

# Righteous Men Pray for their Children

*Job, The Prophet of God*

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**Bible Text:** Job 1:1-5

**Preached on:** Wednesday, July 10, 2013

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So, here we are. The Book of Job 1 and we're going to read probably the first six verses. Here we go,

“There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and 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. Thus did Job continually. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.”

The man, Job, he's mentioned only in three books of the Bible. This is one of them. Another one is Ezekiel and, of course, the letter of James. The Bible says in James 5:10, “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” So, when you read the Book of Job you should come away with two lessons: Job is a very patient man and God is a very, very pitiful, and that means he's full of pity and mercy.

Take look at probably the least well-known of these three areas, Ezekiel. Look at this, Ezekiel 14:14, “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it,” and the context, “it” is the city of Jerusalem. “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD... Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall

deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.” Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it.

There are liberal theologians that say that Job is a fictitious character and the story is really just an old play. Well, then, if you want to be consistent, you have to say that Noah is fictitious and many of them would say, “Yeah, he was.” And you have to say that Daniel was fictitious and I don’t know very many people that are willing to say all three were fictional. So, it’s really unnatural for us to think that James, the half brother of Jesus, referenced a fictional character to prove a point in the Book of James. It’s really hard to think that Ezekiel, who was somewhat of a contemporary of Daniel would say that Daniel was fictional. And if he’s not fictional, why would he put him next to a fictional character like Job?

When was this book written? It seems like, because of the following considerations, Job was written during the Patriarchal period.

First, in 42 chapters of Job there is no mention of Moses’ law. That should tell us right away one of two things: either it’s before Moses or maybe he wasn’t a Jew or he was living outside the area of Jerusalem or outside Israel.

Secondly, the father is the priest figure. Did you see in our passage tonight that Job was offering sacrifices for his children. Did you see that? That didn’t happen once there was a priestly system at the Temple or the Tabernacle.

Thirdly, riches are described in cattle instead of precious metals. Remember how they described Solomon? The gold was like dust in the streets, remember that? It describes him here by how many cattle he has, how many animals, livestock.

Fourth, he was an owner of camels. You’re just not going to find that with most Jews because in the Book of Leviticus, chapter 11, camels are unclean. We have a good clue that this is either before Moses or outside of the Jewish realm. Remember the demoniac in Jesus’ time, remember the demons were cast into what? Pigs, but they were in Decapolis which is on the east side of the Sea of Galilee which is where the Gentiles lived. You weren’t going to find a herd a pigs in Israel. So that’s another hint that we’re either before the law of Moses.

Number 5, I’m going to show you in a minute how this could be but it seems to be that he’s the second king of a pre-Israel land, Uz. I’m going to show you where Uz is in a minute and then I’m going to show you that I think he was a king in that land and because of the timing of that verse, I think that I can prove to you that it’s pre-Israel, or I should say, pre-law, might be a better way to say it.

Number 6, Job dies at 210 years old. That’s probably the one that takes the cake because Moses died, how old was he? About 120. And Aaron was three years older than him so by the time, I would need to read the book and you hesitate saying anything, but I think Moses might’ve been the oldest one of his time that died. Before, Abraham was 175 and

Isaac was 180, Sarah was 127 so you have these ages mentioned and Job comes along and he's 210. So, that tells me that we're probably around the patriarch days.

So, if you really want to get down to it, when did we say that Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy were written? Probably somewhere during the wilderness journey and seeing it was written by Moses, probably it had to happen before he died. It's really hard to write anything once you're dead. It really is, from what I've heard. So this story in the Book of Job happened before Genesis was written.

Now, let's talk about the date of writing. Notice what I have below there. Since this name of God, we're going to talk about it in just a moment, was not known until Moses' time, we can conclude that Job was not written until then at the earliest. What are you saying? Hang on a second. Look at this verse right here when God speaks to Moses after he returns to Egypt. "God spoke to Moses and said unto him, I am the Lord and I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the name of God Almighty." In the Hebrew that's El Shaddai, "but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." Now, Genesis, Exodus, up until Exodus 6, they used the name Jehovah but it is as a narrator's comments since Moses wrote Genesis after this experience. It's not hard to see why Genesis uses the name Jehovah a lot, especially in the narrator comments.

