

Job

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(Taken from Nelson's *New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*)

• The story of Job in the Old Testament relates three of the great tests we all should be prepared to face at some period in our lives. First, temporal setbacks. Job lost all he owned. Second, physical illness that will test our faith and testimony. And third, depression. Job said, "Why died I not from the womb?" (Job 3:11.) "My soul is weary of my life." (Job 10:1.) But the great lesson of Job is that, "in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." (Job 1:22.) Too often when adversity strikes, we use it as a justification to commit sin and turn away from the teachings of Jesus Christ, the prophets who lead us, and our family and friends. Job maintained his testimony and was blessed for his unwavering faith that God lived and that he would dwell in God's presence. (Robert D. Hales, in Conference Report, Oct. 1981, 26; or Ensign, Nov. 1981, 19)

Some scholars question the actual existence of Job, but the Lord confirms Job's reality in comforting the Prophet Joseph Smith. (See D&C 121:10-11; Job 2:11.) Further, Satan's "going to and fro in the earth" (Job 1:7) is verified in Doctrine and Covenants 10:27, and Joseph Smith used this incident in showing that "wicked spirits" are controlled by "bounds, limits, and laws." (Teachings, p. 208.) (Monte S. Nyman, "Restoring 'Plain and Precious Parts': The Role of Latter-day Scriptures in Helping Us Understand the Bible," Ensign, Dec. 1981, 20)

Perhaps there has never occurred such a demonstration of patience as that exemplified by Job, who was described in the Holy Bible as being perfect and upright and one who feared God and eschewed evil. He was blessed with great wealth and riches in abundance. Satan obtained leave from the Lord to try to tempt Job. How great was Job's misery, how terrible his loss, how tortured his life. Urged by his wife to curse God and die, his reply bespoke his faith: "I know that my redeemer liveth, 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." What faith, what courage, what trust. Job lost possessions-all of them. Job lost his health-all of it. Job honored the trust given him. Job personified patience. (Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 77; or Ensign, Nov. 1995, 60)

1:5 Job, informed that his socially minded sons and daughters were dissipating in their homes, "offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." (Job 1:5.) He was in great distress. His bones ached; his flesh was sore; his heart was tried; and his hope near gone. Yet when his wife rebelled, saying, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die," faithful Job reprimanded her severely: "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh." (Job 2:9-10.) (Spencer W. Kimball, *President Kimball Speaks Out*, p.51)

1:7 In like manner since that time, Satan has been "going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it," (Job 1:7.) "to deceive and to blind men and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken" unto the voice of the Lord, (Moses 4:4) nor to his servants, the prophets of the Lord. He is the master of deceit, adulteration and counterfeit. There is hardly a human appetite that he has not prostituted to his own evil designs; virtue he betrays into vice; and things invented and designed as benefactors to mankind he diverts to his own ends. No palace of art or temple of music was ever more glamorously decorated than the hell-holes of Satan that are labeled saloons, bars, road houses and gambling clubs. With blazing neon signs and lighted "white ways," the cheap and the tawdry are dressed in tinsel garb and with sensuous music from the nether regions issuing forth from such places, the passersby are enticed to partake. (Harold B. Lee, *Decisions for Successful Living*, p.155)

2:1 The prince of darkness can be found everywhere. He is often in very good company. Job said, "Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord" (Job 2:1). His influence is everywhere: "And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 2:2). (James E. Faust, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 34)

2:11 God suffered such kind of beings to afflict Job, but it never entered into their hearts that Job would get out of it all. (Joseph Smith, Letter to the Church in Caldwell County, from Liberty Jail, Missouri, 16 December 1838; PWJS, 376.)

2:13 In life, the sandpaper of circumstances often smooths our crustiness and patiently polishes our rough edges. There is nothing pleasant about it, however. And the Lord will go to great lengths in order to teach us a particular lesson and to help us to overcome a particular weakness, especially if there is no other way. In such circumstances, it is quite useless for us mortals to try to do our own sums when it comes to suffering. We can't make it all add up because clearly we do not have all the numbers. Furthermore, none of us knows much about the algebra of affliction. The challenges that come are shaped to our needs and circumstances, sometimes in order to help our weaknesses become strengths. Job noted how tailored his challenges were, saying, "For the thing which I greatly feared has come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me." (Job 3:25.) Yet he prevailed so much so that he was held up as a model to the great latter-day prophet, Joseph Smith. (D&C 121.) Our triumph here could not be complete if we merely carried our fears and doubts into the next world. What came to Job was not a minor test with which he could have coped with one hand tied behind him. Rather, "his grief was very great." (Job 2:13.) (Neal A. Maxwell, *Notwithstanding My Weakness*, p.67-68)

