

Job, A Man Redeemed Unto Righteousness.

We now enter another book of the Old Testament, Job. This book is in the form of a story but it is an account of a real person not some sort of fictional character. While the normal emphasis of Job centers around his trial, I would rather approach the book with the general theme of Redemptive History in keeping with this series. Matthew Henry seems to support this approach as shown in the quote below.

For more a more complete reading from my quote, I give you the following link. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc3.Job.i.html>

An interesting point that Henry makes is that Job is an example of Gentile piety:

“...(2.) It presents us with a specimen of Gentile piety. This great saint descended probably not from Abraham, but Nahor; or, if from Abraham, not from Isaac, but from one of the sons of the concubines that were sent into the east-country ([Gen. xxv. 6](#)); or, if from Isaac, yet not from Jacob, but Esau; so that he was out of the pale of the covenant of peculiarity, no Israelite, no proselyte, and yet none like him for religion, nor such a favourite of heaven upon this earth. It was a truth therefore, before St. Peter perceived it, that in every nation he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted of him, [Acts x. 35](#). There were children of God scattered abroad ([John xi. 52](#)) besides the incorporated children of the kingdom, [Matt. viii. 11, 12](#). ...”¹

While our overall theme is Redemption, we cannot ignore the result of redemption, piety. I fear this is a topic that is misunderstood by many in that piety is viewed as a condition of *personal* righteousness even though the Bible points out that NO ONE has personal

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righteousness.² I view piety as a condition where the believer having been justified by faith has been regenerated and receives the ability to live a pious life as empowered by the Holy Spirit. So Job as a pious individual is a picture of a Gentile who has recognized by Jehovah as a righteous person because he was the recipient of redemption. Also for this point, compare Job 1:8 below, (Jehovah’s evaluation of Job’s righteous condition) and ch [19:25f](#) (Job’s confession that he needs redemption). What this account of God’s approval does show is that when sinners have the LORD’s righteousness imputed to them they enjoy this wonderful status from Him – that of a sinner whose sins are forgiven and viewed as being righteous.

¹ Matthew Henry commentary – see above link.

² ⁹ **What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. 10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;** Romans 3:9, 10, NIV

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⁸ Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." NIV.³

So, for this lesson, we must blend in the two Grand Themes; the Imputed Righteousness of Christ unto the penitent, believing sinner and the basis for this Imputation; the Redemption of this sinner from Sin unto a life of Righteousness – Grand Themes indeed. The account of Job is wonderful because it delves into a personal relationship with the LORD *outside of the general area of Jewish faith*.

Job and the Roman Centurion, Cornelius compared. I see a similarity between Job and the Roman Centurion Cornelius as related in the New Testament book of Acts.⁴

¹ At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. ² He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. Acts 10:1, 2.

We see here that the accoutrements of Jewish faith are stripped away as in Job's case and the faith of Cornelius is highlighted. There is really no "fog" of religiosity in either case of these men – only the basic faith in the LORD is presented by them. And so it should be when it comes to personal righteousness. Religious form has never been the primary concern of the LORD even though strict adherence to the Law was expected from the Jew in the Old Testament faith.

Not religious form but the imputed righteousness of the LORD is the basis for personal righteousness. King Saul thought he could use religious form in the sacrifice of animals from a defeated enemy, animals which the LORD expressly commanded that they were to be destroyed. Saul had a problem waiting for the LORD's instructions and performed this rash, impulsive act of disobedience. Because of this, Saul's dynasty as king of Israel was set aside and another (David, a man after God's own heart) would rule in his place. The whole account of Saul's conduct points to a man who did not have faith in Jehovah and served his own agenda rather than seeking the LORD and having faith in Him.⁵ The basis for this whole theme of personal righteousness is faith in the LORD not personal "goodness" or (in the case of Saul) acts of bravery in battle and assumed favor with God. Job had realized this truth when he offered sacrifices unto the LORD for his sins and the sins of his sons (read [Job 1:1-5](#)). This act of offering sacrifices for sin points out that in his heart, Job knew that he needed atonement for his sins, thus highlighting the true source of his righteousness – the imputed righteousness of the LORD.

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⁴ Although Cornelius was probably a proselyte unto the Jewish faith.

⁵ ²² **But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. 1 Samuel 15:2, NIV.**

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The Dual Theme Found in the Book of Job.

