

# ***The Book of Job***

## ***Intimations of Hope***

Lesson #9 for November 26, 2016

Scriptures: Proverbs 17:28; Job 13:1-15; James 2:20-22; 1 Corinthians 15:11-20; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Genesis 22:8.

1. In this lesson we are completing the first cycle of speeches recorded in the book of Job. Job spoke, and Eliphaz responded. Job spoke again, and Bildad responded. Job spoke yet again, and Zophar responded. After hearing speeches from each of his three friends, Job had about had it! But, at the same time, Job was beginning to see and talk about hope. He realized that he could very easily die at any moment; but, he also knew God well enough to state clearly that there is a life beyond this life. He clung to that hope of salvation.

“Man is the only animal,” wrote British essayist William Hazlitt, “that laughs and weeps; for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are, and what they ought to be.”—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for Sabbath, November 19.

2. The second coming of Jesus Christ pervades the New Testament. However, it is not mentioned in the Old Testament. Those who lived in the times of the Old Testament apparently believed that salvation would come with Christ at His first coming. They expected Him to come with power and deliver them from evil and especially from their enemies. If that is the Christian’s great hope, what hope does the secular atheist or evolutionist have?
3. Where do you think Job got his ideas about God that gave him a hope for the future? There was no Bible, no churches or synagogues, and no prophets that we know about. Did God visit him personally in some form? Or, did the angels of God visit him as they did Abraham? God spoke to Adam and Eve, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Daniel, etc. Did He speak to Job?
4. Remember the experience of the disciples. When the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross, they were hiding in the upper room, scared to death that they would be next. Two days later, they began to experience hope beyond hope—the hope of the resurrection. And when the Pentecost occurred and the Holy Spirit descended upon them, they were no longer afraid of anything! What does that mean? Why that great change? They came to realize in a very practical way that this life is just the beginning of God’s plan for us. Even if they were martyred, it would not be the end.
5. One thing for certain about the book of Job and about Job himself is that he did not just wilt and fade at the blistering and untrue words spoken to him by his so-called friends.
6. How did he respond to the speeches of Bildad and Zophar?
7. Read Job 12:1-13:16. While Job’s friends believed that they were correctly representing God, Job knew that they were lying. How did he know that? Somehow, Job had come to know God well enough so that he knew! Do we have any false conceptions of God? Would God bless us to spread those false ideas about Him to others? Could that be one of the reasons why He has not come back yet? Could that be why our message is not spreading faster?
8. Read again Job 13:7-8. In an earlier lesson, we challenged our readers to look for things

about which Job and his friends disagreed. There were a number of things about which they agreed; but, there were some things about which they clearly disagreed. Their lies about God were one area of clear disagreement with Job's defense of God. (See Job 42:7-8.)

9. Do you think that you know God well enough that if you had gone through an experience like Job's, you could say with confidence that God was your Friend and what the friends were saying about both God and you were lies?
10. As we read the book of Job starting with Job 1&2 and ending with Job 42, we should see this silver lining to the clouds. But, neither Job nor his friends knew about Job 1&2 and 42. As Job began to digest what his friends had said and as he thought things through, he began to show the glimmers of hope as he formulated answers to his friends.
11. Job 13:15 is a challenge for translators. There are actually two different versions of this verse in the ancient manuscripts. One Hebrew expression suggests: "Even if He should kill me, I will trust Him." That is the meaning which we find in most English translations. But, a few versions like the *New Revised Standard Version* and the *New Living Translation* take the other Hebrew expression and translate: "See, he will kill me; I have no hope." The rest of the chapter suggests that the more common translation is more likely correct. See the passage below.
12. Ellen White commented:

The riches of the grace of Christ must be kept before the mind. Treasure up the lessons that his love provides. Let your faith be like Job's, that you may declare, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." [Job 13:15] Lay hold on the promises of your Heavenly Father, and remember his former dealings with you and with his servants; for "all things work together for good to them that love God." [Romans 8:28]—Ellen G. White, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 24, 1888, par. 8; October 20, 1910, par. 2. [Content in brackets is added.]

13. As he was going through this experience, Job realized that from a purely human perspective, he had no basis for hope. He could die at any moment. And there was nothing left here on planet earth that could give him hope. But, knowing God, he realized that there is more than what might appear on this earth. So, what about us? From a purely human perspective, how much hope do we have?
14. Read Job 1:1 and James 2:20-22. Do these verses give us a clue about how Job developed and maintained some hope through all of this? What should the answer tell us about the importance of faithfulness and obedience in our Christian life? (See Lesson 13.)

There was a man named Job, living in the land of Uz, who worshiped God and was faithful to him. He was a good man, careful not to do anything evil.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation* (2nd ed., Job 1:1). New York: American Bible Society.