5:7 The power of evil is great. The power of evil is great against us, so great that [, to paraphrase the book of Job,] "it is as easy to do evil as sparks are to fly upward" (see Job 5:7). You have evil beckoning on every side—the billboards, the radio, the television—everything is beckoning you to do something wrong: pornographic literature, lewd and vile things in the schoolroom and elsewhere. You know the pattern; everything is beckoning you to do wrong. And the reason we brought you here [to youth conference] is why? We're trying to tell you that goodness is beauty. And it's popular to be good. That's what we're trying to say to you. (Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, edited by Clyde J. Williams, p.42)

5:7 As we ponder the events that can befall all of us—even sickness, accident, death, and a host of lesser challenges—we can say, with Job of old, "Man is born unto trouble." Needless to add, that reference to man in the King James Version of the book of Job encompasses women as well. It may be safely assumed that no person has ever lived entirely free of suffering and tribulation. Nor has there ever been a period in human history that did not have its full share of turmoil, ruin, and misery. (Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 70)

6:6 Salt played an important role in the diet, customs, and practices of ancient Israel. It was not only used as an appetizing condiment in the food of man and beast (Job 6:6), but was also frequently used in the various religious offerings of the Israelites. An inferior type of salt was used in the decomposition of waste (Matt. 5:13; Luke 14:35), and an excess of salt was sowed on the soil of a destroyed city to cause sterility (Judg. 9:45). The "covenant of salt" (Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19; 2 Chr. 13:5) indicates that anciently salt was a symbol of faithfulness, steadfastness,

and purity. (Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the New Testament: The Four Gospels*, p.246)

14:14 "If a man die, shall he live again?" asked Job (Job 14:14). There is no question of greater importance than this.

Those of us who live in comfort and security seldom give any thought to death. Our minds are on other things. Yet there is nothing more certain, nothing more universal, nothing more final than the closure of mortal life. No one can escape it, not one.

I have stood at the tomb of Napoleon in Paris, at the tomb of Lenin in Moscow, and before the burial places of many others of the great leaders of the earth. In their time they commanded armies; they ruled with almost omnipotent power; their very words brought terror into the hearts of people. I have reverently walked through some of the great cemeteries of the world. I have reflected quietly and thoughtfully as I have stood in the military cemetery in Manila in the Philippines where are buried some 17,000 Americans who gave their lives in the Second World War and where are remembered another 35,000 who died in the terrible battles of the Pacific and whose remains were never found. I have walked with reverence through the British cemetery on the outskirts of Rangoon, Burma, and noted the names of hundreds of young men who came from the villages, towns, and great cities of the British Isles and gave their lives in hot and distant places. I have strolled through old cemeteries in Asia and Europe and yet other places and reflected on the lives of those who were once buoyant and happy, who were creative and distinguished, who gave much to the world in which they lived. They have all passed into the oblivion of the grave. All who have lived upon the earth before us are now gone. They have left all behind as they have stepped over the threshold of silent death. None has escaped. All have walked their way to "the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns" (Hamlet, act 3, scene 1, lines 79-80). Shakespeare so described it.

Through Jesus Christ all live

But Jesus the Christ changed all that. Only a God could do what He did. He broke the bonds of death. He too had to die, but on the third day following His burial, He rose from the grave, "the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20), and in so doing brought the blessing of the Resurrection to every one of us. (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 1999, 70-71)

14:14 It was Job who posed what might be called the question of the ages: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). Christ's answer rings down through time to this very hour: "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). (Howard W. Hunter; *Ensign*, May 1986, 16)

16:9 "In the literal sense, the gnashing of teeth consists in grinding and striking the teeth together in anger. This expressive act, indicative of hate and violent animosity was adopted by the prophets as the proverbial way of portraying the intensity of the weeping, wailing, and sorrow of the ungodly. Wicked men gnash their teeth at the anointed of the Lord in this life. (Job 16:9; Ps. 35:16; 37:12; 112:10; Mark 9:18; Acts 7:54; Alma 14:21.) Then in eternity the wicked are cast into hell where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." (MD, 315.) (Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, p.213)

19:25 If any of us feels his challenges are beyond his capacity to meet them, let him or her read of Job. By so doing, there comes the feeling, "If Job could endure and overcome, so will I."

Job was a "perfect and upright" man who "feared God, and eschewed evil." Pious in his conduct, prosperous in his fortune, Job was to face a test which could have destroyed anyone. Shorn of his possessions, scorned by his friends, afflicted by his suffering, shattered by the loss of his family, he was urged to "curse God, and die." He resisted this temptation and declared

from the depths of his noble soul, "Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high."
"I know that my redeemer liveth."