So let's look at this Dual Theme – Job, the righteous one and his faith in his redeemer⁶ and see how it plays out.

¹ In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.

Job 1:1, NIV.

An introduction to the man Job. The account of Job is in story form but not a typically Hebrew form. This does not suggest that the book of Job is extra biblical but rather emphasizes that Job is *outside* the Israelite biblical law.⁷ The fact that Job's homeland '...In the land of Uz...' further emphasizes this – that he did not have any geographical, political or religious connection with Israel. Uz is not known geographically other than a reference found in [Lamentations 4:21](#) where it is associated with Edom – again a Gentile nation. At this point I'd like to quote from one of my favorite commentaries:

“Job was not an Israelite, but he was an exemplary worshiper of the true God. The narrator uses two pairs of terms to describe Job's character and spiritual condition: ‘blameless and upright, one who feared God, and turned away from evil.’ These same four

terms are repeated when God himself summarizes Job's character in [1:8](#) and [2:3](#). The Hebrew practice of piling terms together suggests that their effect is cumulative and complementary; they are not intended to be analyzed separately in great detail, though a brief discussion is warranted. The first two terms focus on Job's moral or ethical character. ‘Blameless’ (HED #8865) can be taken in the sense of being ‘ethically sound’ or ‘having moral integrity’ (Payne, TWOT, 2:974). ‘Upright’ (HED #3596) generally has the meaning of ‘doing what is right in relationship to other people.’ The second pair of terms depicts Job's religious or spiritual condition and, according to Habel, they interpret the first pair. First, Job is described as ‘one that feared God’ (HED #3486, 435), which means that he worshiped God and obeyed Him out of reverence. Thus, the second term of this group, ‘turning away from evil’ (HED #5681, 4623, 7731), results from the first as Job obeyed God.

Four Terms of Job's Integrity.

- (The Horizontal), Blameless
- Upright
- (The Vertical), Feared God
- Turned away from Evil.

Sometimes in Job, one or more of the four characteristics (the wording need not be exact) can stand for the whole set of four. (See, for example, [1:9](#); [2:3](#), [9:4:6](#); [9:20f](#); [27:5](#); [31:6](#).)”⁸

So, we see a true believer in the LORD. The remarkable thing about Job is that he seems timeless, to me, and can be used as an example outside the

⁶ Read [Job 19:25-27](#).

⁷ See Henry's introductory comments on this. A link is provided at the beginning of this lesson.

⁸ [The Complete BIBLICAL LIBRARY](#), Old Testament study bible, Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, page 345.

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framework of organized religion to show the life of a man who is in right relationship with the LORD.

In a certain way, I'd like to compare him with Adam as far as his faith is concerned (certainly not with any connection to Adam's original sin). Adam had just fallen from right relationship with the LORD but his restoration was close at hand. Please allow me to revisit a previous lesson with regard to Adam's faith:

"... An innocent animal being killed by way of sacrificial death must have been a great shock for the First Couple – this is the first time they witnessed death. Adam Clark suggests that the animal may have been killed by way of instruction by God to Adam to prefigure the Atonement. I may disagree with that thought. I think Wesley is more on the mark.

These coats of skin had a significancy. The beasts whose skins they were, must be slain; slain before their eyes to shew them what death is. And probably 'tis supposed they were slain for sacrifice, to typify the great sacrifice which in the latter end of the world should be offered once for all. Thus the first thing that died was a sacrifice, or Christ in a figure. —Wesley's Commentary

It may be that the animal was slain by Adam from God's instruction or that God himself performed the act. No matter – the result was the same. This shocking spectacle resulted in an innocent one dying so that the guilty might live. This was properly their first viewing of death being a death of atonement, not a death of deserved punishment which atoning death, of course, prefigured Jesus Christ the Innocent Lamb of God. After I made this last comment I noted that Wesley had had the same view (see above)... ."

