

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Fourth Quarter 2016: *The Book of Job*

Lesson 5 “Curse the Day”

Read for this week’s study

Job 3:1–10; John 11:11–14; Job 6:1–3, 7:1–11; James 4:14; Job 7:17–21; Psalm 8:4–6.

Memory Text

“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” (Revelation 4:11, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Let the Day Perish
- III. Rest in the Grave
- IV. Other People’s Pain
- V. The Weaver’s Shuttle
- VI. “*Mah Enosh?*” (What Is Man?)
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read the entire book of Job through in one sitting, using an easy reading translation like the Good News Bible. How would you characterize this book? Is it a straightforward narrative? Is it a play? Is it a song about a specific occasion with many parts? What does it tell us about God that the Bible comes to us in such unusual packages sometimes? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Job 3:1-10. How does Job choose to express his grief in this passage? Is this just an ancient form of expression or is this also common today? Have you ever felt the way Job felt here? How did you recover from these feelings? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Job 3:11-26. What is Job saying about death? What reasons does he give for seeing death as preferable to life? Read Ecclesiastes 9:5 and John 11:11-14. How does what Job says fit in with what the Bible teaches about the condition of those who have died? What can one do in the darkest times to find peace and comfort? (Monday’s lesson)
4. Read Job, chapter 6. In verses 1-13 Job takes up his complaint with God. Summarize what he is saying about God here. What does it tell us about God that such a

passage is in the Bible? How does it affect your view of God to read this passage in light of Job 42:7? In the latter part of chapter 6, how does Job respond to the speech of Eliphaz in chapters 4 and 5? (Tuesday's lesson)

5. The lesson brings out the idea that we don't suffer in groups. We don't suffer anyone's pain but our own. Does this idea help us look at the problem of human suffering in a different light? How was Jesus' experience on the cross different from this? Or was it? (Tuesday's lesson)
6. Read Job 7:1-11. What is Job's complaint in this passage? How is it similar or different from chapter 6? How does Job describe death? How is his view different from the view of death in the New Testament? What is missing in Job's point of view and how does that matter? What does Job's view of death tell us about the Bible? What does it tell us about God? (Wednesday's lesson)
7. Read Job 7:12-21. What complaint does he lodge against God here? Compare this point of view with Psalm 8:3-6. How do you reconcile these two passages? Why would a passage like Job 7 be in the biblical record? What does that tell us about God? Compare Job 7 with John 3:16 and 1 John 3:1. Why doesn't the book of Job contain this perspective about God? (Thursday's lesson)
8. What is the Seventh-day Adventist view of death? What is the practical, everyday value of that view as opposed to other options? (Friday's lesson)
9. Why do you think that even in the most miserable of situations most people still cling to life? What does the cross tell us about the value of human life? (Friday's lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

What is the real question in the book of Job, and about whom is the question? Is it about Job? Is it a book about how Job matured and became a better man? God said, "I don't want you to worry about his character. I say he's perfect," page one and page two, "and in the end, I say he did splendidly. He said of me what is right." But what we find in the book is that the theologians didn't think he was right. And the contrast between Job's statements and Job's behavior, and the statements and behavior of the friends, makes up the bulk of the book. And didn't you feel a little breathless at times, as you read in modern speech the things that Job said? Would you dare? Of course, would you have dared to say, "God, should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?" Would you dare do that? And that's Abraham, who was God's very special friend. Would you dare say to God, if God said, "Step aside; I say, step aside. I'm sick and tired of these people. They deserve justice. I will destroy them and make a great nation of you." And Moses says, "God, I can't. I can't do that. And as I know you, you couldn't do it either. You would ruin your reputation. The Egyptians would say you have showed so much power there, but actually you were too weak to take the people to Canaan. You would lose your reputation if

you do this.” I wish God’s reply was in there. It’s implied. “I love to hear you say this, Moses. That’s why I say you are my friend. And I don’t treat you like a prophet in vision and dreams. You and I can talk, face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.”