Job became a model of unlimited patience. To this day we refer to those who are long-suffering as having the patience of Job. He provides an example for us to follow. (Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 60)

19:25 Many who think that life is unfair do not see things within the larger vision of what the Savior did for us through the Atonement and the Resurrection. Each of us has at times agony, heartbreak, and despair when we must, like Job, reach deep down inside to the bedrock of our own faith. The depth of our belief in the Resurrection and the Atonement of the Savior will, I believe, determine the measure of courage and purpose with which we meet life's challenges. (James E. Faust, *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 52)

19:26 This great and glorious principle of the resurrection is no longer a theory, as some think, but it is an accomplished fact which has been demonstrated beyond all successful contradiction, doubt or controversy. Job, who lived before the resurrection of Christ, possessing the spirit of prophecy, looked forward to the time of the resurrection. He comprehended the fact. He understood the principles and knew the power and design of God to bring it to pass, and predicted its accomplishment. He declares: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." He further says, "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19:25-26) He looked forward to something not yet done, something which had never been done in this world before his day. It was not accomplished till long after his time. Having received the spirit of the gospel and of revelation, he was enabled to look down into unborn time and see his body which had moulded and crumbled into dust, raised from the dead. What he saw by the eye of faith has become actual history unto us, and we possess not only the history of the fact but a knowledge by the testimony of the Holy Ghost of its truth. We are not therefore situated as Job was; we live in the latter times which are pregnant with grand and glorious events, among the greatest of which is this glorious principle of the resurrection of the dead, which is no longer a mere prediction, a cherished hope, or a prophetic promise, but a reality; for long before our day it has actually been accomplished. Christ himself burst the barriers of the tomb, conquered death and the grave and came forth "the first fruits of them that slept." But, says one, how can we know that Jesus was put to death or resurrected? We have plenty of evidence to show that Jesus was crucified and resurrected. We have the testimony of his disciples, and they produce irrefutable evidence that they did see him crucified, and witnessed the wounds of the nails and spear which he received on the cross. They also testify that his body was laid away in a sepulchre wherein no man had lain, and they rolled a great stone to the door and departed. (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith*, compiled by John A. Widtsoe, p.444)

23:10 Those who mourn will be consoled as they reaffirm their trust in God. We should not seek "to counsel the [pagebreak]Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. For behold, [we] know that he counseleth in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works." (Jacob 4:10.) Neither does the faithful person contend with "an appointed time to man upon earth" (Job 7:1), but he or she begins to understand that triumphs, tribulations, and death are part of life. Just as Abraham was commanded to offer up his only son, each of us may be required to part with a beloved son, daughter, or companion. That is part of the divine process of chastening, refining, and sanctification. (See D&C 101:4-5.) In that spirit of resolute commitment to God, a contrite

Job so stated: "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10.) (Russell M. Nelson, *The Gateway We Call Death*, p.30-31)

38:7 And the next is the question the Lord posed to Job: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. ... [of] when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:4-7.)

Reduced to more simple language than the words of those questions from the scriptures, the prophets in these quotations are simply asking each of us, "Where did you come from? Why are you here?" (Harold B. Lee, *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 4)

38:7 While most of our suffering is self-inflicted, some is caused by or permitted by God. This sobering reality calls for deep submissiveness, especially when God does not remove the cup from us. In such circumstances, when reminded about the premortal shouting for joy as this life's plan was unfolded (see Job 38:7), we can perhaps be pardoned if, in some moments, we wonder what all the shouting was about. (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1985, 72)

38:7 Speaking of homesickness, the Lord's anesthesia is our amnesia. We would not stand this operation except for the fact that the curtain has been drawn over our past. So we do not know our name and rank and serial number. We have no specific memories of our premortal lives. Patriarchs give us a glimpse under inspiration. We have forgotten so we will stay here and tough out the spook alley. That is not a bad metaphor, because there was complete understanding before we got into this tunnel of why and what it would lead to. That's why we had the courage to shout for joy at the prospect (see Job 38:7), which in light of present circumstances is astonishing. We were able to envision what it could lead to because there we were in the presence of it. We would come back, should we be so blessed, and be like our Father and our Mother. (Truman G. Madsen, *The Radiant Life*, p.91)

42:5 Perhaps the best-known Old Testament example of perseverance is the story of Job. As you know, it narrates the afflictions that befell a righteous man and considers reasons for those afflictions. It does not entirely answer the question of why Job, or anyone, might suffer pain and sorrow, but does state clearly that affliction is not necessarily a sign of God's anger and a punishment for sin, as Job's friends told him. The book suggests that affliction, if not for punishment, may be for experience, discipline, and instruction (see Bible Dictionary, LDS edition of the King James Version, s.v. "Job").

I do not know of anything that members of the Church need more than they need the conviction and perseverance of Job. He was a just man who feared God and avoided evil. After the Lord allowed Satan to torment Job, his afflictions included the loss of his seven sons and three daughters, the loss of his wealth in flocks and herds, and serious physical illnesses. Remaining faithful to the Lord through his indescribable sorrow and suffering, Job was able to say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. ... He also shall be my salvation. ... For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. ... Yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 13:15-16, 19:25-26)

The result of Job's perseverance is told in the conclusion of the story. The Lord blessed him with a family, good health, and great possessions. He continued in his course, despite unrelenting opposition, until he saw the Lord (see Job 42:5). (Joseph B. Wirthlin, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 8)

LESSON 32

“I Know That My Redeemer Liveth”

Job 1-2; 13; 19; 27; 42

Faithfulness in the face of pain and suffering have distinguished through the ages the example of Job, the ancient man, “perfect and upright, and one that feared God.” (Job 1:1.)

