁴ How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?

Job 31:23-40

²³ For destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.

²⁴ If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence;

²⁵ If I rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and because mine hand had gotten much;

²⁶ If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking *in* brightness;

²⁷ And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my

tremendous difference there will be when men of all ages stand in the judgment! "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that arse in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29).

Job feared the judgment of God, and wanted his life to be such as God would be pleased with. He names some of the things that might have displeased God: If Job had rejoiced in his wealth and not given God the glory for it; if he had cursed his enemies; if he had seen someone in need, and had not helped him; if he had done something wrong and had tried to hide it rather than confess it. Job did not want to be guilty of any such things.

We must remember that all we do is counting for eternity. Our actions are weighed by the Lord. The very thoughts and intents of the heart are known to Him. May we pray with Moses: "Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

QUESTIONS

1. Who made Job rich?
2. What were some of Job's troubles?
3. What did Job say about the physical body, when it is buried?
4. How do we know that Job believed in the Rapture of the Church?
5. Compare the length of life here with eternity.
6. What happens to the body when it is buried? What happens to the spirit of man?
7. Who will stand before God in judgement?
8. What will happen to the good? To the bad?

hand:

²⁸ This also *were* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: for I should have denied the God *that is* above.

²⁹ If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him:

³⁰ Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.

³¹ If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.

³² The stranger did not lodge in the street: *but* I opened my doors to the traveller.

³³ If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom:

³⁴ Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, *and* went not out of the door?

³⁵ Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire *is, that* the Almighty would answer me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book.

³⁶ Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me.

³⁷ I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.

³⁸ If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain;

³⁹ If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life:

⁴⁰ Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.