I see Moses, Abraham and Job in the same company. And look how they talked to God. Have you ever in prayer said, “God, should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?” And wasn’t Job saying, “God, something in this doesn’t seem right, and I know you’re all-powerful. These friends here keep emphasizing that you’re powerful. I have no argument with them on that. Of course you are all-powerful. Then how come this is happening to me, when you could stop it? I don’t understand it. Is it that we weren’t friends? I want to be friends now. Please talk to me.” Didn’t he keep saying, “Talk to me please. But you won’t listen. I keep searching for you east and west, and I can’t find you.” Job didn’t want to leave God. He wanted to find God. Now was God allowing himself to be hard to find? Well, it’s exactly what he arranged with Satan, didn’t he? God knew this was going to happen, and he let Satan come between. And God indeed was hard to find.

But who wanted to find him desperately; almost enough to die? Was this a compliment to God, or an irreverent rejection of God? Could you imagine any man in history wanting to get in touch more than Job did? He longed to get in touch. He said, “God, if we could just get together, I’m sure we could clear this up. If you three friends would just stop talking so much—I have no argument with you. You just keep talking about how powerful God is. Of course God is powerful! Everybody knows that. I just want to know how he’s using his power right now.” And they said, “That’s none of your business. Who are you to question God’s inscrutable ways?” They were utterly legalistic in their presentation. They said, “You can’t understand God’s ways anyway. Just bow your head and accept it.” And Job said, “That’s not the kind of relationship I have had. I’ve talked with God through the years, and God has always made sense to me before. He doesn’t make sense to me now.” Could you sympathize with Job saying that? Did he know chapters 1 & 2? Could he say, “I guess I’m reaping what I’ve sown. I’ve been unfaithful in this, and unfaithful in that, and I really haven’t been God’s friend; I deserve what’s coming”? He knew he hadn’t been that way. “Now,” he says, “I know I’ve been a sinner.” He admits that. And he says, “If maybe there’s some hidden sin in my life, tell me about it, God. If someone’s accusing me, what is the accusation?” And we’ll read these verses in a minute or two.

Had there not been an accusation? Yes, that God was served by Job for reward. But though Job wasn’t told what that accusation was, he answered it magnificently. Did he abandon God because of what was happening? Did he cry, though, because he seemed to be abandoned by God?

Would you fault a man for that? How should he have behaved? Remember, he lost his family, his whole estate, everything that made sense seemed to be crumbling here; his whole orderly life. “Lead an orderly life and it will produce good results.” It didn’t seem to be. Nothing made

sense. He was tested to the limit and now he can't even talk to God in his loneliness. Add to that the fact that he's covered with boils. I've only had one in my life. It was a miserable experience. Have you ever been covered with these things? What would it be like to be covered with boils? And we say, if he had been a better saint, he would have sat there calmly and said, "Well, sometimes God talks to me and sometimes he doesn't. Sometimes he blesses me and sometimes he doesn't. No problem!" Would you want him to respond that way? Or don't you marvel at the feeling he shows when the Lord allowed the devil to intervene. Job cared enough to cry out like this. It seems to me that the measure of their friendship is the intensity of the feeling that Job expresses here. When you've lost a dear friend do you say, "Well, you win some, you lose some"? Or do you phone, write, or go and see them? If they're really friends?

And when God could not communicate with Job and God permitted it, he knew he was not testing his friend more than he was able to bear. Isn't there a text for that? God doesn't allow a man to be tested more than he is able to bear. He knew Job could take it and he complemented Job—though Job didn't know that yet. Job didn't know the universe was watching this with such intense interest. He didn't know about Satan's accusation. He didn't know how his behavior was honoring God. All he did was honestly express the way he felt about being cut off like this. And he cared enough to cry for pages. And when the three friends said, "Don't talk like that. I mean, you don't want to die, do you?" They expected God to punish him for talking like that. Here's God in heaven saying, "Look at my friend Job. Look what our friendship meant." And God was complemented by his cries. And the theologians, because they had an entirely different picture of God, were saying, "Job, don't talk any more like that. God will smite you for talking like that." They would have told Abraham, "Don't you dare say, 'If there are fifty, forty, thirty, shouldn't the judge of all the earth do what's right.' Don't you dare talk to God like that. Who are you to question God's inscrutable ways?" {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Esther & Job*, recorded March, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/25MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/26MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

With our understanding of the nature of man and of death and of resurrection, is it not true to say that if the boiler were to blow up right now, and we all should be killed, between now and the resurrection would be a dreamless sleep of which we'll be totally unaware and we would awaken the next instant of consciousness with the Lord. Now, because we want to keep the dead in the grave to support our doctrine, often we hate to emphasize this too much. So we almost leave the impression, "don't overlook the fact that when you die you'll be in that tomb

for years and years until the Lord comes.” And then you go to a funeral for one of our Christian friends and they’re saying, “Isn’t it marvelous? Mother is in Heaven right now!”