Job was a wealthy patriarch, “the greatest of the men of the east” (Job 1:3) who lived in the land of Uz, that some Bible scholars believe lies in an area east of the Lebanons, a mountain range north of Israel. He may have lived about 400 B.C. (LDS Bible Dictionary, p.502.)

Job lost his material possessions and his children in a calamitous day because of bandits, lightning, and a windstorm. His loss was over whelming: seven sons and three daughters, 7000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen and 500 donkeys. Job’s grief from his losses was inconsolable, but that loss, severe as it was, was soon followed by “sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.” (Job 2:7.)

Job’s pitiful situation presented an age old question: “Why must men suffer?” Job’s three friends soon visited and that question was eventually explored at length.

After his friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, sat with him for seven days and nights without speaking, Job vented his grief by cursing the day of his birth.

His friends began to ask probing questions and imply that Job should repent because only wickness could bring such calamities. Job’s replies have become classic. “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither,” (Job 1:21) and “Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” (Job 2:10)

The first friend, Eliphaz, asked that “where were the righteous cut off?” (Job 4:7) and “shall a mortal man be more just than God?” (Job 4:17)

Job responded by lamenting further his fate: “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope.” (Job 7:6.)

Bildad again questioned Job’s righteousness by asking, “doth God pervert justice?” and then asserted, “Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man.” (Job 8:3,20.)

Job replied that God is great and just but the "My soul is weary of life.... Thou knowest I am not wicked; and there is not that can deliver out of thine hand." He adds,, "If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction; for it increaseth." (Job 10:15-16.) Yet he confesses of God, "thy visitation hath preserved my spirit." (Job 10:12.)

Zophar next spoke and counseled Job to repent: "If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle." (Job 11:14.)

Job responded that he was mocked of his neighbors and asserted that indeed God rules "the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." (Job 12:10.)

In his despair, Job declared: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job 13:15.) He noted the shortness of life, that man "cometh forth like a flower and is cut down: he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job 14:2.)

Then Job asked, "If a man die, shall he live again? (Job 14:14.)

As Job's friends continued to demonstrate against him, he replied that "my witness is in heaven, and my record is on ." (Job 16:19.)

At this point, he gave perhaps his most well known testimony:

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter days 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 did acknowledge that the wicked prosper in this life, but noted that those are "in the terrors of the shadow of death." (Job 24:17.) These terrors, he said, await the unjust at death.(Job 27:20.)

After further discussion, "the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and told him, "Grid up now thy loins like a man" (Job 40:7) and instructed him to "cast abroad the rage of thy wrath." (Job 40:11)

Job repented of his words, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:6.)

The Lord than expressed displeasure at Job's friends and required them to repent and to ask Job to pray for them.

Job's account concludes with his receiving even more than he had at first, with seven sons and three daughters and 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen and donkeys.

President Kimball endured his trials with faith, courage

A the October 1981 general conference, Elder Robert D. Hales, then of the First Quorum of the Seventy and now of the Quorum of the Twelve, said that the story of Job in the Old Testament relates three of the great tests all should be prepared to face at some period in their lives.

"First, temporal setbacks. Job lost all he owned," Elder Hales said. "Second, physical illness that will test our faith and testimony. And third, depression.

"Job said, 'Why died I not from the womb?' (Job 3:11.) 'My soul is weary of my life.' (Job 10:1.) But the great lesson of Job is that, 'in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.' (Job 1:22.)

"Too often when adversity strikes, we use it as a justification to commit sin and turn away from the teachings of Jesus Christ, the prophets who lead us, and our family and friends. Job maintained his testimony and was blessed for his unwavering faith that God lived and that he would dwell in God's presence."

Elder Hales referred to President Spencer W. Kimball as "being a righteous man like Job," who endured many trials - cancer of the throat, heart surgery, boils, cranial surgery, and numerous other afflictions. He said that President Kimball's experiences served "as an example of how we should meet similar adversity and suffering in our lives."

He said that President Kimball had not sinned or charged God foolishly, but had kept his integrity and his testimony, and had sung the praises of the Lord throughout his many physical trials. "We have never heard him complain about his trials," Elder Hales said. "On the contrary, his challenge has been, 'Give me this mountain' to climb." (See Josh. 14:12.)

Elder Hales said that the courage and faith of President Kimball to overcome adversity are an example to all, "to testify that we, too can meet the challenges of life. Our aches and pains are but little hurts in comparison to his. After his throat operation, President Kimball had no voice. During a testimony meeting in the temple, President David O. McKay asked him to bear his testimony. He could not speak a word. He could only utter inaudible, breathy sounds. He wrote a note to President McKay afterwards and asked, 'Why would you do that to me?' The president answered, Spencer, you must get your voice back, for you still have a great mission to perform.' (What a moving example of the love of one prophet for another.) President Kimball was obedient. He learned how to control air in his throat and to use the scar tissue that developed in his larynx and his remaining vocal cord. He regained his voice and carried on his great work. The accomplishment of President Kimball's prophetic mission will stand equal to any in this or any other dispensation.