Well, in the Book of Job 1, this word is used all over the place. For example, you might notice verse 7, "and the Lord," that's Jehovah. Well, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not know Jehovah. They knew God as El Shaddai but they didn't know his name Jehovah. So, whoever this writer is here, whoever the writer of Job is, came along after Exodus 6. Are you with me? Because he's using words that weren't revealed yet to man until Exodus 6.

So, though the occurrences of Job took place somewhere around the time of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and I'll give you maybe a little bit more pinpoint in a minute, the writing didn't take place until the time of Moses probably. Let me say it again, no Jew knew the name Jehovah for God until this occurrence right here and that is the name most used in Job 1 and 2 for God. So, whoever wrote Job knew the name of God as Jehovah and that did not occur until the time of Moses.

Let's talk about this land of Uz. He is a grandson of Shem. Who is Shem? One of Noah's boys, right? So, we have a great-grandson of Noah named Uz. Probably it's named after him. In Genesis 10, seventy nations spread out and they all pretty much go to a place and name the place after themselves.

Alright, so let's talk about this land of Uz. Where is it? Look at Lamentations 4, "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz." So, we have the children of Edom live in the land of Uz. Well, if you look right here, southeast of the Dead Sea that's on the southeast corner, if you want to call it a corner, of Israel, you have this place known as Edom. Job lives somewhere in the land of Edom probably.

If you read the Book of Genesis, chapter 36, you'll find out about five times that Edom is another name for Esau. Esau and Edom are the same. Now, Esau was the son of who? Isaac. Isaac is the son of who? Abraham. So, Abraham had two grandboys that we know of, Jacob and Esau. Esau, his name was Edom, and at some point when he split, he went to Edom and probably that land took on the name of him.

So, who is this Job, I want to know? Well, I think we can shed some light on that right here. Where did Job live? Job 1:1? Uz which is in where? Edom. So, Job lived in Edom probably.

Look here in Genesis 36, "These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel. And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city was Dinhabah. And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead." Now, you're probably thinking, "Well, you know, there's a lot of difference between the spelling." Yes, but I don't think you want to use that as a reason why it's not Job because you're going to find in the Bible Elias is also Elijah and Esaias is also Isaiah, Osee is Hosea so we have a lot of variance in the name. Jude is Judah, you know. We have a lot of variances in spellings but I think it's safe to say that the Job of the Book of Job is the second king that was king over the land of Edom.

In Job 1:1 he was from Uz in the land of Edom. I think that Job was a king. I think he was royal. I think that's why he was so rich. And, by the way, I think that's why he was so able to record chapters and chapters and chapters of communication. I don't think that while he was sitting in the city dump he was able to write all kinds of things, but if he was a king, what did he have? Scribes, lots of scribes. It would not have been hard for someone to be taking minutes.

So, let's work together on this for just a moment. This is the last hard thing you have to think about tonight. Abraham had a son, his name was, he had two that we know of, and that was before Sarah died because Abraham had a second wife and her name was Keturah and they had six children if memory serves. So, Abraham with Hagar had who? Ishmael. And after Ishmael was thirteen years old when Abraham came to Sarah again and said, "You're going to have a son," and she had a son and his name was? Isaac. So, Abraham had a son named Isaac. Isaac had two sons. They were twins, their names were? Jacob and Esau. And then Esau who's also Edom, apparently at some point moved away. It says that he married someone that wasn't of the family to irritate his parents, do you remember that? So, they moved off and it became Edom in that area where they lived and somewhere down the line, let's say, I don't know, Edom was large enough where it needed a King, 3-4 generations after Esau perhaps? There is a king and then there's another king named Job, it seems.

I don't think it's too many generations after Edom because Job was how old when he died? 210. Meanwhile, let's back up for just a minute to Isaac who had another son named Jacob. Jacob had how many sons? 12 and one of them was named, who became second in command in Egypt was? Joseph. Probably by the time Genesis is done, Job is

living because Joseph is seeing his third and fourth generation and Joseph's uncle Esau has three or four generations down from him, a king reigning over Edom. So, probably by the end of Genesis Job is living.