15. Read again Job 13:14-16.

14 I am ready to risk my life.

15 I've lost all hope, so what if God kills me?

I am going to state my case to him.

16 It may even be that my boldness will save me,  
since no wicked person would dare to face God.—American Bible Society.  
(1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation* (2nd ed., Job 13:14–16).  
New York: American Bible Society.

16. What do you think about Job's response as recorded in verse 16 to his own words in verses 14 and 15?
17. Did Job know about some cases in which God actually killed human beings? How much did he know about the flood? Did he live after Sodom and Gomorrah and know about them?
18. But, if you believe that you are facing an imminent death, what else could bring any hope? What a hope to the Christian who clearly understands the biblical teaching about death as a dreamless sleep followed by a resurrection which to that person seems to occur in the next moment, arising at the second coming of Jesus Christ!
19. When my father slowly died in the hospital, we watched him for some time. When he finally took his last breath, we were so thankful to realize that the next thing he will see and know will be the second coming of Jesus Christ!
20. What do you think about Paul's discussion about the resurrection and why it is important?
21. Read 1 Corinthians 15:11-20, especially verses 19 and 20.

**1 Corinthians 15:19-20:** <sup>19</sup> If our hope in Christ is good for this life only and no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else in all the world.

<sup>20</sup> But the truth is that Christ has been raised from death, as the guarantee that those who sleep in death will also be raised.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation* (2nd ed., 1 Corinthians 15:19-20). New York: American Bible Society.

22. In Job 1 we learned that Job offered animal sacrifices for even the possibility of sin in his children. What do you think he understood those sacrifices to symbolize? And today, what do we believe those sacrifices symbolized in the Old Testament? We now live hundreds of years after the crucifixion and the resurrection. Do we clearly understand why Jesus had to die and the implications of the resurrection? Could we make a resounding statement of faith and hope similar to the one made by Job?
23. We know about the fall of Adam and Eve as pictured in Genesis 3. We also know about the final scenes in this earth's history at least from a prophetic viewpoint as pictured in the book of Revelation. Do you see any hope in those chapters—Genesis 3 and Revelation 14?

The world has been committed to Christ, and through Him has come every blessing from God to the fallen race. He was the Redeemer before as after His incarnation. As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* 210.2.

24. Of course, we know that our great source of hope is none other than Jesus Christ, our Savior.
25. There are many Christians even among Seventh-day Adventists who have serious questions about God's foreknowledge.
26. Read Ephesians 1:4; Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:8-9; and 1 Peter 1:18-20. These verses make it very clear that God had arranged for the plan of salvation even before the first human

was created or had any chance to sin. The plan of salvation was put together “before the beginning of time” and “before creation.” Do these passages leave any doubt about God’s foreknowledge?

27. Today, on what is our hope based?

As Christians, we have so much to hope for and to hope in. We exist in a universe created by a God who loves us (*John 3:16*), a God who redeemed us (*Titus 2:14*), a God who hears our prayers (*Matt. 6:6*), a God who intercedes for us (*Heb. 7:25*), a God who promises never to forsake us (*Heb. 13:5*), a God who promises to raise our bodies from death (*Isa. 26:19*), and to give us eternal life with Him (*John 14:2, 3*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for Wednesday, November 23.

28. Which of those promises gives you the most hope? Why is it necessary for Jesus to plead/intercede for us? Is the Father not as forgiving as the Son? Roman Catholics teach that they need a lot of “saints” pleading/interceding for them! Does that help?

29. Read the following passages in the order listed. What kind of progression do you see in these verses?

Genesis 3:15: Satan and evil will be crushed.

Genesis 22:8: God will provide.

Leviticus 17:11: Our sins can be taken away.

John 1:29: The Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world.

Galatians 2:16: By faith in God, we can be put right with Him.

Philippians 1:6: God will finish this good work in us.

1 Corinthians 10:13: He will not allow you to be tested beyond your power to remain firm; at the time you are put to the test, he will give you the strength to endure it and so provide you with a way out.

Daniel 7:22: God’s people will receive royal power.

Daniel 12:1-2: When that time comes, all the people of your nation whose names are written in God’s book will be saved.

Matthew 24:27: The Son of Man will come like the lightning which flashes across the whole sky.

Daniel 2:44: The God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will never end.

30. For what more could we hope? We can know the future even now.

31. We should never question the fact that the Bible is full of hope. See John 16:33; Matthew 28:20; Galatians 3:13; Psalm 103:12; Romans 8:38-39; Genesis 9:16; 1 John 3:1; and Psalm 100:3.

32. Consider especially: **Romans 8:38-39**:<sup>38</sup> For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future,<sup>39</sup> neither the world above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News*

*Translation* (2nd ed., Romans 8:38-39). New York: American Bible Society.