Despite trials, life must go on

President Thomas S. Monson of the First Presidency spoke in the October 1992 general conference of having gone nearly 40 years earlier to the office of President J. Reuben Clark Jr., who was then a counselor in the First Presidency. President Monson's profession was then in printing and publishing.

He said that President Clark had been working on harmony of the Gospels. During their visit, President Clark asked Brother Monson to read aloud the account found in Luke concerning the man filled with leprosy (Luke 5:12-13.)

President Clark then asked him to read the account concerning the man afflicted with palsy. (Luke 5:18-25.)

In his conference address, President Monson said that President Clark removed from his pocket a handkerchief and wiped the tears from his eyes. "He commented, 'As we grow older, tears come more frequently.' After a few words of good-bye, I departed from his office, leaving him alone with his thoughts and his tears.

"As I reflect on this experience, my heart fills with gratitude to the Lord for His divine intervention to relieve the suffering, heal the sick, and raise the dead," President Monson said. "I grieve, however, for the many, similarly afflicted, who knew not how to find the Master, to learn of His teachings, and to become the beneficiaries of His power. I remember that President Clark himself suffered heartache and pain in the tragic death at Pearl Harbor of his son-in-law, Mervyn S. Bennion, captain of the battleship West Virginia. That day there had been no ram in the thicket, no steel to stop the shrapnel, no miracle to heal the wounds of war. But faith never wavered, and answered prayers provided the courage to carry on.

"So it is today. In our lives, sickness comes to loved ones, accidents leave their cruel marks of remembrance, and tiny legs that once ran are imprisoned in wheelchairs.

"Mothers and fathers who anxiously await the arrival of a precious child sometimes learn that all is not well with this tiny infant. A missing limb, sightless eyes, a damaged brain, or the term 'Down syndrome' greets the parents, leaving them baffled, filled with sorrow and reaching out for hope.

“There follows the inevitable blaming of oneself, the condemnation of a careless action, and the perennial questions: Why such a tragedy in our family? Why didn’t I keep her home? If only he hadn’t gone to that party. How did this happen? Where was God? Where was a protecting angel? If, why, where, how- those recurring words do not bring back the lost son, the perfect body, the plans of parents, or the dreams of youth. Self-pity, personal withdrawal, or deep despair will not bring the peace, the assurance, or help which are needed. Rather, we must go forward, look upward, move onward, and rise heavenward.

“It is imperative that we recognize that whatever has happened to us has happened to others. They have coped, and so must we. We are not alone. Heavenly Father’s help is near.

“Perhaps no other has been so afflicted as the man Job, who was described as ‘perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.’ (Job 1:1) He prospered by every measurement. In other words, he had it all made. Then came the loss of literally everything: his wealth, his family, his health. At one time the suggestion was made that he curse God, and die.’ (Job 2:9.) Job’s summation of his faith, after ordeals demanded of few others, is a testimony of truth, a proclamation of courage, and a declaration of trust.”

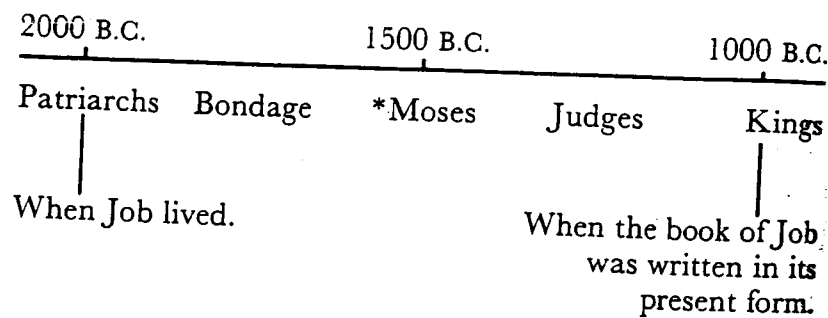
Sharing the Gospel with the World

Jonah 1-4; Micah 2; 4-7

Study the following scriptures:

- a. **Jonah 1-2.** The Lord calls Jonah to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh. Jonah tries to flee from the Lord on a ship, is swallowed by a great fish, prays, and is delivered from the belly of the fish.
- b. **Jonah 3-4.** Jonah prophesies the downfall of Nineveh and is angry when the people of Nineveh repent and the Lord spares the city (*the Joseph Smith Translation of Jonah 3:9-10 explains that the people, not God, repented*). The Lord teaches Jonah to love all people.
- c. **Micah 2:12-13; 4:1-7, 11-13; 5:2-4, 7-8; 6:6-8; 7:18-20.** Micah prophesies of the mission of Israel in the last days.
 - Why did the Lord want Jonah to go to Nineveh? (See Jonah 1:2.) Why did Jonah go to Tarshish instead? (See Jonah 1:3 .) What are some reasons why we choose not to share the gospel? What can we learn from the story of Jonah that can help us be more valiant in obeying the Lord and sharing the gospel?
 - What did Micah prophesy about the latter-day temple? (See Micah 4:1-2.)
 - How can Micah 6:6-8 help us when we feel overwhelmed by all that is expected of us?

