

**JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**  
THE BASIS OF JOB'S SALVATION  
BASED ULTIMATELY IN GOD'S POWER TO FORGIVE

Was Job saved? Will we meet Job in heaven when we get there? No human being knows but listening to God's commendation of Job in chapters one, two, and forty-two, it seems to be a good conclusion that Job finished out his life within the Grace of God.

There it is! The Grace of God! Job's salvation ultimately depended upon the Grace of God. Job needed and hoped for God's forgiveness, the same as any other accountable person. The same as you. However, God was impressed with Job's life! That's right!

God declared to Satan that Job was His servant, and that Job was "blameless and upright", a man who feared God and turned away from evil. (Job 1:8) Job was a family man with a wife and 10 children. He worked hard and earned his living and became wealthy. Furthermore, Job was a conscientious worshipper of the living God who continually offered sacrifices for himself and his family. (Job 1:5)

God allowed the "Prince of this world" (cf. John 12:31) permission to afflict Job through earthly circumstances. Tragic events happened to Job's family; all his children were killed in a tornadic wind that collapsed the house upon them. Much of Job's wealth disappeared when he was robbed. Job's response was to arise, tear his robe, shave his head, and fall on the ground to worship. (Job 1:20) Job said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job 1:21) Job 1:22 says, "In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong."

But then, Satan wanted to expand the attack on Job. God gave his permission but forbade Satan to take Job's life. Job's body was then attacked with disease. He was in such pain and distress that Job prayed that God would "cut" him off (Job 6:9). Whereas he did not curse God, Job did curse the day of his birth. By an early death Job thought he would find "rest" in the presence of kings and counselors (Job 3:17). But yet, Job did not deny "the words of the Holy One." (Job 6:10)

After that second phase of Satan's persecution and Job's body was afflicted, Job's wife echoed Satan's thought, "Why don't you curse God and die!" Job did not curse God (Job 2:10), but Job did complain, loudly.

Job asked of God: why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? (Job 7:2) Job acknowledged his situation, "how can a man be in the right before God?" (Job 9:2) Job continued, "Though I am in the right, I cannot answer Him; I must appeal for mercy to my accuser" (Job 9:15). And then Job confessed that "though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn me; though I am blameless, he would prove me perverse" (Job 9:20). Job knew of no arbiter between him and God "who might lay his hand on us both" (Job 9:33).

Job addressed God and said, "If I sin, you watch me, and do not acquit me of my iniquity. If I am right, I cannot lift up my head, for I am filled with disgrace and look on my affliction" (Job 10:14, 15). Even in his own mind, Job could not see how he could be saved without an acquittal from God.

It is my belief and contention that there is no acquittal apart from God's mercy. No matter who it is or what century they have lived, saved people are saved only by God's merciful forgiveness. How then can it be written that God renders judgment based upon a person's deeds?

It is written that every human "must appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10) It is said that "we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" in Romans 14:10, where, as Jesus predicted, "every idle word" will be remembered and judged (Matthew 12:36). Furthermore, Jesus predicted that "by your words you shall be justified and by your words you shall be condemned" (Matthew 12:37). Condemned or justified? Those are the choices, but whose choices? God's choice, Christ's choice based on your words! What will be the basis upon which God and Jesus justify and save a sinful person? The person's words! However, not only our words, but also our deeds will enter judgment.

We are told that there is coming a day when God's wrath and God's righteous judgments will be revealed. On that day God "will render to every person according to his deeds" (Romans 2:5, 6). Since God is no respecter of persons (Romans 2:11), He renders either eternal life or tribulation and anguish. His

decision for eternal life is based upon God's ability to show mercy and forgive sins. Jesus, God's only begotten son gave God this option of forgiveness. That's right! Otherwise, God must follow His law: the wage of sin is death! (Romans 6:23) Jesus died for the sins of mankind. Jesus suffered the lawful penalty for the world of sin, all sin. That sacrifice gives Jesus' Father the legal standing to graciously acquit.

God makes His choice based upon the words and deeds of an individual. Since Job "feared God and turned away from evil" (Job 1:1), God could show mercy and forgive Job's sin. If not for Jesus, the Father would not have had the option of forgiveness! God's anticipation of Christ's sacrifice enabled God to forbear sin and to forgive Old Testament era characters (Romans 3:25). Therefore, Job was saved, based on Christ's forthcoming sacrifice that enabled God's legal acquittal for repentant people who fear God and turn away from evil.

Are you a person who fears God and turns away from evil?

God grants eternal life to the person who repents of sin and continues in well-doing and thereby seeks glory, honor, and immortality (Romans 2:7). God is also justified in withholding forgiveness and rendering tribulation and anguish upon contentious persons who do not obey the truth. These disobedient people choose to obey unrighteousness, which is unapproved words and deeds. (Romans 2:8, 9) God is the One who has revealed what is approved behavior and unapproved behavior.

Was Job a person who would repent of sin and continue in well-doing and thereby seek glory, honor, and immortality from God? Satan did not think Job would continue to serve God under terrible earthly circumstances. "He will curse you to your face," said Satan. And you know, some people would do just that! When earthly circumstances are terrible some people will "curse God to his face." And so, Satan was permitted to test his contention.

Is Satan testing you? Is your faith in God being challenged? Are the circumstances of this world eroding your faith? Is your physical condition a burden on your faith in God?

Like gold, faith is purified by fire! And we will become frustrated like Job. Job wondered aloud: "I shall be condemned; why then do I labor in vain?" (Job 9:29)

Do you want to quit? Do you feel like your pursuit of God and goodness is in vain? Well, Job was wrong! The pursuit of righteousness is NOT in vain! Job would not be condemned when and while he was pursuing righteousness. You see, the coming sacrifice of Jesus on the cross had Job's sins covered; but Job would have to continue in well-doing, fearing God and turning away from evil. Job would have to continue following God's rules of continuous sacrifice.

In fact, that is exactly what Job intended to do. Job said that as long as his breath is in him, and the spirit of God is in his nostrils, that his lips will not speak falsehood, and his tongue will not utter deceit. (Job 27:4) Job still thought that "the fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding." (Job 28:28)

### **Job's Righteousness**

Job describes the kind of man he was and would continue to be.

"I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. A father to the needy, a friend to the stranger, an enemy of the unrighteous and a friend to the preyed upon." (Job 29:14-17) Job continued the description of his life: Did not I weep for him whose day was hard? Was not my soul grieved for the needy?" (Job 30:25)

Furthermore Job said, "I made a covenant with my eyes – how could I gaze at a virgin?" (Job 31:1) "Have I rejected the cause of servants? (Job 31:13) Have I not treated the poor, the widow, and the fatherless fairly? (Job 31:16-17)

Job also talked about his wealth. "Did I make gold my confidence? Was I arrogant with my riches?" (Job 31:24-25) Job was not lazy, but worked his fields. (31:38-40)

"Have I worshiped the sun, moon, or stars?" (Job 31:26-28) "Have I rejoiced at the fall of my enemies? I haven't cursed anyone." (Job 31:29-30) "I have fed the hungry and the stranger has had a roof over his head." (Job 31:31-32)