And that seems more like good news, except Mother has to watch some very unpleasant things through the years, plus the fact she may be thinking that’s a pretty small bouquet you put on her grave. . . .

Paul, I think, knew that the moment that sword severed his head from his shoulders, the next *instant* he’d be face to face with the Lord, and he couldn’t think of anywhere he’d rather be. So he would say, “To stay with you is no end of trouble, you’ll have to admit, look what I’ve just gone through in the city of Corinth, when they told me that my physical presence was weak and my speech was contemptible.” I mean, they insulted him there. The Lord would never do that. “So I’m torn between working with you dear saints, in all your problems, and departing and being with the Lord.” It makes sense in that light. But we would want evidence from the rest of Scripture that it’s true, that when we die we fall asleep, and in the resurrection we awaken. We’re unaware of the time between.

Well, who could make it plainer than Jesus when Lazarus died? He said, “Lazarus is asleep and I’ve gone to awaken him.”

They said, “That’s great; if he’s asleep his fever must be broken. Maybe he’s resting now.”

“No”, he said, “I guess I’ll have to tell you plainly, he’s dead. But I’ve been trying to make the point to you folk; the first death is just a sleep. That final one is the one to worry about.”

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Three Angels’ Messages*, #3, recorded October, 1981, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MM3ANGELSM>*

When we read that first angel’s message to “worship the Creator of the heaven and earth, the Creator of the sea and springs,” perhaps we are reminded that the first mention of the Sabbath comes in the Bible at the end of creation week. I wonder if tonight we could think back in imagination to the very dramatic events of that first week of this earth’s history. The war had begun already in heaven. Satan had already leveled his charges and his accusations. One third of the angels had already agreed with him that God is not worthy of our love and our trust. Right in the middle of that devastating crisis, God invites his family to watch him as he creates yet another world—this time, ours. How easily he could have created our world with a snap of his fingers, in just an instant of time.

But in the dramatic and significant setting of the great controversy, he chose this time to do it in six twenty-four hour days. On the first day, all he said was “Let there be light.” That’s all. And then day two, three, four, five, as God in unhurried majesty and drama unfolded his plans for

our earth. By the sixth day, what a beautiful place this was. Where now were Satan's charges that God was selfish? I mean, look at the freedom. He created us in his own image with power to think and to do. And we know from human history that he created us free to either love and trust him, or hate him and spit in his face, because it has been done. And he created us able to do it! God even allowed Satan to approach our first parents at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. And he didn't hide that tree in some dark corner of the garden; he put it right in the middle near the Tree of Life, so that Adam and Eve would see it every time they came to that other tree.

Look in Genesis 2:9 of the reference sheet: "In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (NIV)

Of course the God we know could be trusted not to allow our first inexperienced parents to be tested more than they were able to resist. You know he would not do that. And so Satan was only allowed to approach them at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam and Eve were warned not to risk a confrontation with their wily foe. Isn't that the meaning of that famous key text, next on the list, in 1 Corinthians 10:13? "But God keeps his promise [or God can be trusted], and he will not allow you to be tested beyond your power to remain firm." (GNB)

You see, that tree was not put there as a test of obedience—an arbitrary test of obedience. That tree was put there to help them, to protect them. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was not placed there before sin, but after sin. If it was before sin, it was an arbitrary test. After sin, it was to help them and protect them like every other one of God's gracious laws. Then God stunned the universe by sharing with us, as far as he possibly could with mere created human beings, some of his own marvelous creative power. God so designed it that when a man and a woman come together in love, they are able to share life with little people; create little people in their own image. Isn't it interesting to watch our children and our grandchildren? They look so much like us. They behave like us, at our best points and our worst points. Truly, they do reflect our image and God designed it to be this way. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10, "The Reminder of the Evidence" recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