The Time Period of Job and the Book of Job



* According to Jewish traditions, the book of Job was first written by Moses in the wilderness.

Things to Note

The Lord reminds Job of the power of God by asking him, among other things: Do you know—

- Job 38:12.* How to set the time of the days?
- Job 38:15.* How light is withheld from the wicked?
- Job 38:17.* How to overcome death?
- Job 38:18.* The breadth of the earth?
- Job 38:19.* The place of light and darkness?
- Job 38:20.* The limits of light and darkness?
- Job 38:22.* The treasures of snow and hail?
- Job 38:25.* How to make thunder and lightning?
- Job 38:26.* How to make rain?
- Job 38:29.* Where ice comes from?
- Job 38:33.* The ordinances of heaven?
- Job 38:35.* How to send lightning?
- Job 38:41.* Who provides food for the raven?
- Job 39:1-2.* The time goats and cows give birth?
- Job 39:10.* How to bind the unicorn?
- Job 39:13.* How to give wings to the peacock or wings and feathers to the ostrich?
- Job 39:18.* How to give the horse strength?
- Job 39:20.* How to make the horse afraid of the grasshopper?
- Job 39:26.* How to make the hawk fly?

Elder Spencer W. Kimball: "Being human, we would expel from our lives physical pain and mental anguish and assure ourselves of continual ease and comfort, but if we were to close the doors upon such sorrow and distress, we might be excluding our greatest friends and benefactors. Suffering can make saints of people as they learn patience, long-suffering and self-mastery. The sufferings of our Savior were part of his education" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p. 98).

Elder Spencer W. Kimball: "If we looked at mortality as the whole of existence, then pain, sorrow, failure, and short life would be calamity. But if we look upon life as an eternal thing stretching far into the premortal past and on into the eternal post-death future, then all happenings may be put in proper perspective.

"Is there not wisdom in [God's] giving us trials that we might rise above them, responsibilities that we might achieve, work to harden our muscles, sorrows to try our souls? Are we not exposed to temptations to test our strength, sickness that we might learn patience, death that we might be immortalized and glorified?

"If all the sick for whom we pray were healed, if all the righteous were protected and the wicked destroyed, the whole program of the Father would be annulled and the basic principle of the gospel, free agency, would be ended. No man would have to live by faith.

"If joy and peace and rewards were instantaneously given the doer of good, there could be no evil — all would do good and not because of the rightness of doing good. There would be no test of strength, no development of character, no growth of powers, no free agency, only satanic controls" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p. 97).

Discussion and Application Questions

- One frequently repeated message of the Old Testament is that we will be blessed for our righteousness. (Deuteronomy 7:11–16.) How is this message confirmed or questioned in the story of Job? What does the story of Job suggest about the kinds of blessings the Lord bestows on the righteous?
- What other Old Testament themes are included in the story of Job? How does this story treat these themes?
- Do you think God has the trust and confidence in you that he had in Job? (Job 1:13–22.)
- What evidence do the scriptures give that Job was a righteous man? (Job 4:3–4; 29:12–17.) If you were "perfect" like Job (1:1), what would you expect from God?
- After Job was afflicted with boils, his wife told him to curse God and die, but he refused. (Job 2:7–10.) Nevertheless, a few days later Job cursed the day he was born, wanting to die. (Job 3.) Do you think this was a denial of his faith? Do we deny the faith if we cry because of suffering? Why or why not?
- How did Eliphaz and Bildad, two of Job's friends, explain his suffering? (Job 4:7–8; 8:6, 20.) What are the dangers of believing that all suffering comes as God's punishment for our sins? How does Jesus Christ's mortal life help us see the flaw in Eliphaz and Bildad's explanation for Job's suffering?
- What can we learn from the errors of Job's friends about helping people who suffer adversity?
- Why do so many righteous and innocent people suffer? (See Mosiah 23:21; Ether 12:6, 27; D&C 122:5–7; and the first quotation from Elder Kimball.)

- Job's story gives us a catalog of ills that afflict mortals: loss of property and posterity, loss of health, loss of the love and companionship of friends and family, and, finally, loss of God's presence in this life. (Job 19:13–19.) How did Job endure this suffering? What can we learn from his experience? How have you responded to economic losses, poor health, or the death of loved ones? How have these trials affected your faith in God?

- What sustained Job through his suffering? (Job 19:25–27; 27:2–6; 42:1–6, 10–17.)

- To what extent does Job's observation in Job 21:7–15 seem to be true today? How can we reconcile this fact with a belief in God's justice and power? Why do you think God does not always immediately reward the good or punish the wicked? (See the second quotation from Elder Kimball.)