Between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses is about 150 years. Now, how do I know that? Because Galatians says that Abraham went down to Egypt and they had 430 years until Mount Sinai. So there is about 150 years between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses. So, even though I think Job was written after Exodus 6 because of that whole Jehovah name usage, I do think that Job, the man, lived after Joseph and before Moses.

Let's look at Job 1 again please. He was a man who is perfect, now perfect does not mean sinless, does it? As a matter of fact, we're told to be perfect as our Father is perfect in Matthew 7 and right before Jesus says that, he says, "You should pray for those who are your enemies for if you pray for only those who are your friends, what good are you?" So, he says, "Be impartial." And then he says, right after that, "Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." So, perfection is impartiality. So, here's a man named Job who was perfect. That was, he was impartial, he was mature, he was developed in his faith, in his life. You couldn't look at him and say, "What an immature rascal." He was upright. That means that when he was alone he wasn't doing anything he was concerned about being found out about. He was one that feared God. That is a Hebrew way of saying he had a way of worshiping the Creator. He had enough respect for the Lord to know that he could really get hurt if he messed with God.

And that eschewed evil. That means he did his very best to avoid it. He actually recoiled at it. It made him sick. He did his best to get away from it. He wasn't seeing how close he could get to sin and still not be considered unrighteous, he wasn't the kind of guy, okay, let's bring it down to today, he wasn't arguing about whether or not flirting was unfaithfulness. He eschewed evil. He hated the scent of it and so while we're saying he's upright and perfect and feared God, that's what he did, well, let's talk about evil, that's what he didn't do. It's one thing to say, "Here's all the great things I do." But, tell me what you separated from recently?

And then there's the other side. We've got all kinds of people out chanting, "Here's what I don't do anymore." Never mind the stuff you don't do anymore, tell me what you've done, right? But here's a balanced man. He says, "There's some sins I don't mess with any more, I don't even get close to anymore but here's some things that I do."

And then verse 2, "there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters." And his substance, and you've seen it, "seven thousand sheep." Now, I don't know but it makes good sense to me, it's just a guess, but seven sons and seven thousand sheep, maybe that was his sons' inheritance. I don't know. "Three thousand camels," three daughters, I don't know, was that his three daughters' inheritance? 1,000 camels apiece, good guess, I don't know. "Five hundred yoke of oxen," so 1,000 oxen and "500 she asses," was that 1,000 oxen for him, was that his retirement 401K and his wife she got the 500 she asses? I don't have any idea.

A very great household. So what does that mean he had a lot of? A lot of servants. Remember Abraham had trained servants in his house of over 300 when he pursued into Sodom and rescues Lot. So, this is patriarchal language here, this is Abrahamic language. Job lived somewhere around the time of the patriarchs. He had a great household and you never said, "Job, you just don't run that place right."

Verse 4, "and his sons went and feasted in their houses every one his day." So, all the best guessers out there think that this means that on a birthday, all the sons had a seven day feast on their birthday. That's a lot of feasting. That's 49 days off. 49 days off to eat and it looks like they call for their three sisters. It doesn't say they called for their brothers, it's almost like that's instinctive as they all held the feasts. The fact that they had to call for their three sisters and Job knew about it, because in the next verse Job is coming to them and saying, "I'm sending for you because you might've done something stupid while you were feasting so I'm offering a sacrifice." It makes sense to me. It seems like we're back in that good old practice of young ladies staying with dad until they get married.

So, they call for their three sisters. It makes sense to me that they're still living with Job and his wife. Who, by the way, is never named. "And it was so in the days of their feasting were gone about." In other words, it seems like that means that after each period of feasting which were probably on the boys' birthdays, if not they had a turn of some kind. If could've been their birthdays, but everyone got a turn hosting a feast in their house. Seven feasts, probably seven days but that's just a guess. All we know is that they had feasting in their house and every time it looks like this either means that after all the feasts were done or it means after each feast, Job sent and sanctified them. I don't know what that means. It seems like there's a ceremony that he did. I don't know but it involves sacrifices and sending and sanctifying. And I don't know how that worked. I don't know if that meant that he sent and brought them to himself but in any case they knew Dad was sacrificing for them.

