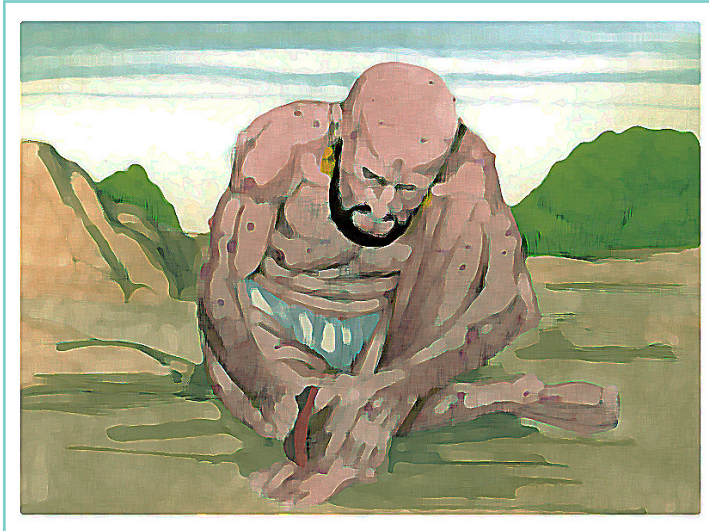


Lesson 6: Suffering



Introduction

Job was a wealthy and prosperous man who was faithful to the Lord in all his ways. But Satan claimed that Job's faithfulness was only due to the favor God had shown him. Satan proposed that if he was stripped of all his blessings, Job would turn away from God.

Read: Job 1:1, 2:1-13

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

Old Testament

New Testament

Where in the Bible?

The Book of Job is found near the halfway mark in the Bible.

The Old Testament: The Writings

Throughout the Old Testament there are instances of poetry, proverbs, and songs. But there are some books in the Bible written entirely in this style. As differentiated from the Law and the Prophets, the Jewish people referred to this third category of books in the Bible as "the Writings."

Biblical Genre: Worship and Poetry

The Bible is honest in reflecting the real-life experience of faith in our lives — both good times and bad. The people of Scripture were not so different from us; they experienced joy as well as pain, happiness as well as hardship. This is reflected in the Book of Job.

The period in which Job lived is hard to place on a historical timeline. It has a timeless quality about it, exploring questions of good and evil and the reality that even good people can experience suffering. The book ends when God speaks to Job from a whirlwind.

When in Time?

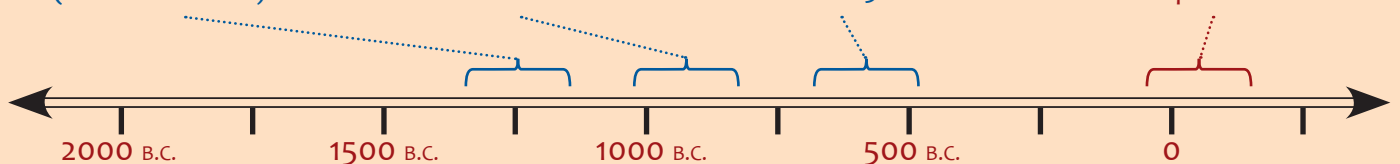
The Bible was not written all at one time, or by the pen of a single person — it was written over the course of several hundred years as God spoke through many people over time:

The first small pieces of the Bible were written at the time of Moses, around 1200 B.C. ("Before Christ").

The first major section of the Old Testament was written at the time of King David, around 1000 B.C.

A second large section of the Old Testament was written at the time of the Major Prophets, around 500 B.C.

The New Testament was written during the 20 to 80 years after Jesus' ministry, at the time of the Apostle Paul.



**Discuss: Job 1:1, 2:1-13**

1. Skim through Job 1. What did Satan do to Job in this chapter? What did Satan do in our lesson for today from Chapter 2?
2. Read Job 1:8 and 2:3. What did God say about Job? Read Job 1:9-11 and 2:4-5. What explanations did Satan give for why Job was faithful to God? Was Satan right or wrong?
3. Do you think Satan is at work in our modern day? What kind of evidence do you see in the world that evil is real?
4. How do you think Job felt when all this happened to him? Why did he not blame and curse God? Do you think that you would have reacted like Job?
5. Read 1 Peter 5:6-11. What advice does Peter give us for how we should face evil and suffering in our own lives? What is God's promise to us?
6. From what you see in the story of Job, does being a faithful person mean that nothing bad will ever happen to you in life? How does knowing God is with us help us deal with suffering and get us through the difficult times we face?
7. Read Romans 8:18-26. How does the whole Creation suffer the effects of evil? Can you give some examples? Will the world always be this way?
8. In the midst of his suffering, Job never stopped praying and talking to God. Why is prayer so important? In what way is God's Holy Spirit at work when we pray?



Christians commonly refer to the Hebrew Scriptures as the **Old Testament**.

Jewish believers refer to their Scriptures as the **Tanak**. The word Tanak is an acronym formed from the initials for the three major sections of the Hebrew Scriptures:

T = Torah (the Law)

N = Nivi'im (the Prophets)

K = Khetuvim (the Writings)

While the Hebrew Scriptures recognized by Jews and Christians are practically the same, they are ordered, grouped, and numbered differently in printed volumes.

The Book of Psalms is a great collection of Hebrew hymns, poetry and prayers, expressing the varied emotions of joy, sadness, anger, and guilt — as well as a genuine trust and praise toward God.

The Book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings and good advice, reminding people to do the right thing and not be foolish.

The Book of Job is the story of a man who suffered much under the devil's temptation, but God remained faithful to Job to the end.

The Book of Ecclesiastes contains the reflections of a wise man who was honest about the struggles of life and faith.

The Song of Songs (also known as the Song of Solomon) is a love poem between a man and a woman. It symbolizes God's faithful and loving relationship with us as his people.