Job was a righteous man who underwent an extreme test of faith. His property and children were destroyed, but he still praised and blessed the Lord. He was smitten with boils and urged by his wife to curse God and die, but he cursed only the day he was born. Although Job grieved and despaired and did not understand why God permitted these afflictions, he endured his trials and trusted in God's providence. Eventually the Lord "blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning" (Job 42:12).

The book of Job examines questions of God's role in our destiny. Although the central question, Why do the righteous suffer? is not fully answered, this book can give us courage to endure our trials in patience and faith.

1. Job is sorely tested.

Teach and discuss Job 1–2.

- What kind of man was Job? You may want to list some of the following characteristics on the chalkboard. Many of the corresponding references are not in the reading assignment, so you may want to ask individual class members to look them up and tell what characteristic is described.
 - a. He was a good man who feared God and shunned evil (Job 1:1).
 - b. He was wealthy but not caught up in wealth (Job 1:3, 21).
 - c. He had integrity (Job 2:3).
 - d. He strengthened the weak (Job 4:3–4).
 - e. He walked in the Lord's paths and esteemed the Lord's words (Job 23:10–12).
 - f. He was compassionate to the widow, the poor, the lame, and the blind (Job 29:12–16).
 - g. He was concerned for his enemies and forgave them (Job 31:29–30).
- What trials did Job experience? You may want to list some of these trials on the chalkboard. Many of the corresponding references are not in the reading assignment, so you may want to ask individual class members to look them up and tell what trial is described.
 - a. Loss of servants, property, and income (Job 1:13–17).
 - b. Loss of children (Job 1:18–19).
 - c. Physical illness and pain (Job 2:7; 7:5; 16:16).
 - d. Restless sleep filled with nightmares (Job 7:4, 13–14).
 - e. Cruel accusations and loss of support from friends and family (Job 2:9; 4:1, 7–8; 11:1–6; 19:13–22).
 - f. Confusion about why he was asked to go through these trials (Job 10:15).
 - g. Mockery by those who delighted in his downfall (Job 16:10–11; 30:1, 8–10).
 - h. The feeling that God had forgotten him or was not listening (Job 19:6–8; 23:3–4; note that the word *him* in Job 23:3–4 refers to God).
- How do Job's trials compare with the trials people experience in our day? (The trials are similar: loss of property, loss of children, loss of health, and loss of the love and companionship of friends and family.)
- What did Satan claim was the reason for Job's righteousness? (See Job 1:9–10.) How did Satan predict Job would react when his wealth and other blessings were taken away? (See Job 1:11; 2:4–5.) How did Job react when this happened? (See Job 1:20–22; 2:10.) What can we learn from these reactions?
- Despite his adversity, Job "sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:22). How do some people charge God foolishly when sorrow, misfortune, or tragedy strike? (They may blame God or question his wisdom or providence, feeling that he does not understand or love them. Some may even question his existence.)

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

1. Job's friends

- How did Eliphaz and Bildad, two of Job's friends, explain his suffering? (See Job 4:7-8; 8:6. They thought Job's suffering was a punishment from God for sins that Job had committed.) What are the dangers of believing that all suffering comes as God's punishment for our sins?
- What can the errors of Job's friends teach us about helping people who suffer adversity?

★ Summarize your discussion of the book of Job, emphasizing that we can receive strength to endure our trials by trusting in the Lord, building our testimonies of him, and maintaining our integrity so we can know our lives are pleasing to him. You might want to tell class members about a time when you received strength during adversity. Suggest that class members contemplate how they can apply the principles discussed in this lesson to help them endure adversity.

4. Prosperity of the wicked is short-lived

- Sometimes the wicked seem to prosper while the righteous suffer. What does the book of Job teach about the seeming prosperity of the wicked? (See Job 21; 24.)

- a. Job 1-2. Job, a just and faithful man, experiences severe trials. He remains faithful to the Lord despite losing his possessions, children, and health.
- b. Job 13:13-16; 19:23-27. Job finds strength in trusting the Lord and in his testimony of the Savior.
- c. Job 27:2-6. Job finds strength in his personal righteousness and integrity.
- d. Job 42:10-17. After Job has faithfully endured his trials, the Lord blesses him.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: "I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, . . . knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 304).

Summarize your discussion of the book of Job, emphasizing that we can receive strength to endure our trials by trusting in the Lord, building our testimonies of him, and maintaining our integrity so we can know our lives are pleasing to him. You might want to tell class members about a time when you received strength during adversity. Suggest that class members contemplate how they can apply the principles discussed in this lesson to help them endure adversity.

2. Job finds strength in the Lord.

Teach and discuss Job 13:13–16; 19:23–27.