So, this livestock thing doesn't make any sense to you maybe. Okay, so let's see if I can break it down here. You have a man named Job and he's living in a beautiful home and he has horses and he rides them. He has a Mercedes, he has a Beamer, he has a Bentley, he has a Jaguar. He has tons and tons of money in 5-6 banks, some in Swiss accounts overseas. He owns shares in oil companies and he loves God dearly. And his sons would each host someone at their summer houses and every time they would host someone in their summer houses they would invite their sisters and it looks like, even maybe Job and his wife but we're not told that. But probably they invited Job and Job was concerned about what maybe his kids might have done if they feasted too much, got too merry, got drunk. And he was concerned about them.

There is a lesson here for us because we don't seem to be able to relate to a man who has unspeakable riches but we are rich in Christ. Now, I know you're struggling. Some of you are struggling to say, "Yeah, that's right." But, look, 2 Corinthians 8-9 Paul said, "He became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich." Many of us live miles

below our means. We haven't prayed about things that matter in a long time and when we do find the gusto to pray, we can't find that rich faith we need to let God have the issue after we pray. Some of us, we think the reason we keep bringing up a prayer request is because we're good prayers when really the truth is we think God's deaf.

Now, there are some of us who keep praying and praying and praying because we want to be like the importunate widow. But some of us pray and pray and pray because it is a holy way of complaining. Think it through with me. If we were to say it like today, Job went and offered sacrifices to the Lord, we're supposed to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, right? It says that we offer up spiritual sacrifice or something that we do now that Job didn't do then because Job did something then that we can't do now and that is we don't go outside and get the best little sheep or cow or oxen and offer a sacrifice. No, so we're going to be tempted to think, "Well, that's not me." But wait a minute, you're very wealthy. And if you don't want to look at the present, let's look at the potential that if we go home today to be with the Lord, you will see unspeakable riches that make this down here will seem like dust on the feet.

And we're also going to see all the things we could've had if we would've prayed and trusted God. Now, let me clarify something I said a few minutes ago, please. I'm not saying don't pray for the same thing twice, I'm saying that if you do make sure it's a faith building exercise and not a way of saying, "God, you're so great and I don't believe a word you say."

Now let's talk about what Job knew. Are we ready? 1. Job knew that wealth was a blessing to be invested. Let me say that again, Job knew that wealth was a blessing to be invested because a good man, one who is perfect, upright, fears God, eschews evil, what is the main point of chapter 1:1-5? He thinks about his kids before God. Now, think about all the things the writer of Job could've said and it could be Job, I don't know. It seems like it. I told you what my theory was. Think about what he could've said. He could've named anything. He could've named anything that this good, perfect, upright, God-fearing, evil eschewing man did. Could he not have? Could he not have looked at the life of this man, Job? Could he not have done that? But he picked an act of Job praying for his children. Why? Well, one thing we know about Job, he knew that his wealth was a blessing to be invested. Job knew that these sheep are from the Lord and it's fitting for me to sacrifice one to make sure that God is pleased with my children.

I know we don't do this today. I know Christ was our ultimate sacrifice and I know that you will never forgive a single sin of your children against God. I got that but Job had to do it differently. What do we do today? We pray that God gives our children more time to believe on Christ. We pray that God softens our children's hearts when they seem like they're hard against the instruction of their parents. So, whatever God has blessed you with, it may be time, energy, remember that it's something that you should be investing.

2. Job remembers that his God is holy otherwise why is he offering sacrifices, why does he care about fearing God, why is he caring about whether his children have insulted the Lord? Because he knows that God is absolutely righteous. Now, folks, I want to get this

back into our minds, there are some things that upset the Lord. God is not near as lax about our actions as we are. I don't know what we're dealing with, I don't know what's in your heart but God surely does. Can I just remind you that you don't need a Scripture verse on a calendar to tell you something is wrong. God the Holy Spirit side of us is a good communicator. And some of us haven't listened to him in years and we still say, "Show me a verse that says I can't do that." Well, whoa, you don't care that God lives inside of you? Job said, "I care." Job knew his children had particular frailties.