The point I wish to make from this quote is that Adam admitted his sinfulness as did Abel. Cain did *not*. The contrast between Adam, Abel and Cain is remarkable. Whereas the former admitted their sinfulness and followed through in obedience with the sacrifice of innocent animals, Cain, the latter, was convinced that he did not need to kill one of his valuable animals because he was already the favored firstborn son of Adam. So his offering of grains and fruits were merely a celebration of that status. *"Cain thought he had the inside track of favor with God being favored by his parents as firstborn so his act was (as I already mentioned) was more a celebration of an assumed status."*⁹

So, if I may get back to Job, the righteous man, he knew he was a sinner in need of the LORD's righteousness – thus the sacrifices. His very admission of his sinful condition gated his entrance into saving faith and hence, the imputed righteousness of the LORD.

⁹ This and the previous quote was taken from one of my previous lessons, "[The First Incident of Sin. It's awfulness.](#)"

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True righteousness comes from the LORD, not a series of good works by man.

Paul the apostle has set the benchmark for defining the imputed righteousness of Christ unto the believing sinner. He states clearly that NO man is intrinsically righteous:

... **"There is no one righteous, not even one;** Romans 3:10b, NIV. This assertion by Paul is basically antithetical from all understood human wisdom. Only the most pessimistic of men say that there is no good in man. The common understanding is that there is *some* good in men and that humanity must work on that assumption. Making that assumption, one can easily conclude that in order to gain access to heaven (or some sort of pleasant afterlife) one's good works should outweigh the bad. Such is not the case according to the word of God. Jeremiah says it clearly:

⁹ **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?** Jeremiah 17:9, KJV.

This is not pessimism but reality. The heart is the heart of the matter. No matter how good a man may appear on the outside – and there are many historical accounts of bravery, sacrifice, altruism and the lot of human good – man is basically sinful and cannot meet the righteous standards of God. “But hold on”, you might say, “how can it be said of God, himself that Job was a righteous man if there was not some good in him?”

This [view of the universal sinfulness of man] is not pessimism but reality.

The answer comes from the very statement found in the beginning of Job's story: he *feared* God and *turned away* from evil showing the true nature of Job's condition. First, he feared God in that he knew his own nature and knew that he could not stand on his own merit before Him.¹⁰ This is in complete contrast to Satan's own appraisal of himself. He said of himself “I will be *like* the Most High...”¹¹ asserting that he, Lucifer has his own merit, his own righteousness. Satan does not view his basic nature as evil but *righteous*. In this matter, the unsaved share in his delusion – that they (all the unsaved) *do* have righteousness and that they can somehow work out things so that they can circumvent the LORD's assertion that the unsaved need saving.

Cain viewed his status very much like Lucifer's. He did *not* need any atonement for sin. He was fine the way he was and because of this, he became an ally of Satan.¹²

¹⁰ See previous comments that Job *needed* a Redeemer.

¹¹ [Isaiah 14:14](#). Read context.

¹² Actually the original suggests paternal relationship between Satan and Cain. See also [John 8:44](#) where Jesus makes the same relationship between Satan and the scribes and Pharisees.

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¹² Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 1 John 3:12, KJV.

This is the hardest thing a sinner must swallow – that his righteous works will not gain him entrance into heaven because they have no merit.

True righteousness comes only from Christ.

²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: Romans 3:21, 22, KJV

It's not that the righteousness of God was not applied to the saints of Old for example; Job himself, but that now in the Church age it is fully realized in the Person of Jesus Christ and the concept is now much more teachable. Please note in verse 21b that it *was* witnessed by the law and the prophets in the Old Testament – now this righteousness is fulfilled and realized because of the redemptive, complete work of Jesus Christ in His death on the cross. The apostle Paul and great church age saints such as Marten Luther have given the church great access to the doctrine of justification by faith alone. But, certainly, the most basic approach to the Old Testament – particularly as exemplified by Abram – teaches that Abram believed God and it was accounted unto him righteousness. *What we need to fully realize is that that righteousness was not Abram's but God's.* Paul so teaches in his epistle to the Romans where he says:

³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. ... ²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; ²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. ²² And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Romans 4:3, 21-23, KJV.

As we come to the conclusion of part one of this lesson let us fully know that Job was also justified by faith and received God's righteousness just as much as Abram – and for that matter all the Old Testament saints – king David, for example.¹³ As we enter into this brief encounter with Job we can view with awe the wonderful work of Jesus Christ as His completed work on the cross reaches back through the centuries into the life of Job and brings forth a righteous man on whom the LORD can brag before all including Satan.

Amen.

¹³ Read [Psalm 32:1, 2](#).