- Job's trust in the Lord was a great source of spiritual strength for him (Job 13:13–16). What does it mean to trust in the Lord? How can we develop trust in the Lord that will sustain us through trials? (See Romans 8:28; 2 Nephi 2:2, 11, 24; D&C 58:2–4; 122:5–9.) Testify that because the Lord loves us, he has assured us that as we are faithful, all things will be for our good and help us grow.
- In chapter 19, Job described the trials that had befallen him, then testified of the Savior. How did Job's testimony of the Savior help him endure his trials? (See Job 19:25–27.) How can a testimony of the Savior give us strength during adversity?

You may want to have class members sing "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" (*Hymns*, no. 136), or you could play a recording of this hymn.

3. Job finds strength in his personal righteousness and integrity.

Teach and discuss Job 27:2–6.

- Job's integrity was another source of spiritual strength during his afflictions (Job 27:2–6). What is integrity? How did personal integrity strengthen Job during his trials? How can personal integrity help us during times of trial? (As we maintain our integrity, we can gain strength from knowing that the course of our lives is pleasing to the Lord.)
- 7 Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin defined *integrity* as "always doing what is right and good, regardless of the immediate consequences. It means being righteous from the very depth of our soul, not only in our actions but, more important, in our thoughts and in our hearts. Personal integrity implies such trustworthiness and incorruptibility that we are incapable of being false to a trust or covenant" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 38; or *Ensign*, May 1990, 30).

4. After Job has faithfully endured his trials, the Lord blesses him.

Teach and discuss Job 42:10–17.

- After Job had faithfully endured his trials, how did the Lord bless him? (See Job 42:10–15; James 5:11.) How does the Lord bless us as we faithfully endure trials? (See Job 23:10; 3 Nephi 15:9. Encourage class members to share personal experiences. You may want to point out that although the Lord blessed Job with "twice as much as he had before," the spiritual blessings the Lord gives us as we faithfully endure are even greater than the temporal blessings.)

Elder Orson F. Whitney said: "No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God . . . and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we

come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven" (quoted in Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, 98).



"Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things. It was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life; and it is through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. When a man has offered in sacrifice all that he has for the truth's sake, not even withholding his life, and believing before God that he has been called to make this sacrifice because he seeks to do his will, he does know, most assuredly, that God does and will accept his sacrifice and offering, and that he has not, nor will not seek his face in vain. Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life. . . .

"Those, then, who make the sacrifice, will have the testimony that their course is pleasing in the sight of God; and those who have this testimony will have faith to lay hold on eternal life, and will be enabled, through faith, to endure unto the end, and receive the crown that is laid up for them that love the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

"All the saints of whom we have account, in all the revelations of God which are extant, obtained the knowledge which they had of their acceptance in his sight through the sacrifice which they offered unto him; and through the knowledge thus obtained their faith became sufficiently strong to lay hold upon the promise of eternal life, and to endure as seeing him who is invisible; and were enabled, through faith, to combat the powers of darkness, contend against the wiles of the adversary, overcome the world, and obtain the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls." (Joseph Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, pp. 58, 59.)

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Job 38:12. How to set the time of the days?

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Tragedy or Destiny (Part 1)

"Now, we find many people critical when a righteous person is killed, a young father or mother is taken from a family, or when violent deaths occur. Some become bitter when oft-repeated prayers seem unanswered. Some lose faith and turn sour when solemn administrations by holy men seem to be ignored and no restoration seems to come from repeated prayer circles. But if all the sick were healed, if all the righteous were protected and the wicked destroyed, the whole program of the Father would be annulled and the basic principle of the gospel, free agency, would be ended.

"If pain and sorrow and total punishment immediately followed the doing of evil, no soul would repeat a misdeed. If joy and peace and rewards were instantaneously given the doer of good, there could be no evil—all would do good and not because of the rightness of doing good. There would be no test of strength, no development of character, no growth of powers, no free agency, no Satanic controls." (Spencer W. Kimball, "Tragedy or Destiny," *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1966, pp. 180, 210.)

Tragedy or Destiny (Part 2)

"The Lord does not always heal the sick, nor save those in hazardous zones. He does not always relieve suffering and distress, for even these seemingly undesirable conditions may be part of a purposeful plan.

"Being human we would expel from our lives, sorrow, distress, physical pain, and mental anguish and assure ourselves of continual ease and comfort. But if we closed the doors upon such, we might be evicting our greatest friends and benefactors. Suffering can make saints of people as they learn patience, long-suffering, and self-mastery. The sufferings of our Savior were part of his education.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. . . ." (Heb. 5:8-9.) . . .

"God controls our lives, guides and blesses us, but gives us our agency. We may live our lives in accordance with his plan for us, or we may foolishly shorten or terminate them.

"I am positive in my mind that the Lord has planned our destiny." (Spencer W. Kimball, "Tragedy or Destiny," *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1966, pp. 210, 216.)

Additional Scriptures

Obedience

Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 4:5-8; Exodus 19:5-6; 1 Samuel 15:22; John 14:21; 1 Nephi 3:7; Helaman 10:4-5, Doctrine and Covenants 59:3-4; 82:10; 98:12-15; 130:20-21; Abraham 3:25.