The Lord God through Jesus Christ holds out His hand all the day long in invitation to the sinful and fallen. He will receive all. He welcomes all. It is His glory to pardon the chief of sinners. He will take the prey from the mighty, He will deliver the captive, He will pluck the brand from the

burning. He will lower the golden chain of His mercy to the lowest depths of human wretchedness, and lift up the debased soul contaminated with sin. {MH 161.3}

Every human being is the object of loving interest to Him who gave His life that He might bring men back to God. Souls guilty and helpless, liable to be destroyed by the arts and snares of Satan, are cared for as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his flock. {MH 162.1}

Satan had clothed the Father in his own attributes, but Christ represented Him in His true character of benevolence and love. In the character in which Christ presented Him to the world it was as if He gave a new gift to man. . . . {LHU 36.4}

The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. {GC 621.1}

If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy. {MH 249.1}

None need abandon themselves to discouragement and despair. Satan may come to you with the cruel suggestion, "Yours is a hopeless case. You are irredeemable." But there is hope for you in Christ. God does not bid us overcome in our own strength. He asks us to come close to His side. Whatever difficulties we labor under, which weigh down soul and body, He waits to make us free. {MH 249.2}

He who took humanity upon Himself knows how to sympathize with the sufferings of humanity. Not only does Christ know every soul, and the peculiar needs and trials of that soul, but He knows all the circumstances that chafe and perplex the spirit. His hand is outstretched in pitying tenderness to every suffering child. Those who suffer most have most of His sympathy and pity. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and He desires us to lay our perplexities and troubles at His feet and leave them there. . . . {MH 249.3}

When temptations assail you, when care, perplexity, and darkness seem to surround your soul, look to the place where you last saw the light. Rest in Christ's love and under His protecting care. When sin struggles for the mastery in the heart, when guilt oppresses the soul and burdens the conscience, when unbelief clouds the mind, remember that Christ's grace is sufficient to subdue sin and banish the darkness. Entering into communion with the Saviour, we enter the region of peace. {MH 250.1}

In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that

He will fail of fulfilling His promise. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant He has made with those who love Him. And He will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands. The apostle Paul has testified: “He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. . . . Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10. {PK 164.3}

Christ became one with humanity, that humanity might become one in Spirit and life with Him. By virtue of this union in obedience to the Word of God, His life becomes their life. He says to the penitent, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” Death is looked upon by Christ as sleep—silence, darkness, sleep. He speaks of it as if it were of little moment. “Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me,” He says, “shall never die.” . . . And to the believing one, death is but a small matter. With him to die is but to sleep. {ML 295.5}

A terrible contest is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding its wings, preparing to step down from the golden throne and leave the world to the control of Satan, the king it has chosen, a murderer and a destroyer from the beginning. {TDG 308.2}

The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against all who serve Him, and soon, very soon, is to be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed. {TDG 308.3}

Christ came to this earth in human form that He might stand as the Captain of our salvation, so that we should not be overcome by Satan’s power. And when the enemy has seemed to be gaining a signal victory over righteousness, God has been working in mercy and power to counteract his designs. {TDG 308.4}

Determined to efface the image of God in man, Satan works with an intensity of effort to hide God from view. Not openly does he work, but secretly, mingling the human and the divine, the spurious and the genuine, so seeking to bring confusion and distress. But in proportionate power divine mercy is revealed to counteract this wicked working, and bring to light the enemy’s hidden purposes. {TDG 308.5}

A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said: “Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?” Job 1:9, 10. The agency by which God protects His people is presented in the words of the psalmist: “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7. Said the Saviour, speaking of those that

believe in Him: “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father.” Matthew 18:10. The angels appointed to minister to the children of God have at all times access to His presence.

{GC 512.2}

Thus God’s people, exposed to the deceptive power and unsleeping malice of the prince of darkness, and in conflict with all the forces of evil, are assured of the unceasing guardianship of heavenly angels. {GC 513.1}

God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

{COL 142.1}

Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God. It was to implant this love, to make us children of one family, that the King of glory became one with us. And when His parting words are fulfilled, “Love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12); when we love the world as He has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are fitted for heaven; for we have heaven in our hearts. {DA 641.3}

He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. {ML 289.5}

God is to us a tender, compassionate, heavenly Father. {ML 289.6}

Recommended Reading: *Steps to Christ* Chapter 1 – “God’s Love for Man”

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