33. What is the meaning of *the world below*? The Jews believed that when one died and was placed in the grave, s/he actually entered a lower world of the dead. They believed there was no consciousness there.
34. As you think over the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which of them especially give you hope? The second coming? The great controversy which makes it possible to understand the rest of the Bible?

Talk hope and faith and thanksgiving to God. Be cheerful, hopeful in Christ. Educate yourself to praise Him. This is a great remedy for diseases of the soul and of the body.—Ellen G. White, *Lt* 322, Oct. 23, 1906, to the wife of a church leader in Australia; *TDG* 305.6; *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 492.1.

35. We have suggested that the experiences of Job match in some ways the final events in the life of Christ as well as the events we expect to take place at the end of this world. So, what does Christ's resurrection teach us about suffering? Would you agree that Christ's resurrection is the guarantee that God's people can and will be resurrected and taken home to live with Him forever?
36. The Bible study guide quotes James 2:20-22 several times. Do you see a relationship between these verses about faith and actions/works and the story of Job?
37. Are there things that we should learn from Job's three friends? Think before you speak? Perhaps, things we should learn not to do? Could we learn things that we should not do when speaking to those who are suffering? If you read carefully through the speeches of Bildad and Zophar as well as Job's responses, do you see sudden glimpses of light in certain places?
38. We do not need to be told that the tongue is a powerful instrument. It can be a way of bringing hope; or, it can be a terribly destructive weapon. Do you think Job's friends learned anything from everything that happened? Did any of them ever realize that they were not representing God correctly? Or, did they go home puzzled about Job 42:7-8? What does Job 42:11 tell us about what they learned?
39. Human groups including Seventh-day Adventist churches are not immune from indulging in gossip, critical comments, even slander. Any close-knit group that shares more than a few details of each other's lives, risks the possibility of falling into chit chat, backbiting, even gossip. Gossip is right in the middle of the longest list of sins in the whole Bible! (Romans 1:28-32)
40. There is a father quoted as saying: "There are two things you cannot take back: a launched arrow and a spoken word." How often do we speak words that we wish we could take back? Have you had the experience of saying something without carefully thinking it through and it wounded a close family member or friend and they remembered even years later? It is possible to turn friends into enemies by a careless word.
41. Read Proverbs 25:11. While we have spoken about the potentially negative impact of words, it is also possible to realize the hope-inspiring impact of a good word spoken at the right time.
42. Read Genesis 3:15. It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for *seed* of the woman referred to in that verse is in the singular, referring to Jesus Christ the Anointed One or

Messiah. He was hurt by Satan, that is, his heels were bruised; but, by living the life which He lived, dying the death which He died, and arising on resurrection morning as He did, He destroyed Satan's kingdom. How did God destroy Satan's kingdom? Since Satan's kingdom is built on lies, in order to defeat it, one must tell the truth!

43. How do you feel about Job 12 and 13—Job's response to the first speech of Zophar? How do you think his friends felt as Job said: "Your proverbs are as useless as ashes; your arguments crumble like clay"? (Job 13:12)
44. But, we must note that after addressing his friends as recorded in the latter part of Job 13, he turned to address God. Notice how he reached out and longed for a response from God Himself. Isn't that a good indication that he was well acquainted with God as a result of their previous conversations? Contrast Job 37:20.
45. Our lesson speaks about a stubborn hope! How do you feel about the hope expressed in the following verses? Genesis 22:8; Daniel 3:16-18; James 2:20-22; and 1 Corinthians 15:11-20? Think of Daniel's three friends. Would you have dared to stand straight and tall before the most powerful person in the world—the emperor—who could speak a word and have your head cut off? Would you still utterly deny his requests?
46. We will see that Job spoke more and more about hope in contrast to the speeches of his friends until his words recorded in Job 19:25-27. There, he spoke about a hope that would carry him even beyond the grave.
47. Read Job 13:16 and Proverbs 11:9. How do you feel about these two statements?
48. Most of us regard hypocrites as people who say one thing and do something else. Do you think that Job's three friends would qualify as hypocrites? Hypocrites can be very damaging to others, especially in the religious arena. It is interesting to note that in ancient times, the word *hypocrite* meant an actor who was wearing a mask, thus, pretending to be something he was not. Job's use of the word *chanaf* in Job 13:16 in reference to his friends is a very strong word suggesting that they were "profane, irreligious, godless, or even perverted."
49. Would you agree that religious hypocrisy is more than just failing to do what you said you would do? It is a form of ungodliness, and it destroys not only your own character but may damage those who hear you and observe you. Job repeatedly used that word to describe his friends. See Job 8:13; 15:34; 17:8; 20:5; 27:8; 34:30; and 36:13.
50. Do you think the 144,000 who live through the final events in this earth's history will need to have stubborn faith? Could you develop a stubborn faith? What would that require?

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