3. Can I ask you to please know your children enough to know their frailties? They're not all the same. If we're not careful, we're going to think because Junior or Sally doesn't make trouble that means that they're really darling little angels. And Job said, "You know what? I think I know my kids enough that they might have just done something stupid and I want to make sure that God doesn't whip them up real good before he hears from me."

Frailties and we're not going to get to know our kids when we rush them off to bed so that we can watch the late, late show. It is our job to know our children. It is our job so that we don't get surprised when the Youth Pastor or the Pastor or the Principal or the cop comes and tells us something about our children. I'm not saying that if your children botch something up it's your fault because you didn't pray enough. God knows I'm not saying that. Let us be able to look in the mirror and say, "It's not because I didn't meet with God." Because they're sinners, right? They're going to mess things up without our permission.

4. Job knew his own failures, pain and why was Job such an excellent intercessor? Because I'll bet you Job was a sinner, too. And you're going to find out in this book that he does sin. He says he's sinned at the end of the book. You're going to see that Job says he's a sinner, so why was he so good at offering sacrifices? Because he remembered how he felt when he was guilty.

I wish our children were to figure it out that experience is not the best teacher. Other people's experiences are the best teacher. I can't tell you how many times I've had a discussion with one of my children and I'm not a pro, some of you've got 17 kids all married, I got that but I can tell you that I've got almost 16 years in on this game and I can tell you that sometimes I look at them and I say, "Now, look, you can do this this way if you want to but I've already done that." So, we can use the pain of our own failures to guide our children, we can also use the pain of our failures to make sure that our kids know that there's forgiveness available. You don't want your kids to go into guilt that you felt for years and years before you realized who you were in Christ, do you? Let us run them quickly to the cross. Let us help them understand quickly that Dad can't offer an animal sacrifice for you but one sacrifice has already been offered and God cannot love you any more than he does right now, Johnny. What a joy!

5. He also knew his parental limitations as a disciplinarian. Now, it looks like all ten children are adults. It looks like it. And he knew, "Okay, I'm going through a transition here. I can't lecture them as much as I used to so I'm going to let them know that I'm



thinking about them.” It says he sent and sanctified them. I don’t know what that means. Maybe it means he had one of his servants, one of his scribes go and take some holy whatever and we’re just given so many details here but one thing these children knew, they knew their Daddy was not the disciplinarian that he once was with a heavy hand. I mean, in this story, I think it says he’s 70 years old.

So, obviously he’s passed the, “Come here, Junior, it’s time to go get your lashing.” Past that stage so now he’s concerned about them and he’s offering sacrifices because there’s just some things a parent can’t do at a certain age anymore. But here’s one thing you can do: you can tell on your kids to the Lord. And his reach is a lot better than ours.

7. God desired to forgive and Job knew that he must desire the same. Imagine what Job said, “You know what? I’m so sick of these boys of mine offering alcohol at their little parties. They all do their little dumb stuff and say the ridiculous things. It serves them right if God strikes them.” He could’ve right? Why not? The truth is, I’m afraid that I treat my children like that sometimes. “If you fall down, don’t come crying to me.” I can’t imagine what would happen if God treated me like that. So, anyway Job didn’t treat his children like that.

Lastly, Job knew that self-respect wasn’t as important as his children’s reconciliation to their Lord, their father and to each other. So, what did Job risk, by the way, when he was praying for his children continually? What did he risk? Well, he risked not being cool. Apparently there were times, it looks like, where Job sent to his children when they were busy doing their thing. Job risked, quite frankly, being the guy that everyone rolled their eyes at. “Oh, ok. He’s going to do something spiritual now.” Now, they expected it out of their Dad. It’s good practice that when you hear something that goes wrong it’s just good practice to stop and say, “Alright, let’s pray about this.” Wouldn’t you say?

Now look, folks, that’s it for tonight. Look, I know that that is not the point of chapter 1 of Job. I know it’s setting the stage. You’ve seen the tv shows where they’ve got a little screen in the corner, a little subplot happening there. And chapter 1:6 is Satan appearing before God and it’s stewing up there and the big story on the main screen is Job offering sacrifices for his children. I know it’s not the main point of chapter 1, but that was a pretty good by the way sort of lesson wasn’t it? So, don’t sell the farm.

*Let’s Pray*