
What About Job?

Barry Bennett

The book of Job is often misunderstood as it relates to the Christian life. When reading Job, we need to understand some of the fundamental differences between Job and a Christian believer.

To begin with, Job had no covenant with God. Job apparently lived before the time of Abraham and did not enjoy the kinds of promises that God had made to Abraham. For example, God had made a covenant with Abraham and that covenant included protection from his enemies (Genesis 15:1). Similarly, in Deuteronomy 28:7 we find the promises of God under the law also protected Israel from their enemies.

However, Job was exposed to his enemies, and they quickly overcame him and destroyed everything he had. In our case, we have a "better covenant established on better promises" (Hebrews 8:6), and that covenant includes healing, financial provision, peace and protection.

Job also had no knowledge of the devil. He was not aware that the devil was the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), the "thief" (John 10:10) and that the whole world was under his rule (1 John 5:19, Luke 4:5 – 6).

Job had very limited knowledge and assumed that his troubles came from God. He even accused God of afflicting him on various occasions (Job 6:4). But we know so much more under the New Covenant. We know that our fight isn't with God but with "principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this world," and that we have been given faith to quench all the "fiery darts of the wicked one" (Ephesians 6:12–16).

We also see that Job had a very limited knowledge of God. He himself confesses his ignorance at the end of the book of Job when he says, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5–6).

A few verses earlier Job had declared, "I have uttered that I understood not, things... which I knew not." (Job 42:3)

So, we are dealing with a man with limited knowledge. But under the New Covenant we have the maximum revelation of God, greater than the revelation of Abraham, greater than Moses and the Law. We have Jesus, God in the flesh. And we see the will of God revealed fully in Jesus when he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil because God was with Him. (Acts 10:38).

One of the most important differences between Job and a New Covenant believer is that the believer is a new creation, born again by the Spirit of God! Job was not born again, nor was anyone in the Bible before the resurrection of Jesus. Thus, they were limited to their sin nature and sensory knowledge. God could not relate to Old Testament saints as He can relate to us. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:10). Job was a natural man, with no covenant and limited knowledge.

Job also had no weapons with which to fight the enemy. Since he had no covenant, he was defenseless. However, we have been given the Name of Jesus, the power of the blood, the filling of the Holy Spirit, the precious promises of God, the armor of God, the gifts of the Spirit, the keys of the Kingdom, the Word of God, the power of faith that can move mountains, the Spirit of power, love and a sound mind, and we have been blessed with all blessings! We are well equipped to overcome the enemy and any sickness or destructive work that he may attempt to put on us.

Job lived in fear. Fear is the natural state of fallen man. Faith turned to fear when Adam and Eve sinned. Job worshiped in fear since he really didn't know who he was worshiping (Job 3:25). Fear is the basis for all of the religions of the world. But faith is the foundation of the gospel.

Finally, Job didn't have an intercessor. The devil had access to man through man's sin. He could accuse man day and night, and thus he did with Job. However, Jesus has defeated sin, the devil and death and has sat down at the right hand of God and forever lives to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25). The accuser of the brethren has been cast down and Jesus is now interceding for us! Job did not have Jesus as his intercessor (Revelation 12:10).

Job was blessed by God because he was a man of integrity, but he was not protected by a covenant.

The accuser had full access to Job. It could appear that God was giving the devil permission to attack Job because of his (the devil's) provocative comments, but we see in James 1:13 that God cannot be tempted with evil nor does He tempt any man.

So whatever we see happening in the book of Job between God and the devil, we know based on the revelation in James that the devil was not successfully provoking God to test Job or tempt him.

Job is not an example for our Christian experience, nor an example of the covenant we have by the blood of Jesus. Our covenant includes healing. Job said, "the Lord gives and the Lord takes away." (Job 1: 21).

But God didn't say that. Jesus said, "the thief comes not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I have come that they might have life and that they might have life more abundantly." (John 10:10)

Unfortunately, many choose to believe Job's words of ignorance instead of Jesus words of revelation.

Job's story is not indicative of God's dealings with us under the New Covenant. They are not comparable in any way. Job lived with the most limited understanding of God. God's revelation to mankind is progressive. The most primitive revelation is found in Job. Then, more Revelation is given through Abraham. We can understand more of God in His dealing with Israel under the law. Isaiah prophetically reveals Jesus, the Redeemer. Then Jesus reveals God in flesh. And finally, Jesus reveals Himself to Paul. Thus, all true doctrine must start with Jesus, not Job.

Whatever God did or didn't do in Job's story has no bearing on our Covenant with him. Satan is a defeated foe and we have been given authority over him. We are to resist him and he will flee. Satan no longer has access to God in order to accuse us. New Covenant believers should not compare themselves to Job.