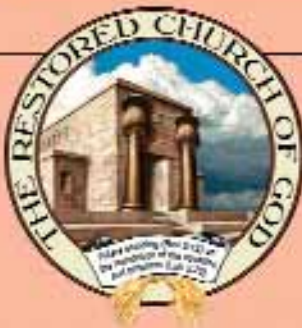


THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



Lessons From the Book of Job



LEVEL 6
LESSON 4

Lessons From the Book of Job

In this lesson, we will learn some fascinating things from one of the oldest books in the Bible—the book of Job. This ancient book tells the story of a man who obeyed God, yet still suffered many things. We will learn why suffering is a *necessary* part of life. The book of Job will also teach us many other exciting truths about God’s plan for mankind!

JOB’S BACKGROUND

Job lived before Israel became a large nation. He was married and had seven sons and three daughters. Although the Bible doesn’t reveal the exact time of Job’s life, there is indication that he lived around the same time as Jacob. Job was a very wealthy man—at a time when wealth was not measured by money, but by livestock. Job had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred oxen, and five hundred donkeys! Can you imagine a farm with this many animals on it?

Turn to the first verse in the book of Job to see how the Bible describes him: “There was a man in the land of _____, whose name was _____; and that man was _____ and _____, and one who feared _____ and shunned evil.” Truly, Job was a man who lived God’s way of life. He under-

stood the law of cause and effect, and knew it was bad to do evil.

SATAN APPROACHES GOD

We have learned in previous lessons that Satan was once the righteous angel named Lucifer. However, he rebelled against God because he did not agree with God’s way of life. Ever since then, Satan has brought evil and disobedience into the world. God has given Satan rulership over the earth for the first 6,000 years of mankind’s existence—until Jesus Christ comes and replaces him as earth’s ruler.

The first chapter of Job gives a fascinating glimpse into exactly how Satan rules the earth today, and how much power he has. Job 1:6 explains that Satan came before God’s throne in heaven and talked to Him. Verse 8 says, “Then the Lord said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?’”

Have you ever considered that God talks directly to Satan? Even though Satan rebelled, God is still the ultimate Ruler of the universe. God gives Satan his power. If God did not want Satan to have any authority, then He would take it away. Satan has the power to influence

all human beings—from the time they are born—to do things their own way, rather than doing what God says.

However, God does work with a very few people during this 6,000-year period. He shows them the right way to live and provides them with extra strength to be able to overcome Satan. Eventually, God will give this chance to every human being who has ever lived—including those who have already died. He will bring them back to life and give them their first and only chance to obey Him!

SATAN CHALLENGES GOD

When God asked Satan to consider Job’s righteousness, Satan immediately challenged God. Satan claimed that the only reason Job obeyed God was because He continually protected Job and all his belongings. Satan thought that Job’s motives were selfish—that he was only obeying God because he was getting something in return. So Satan challenged God to allow him to take away all of Job’s possessions, and see how he would react.

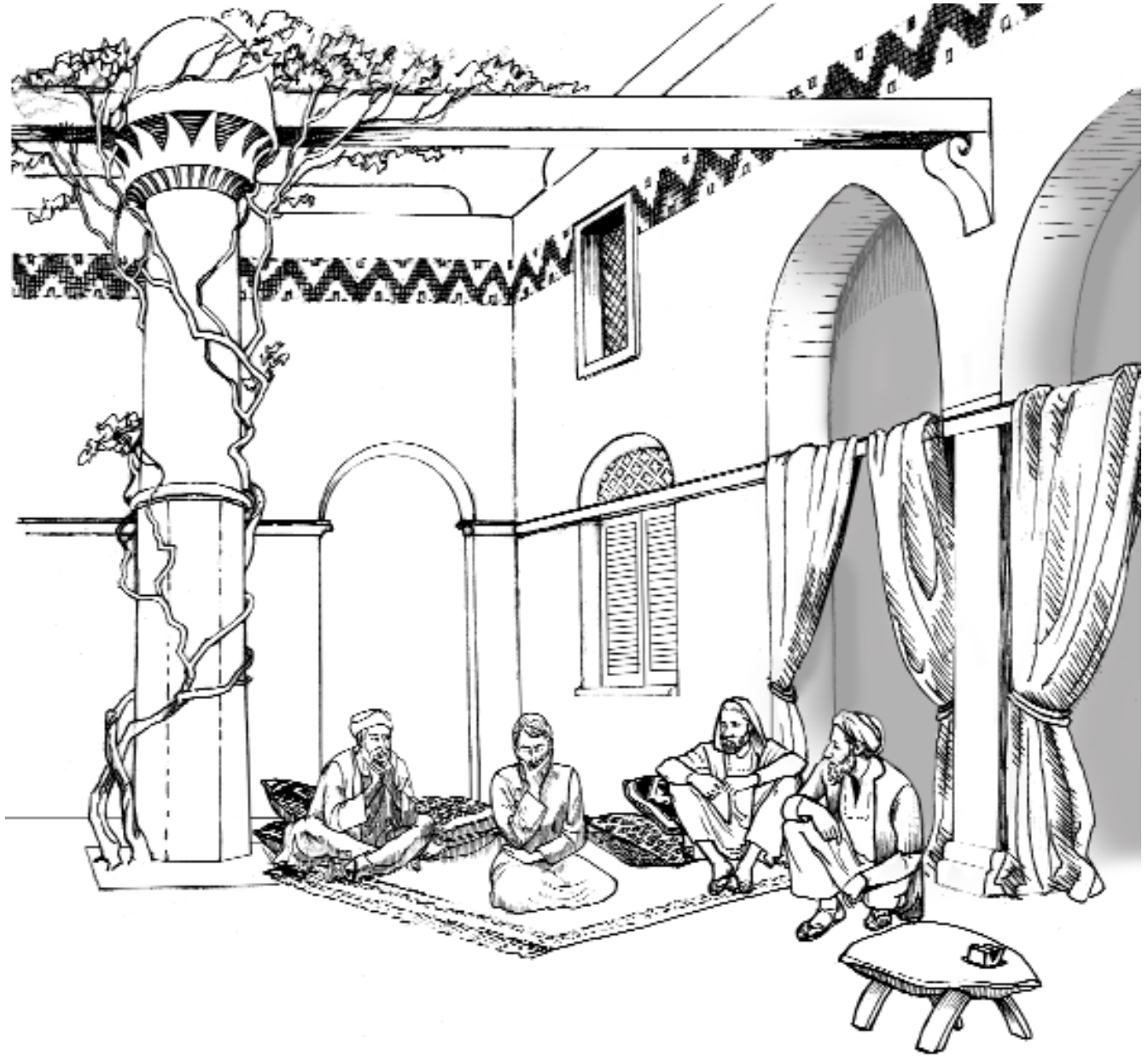
This exchange is found in Job 1:9-11. Fill in the blanks of God’s response to this request, found in verse 12: “And

the LORD said to _____, ‘Behold, all that [Job] has is in your _____, only do not lay a hand on his person [life].’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.” God granted Satan’s request! Did you notice that Satan did not have the power to do this on his own? Even though Satan does not obey God, he cannot do things that God does not allow. Satan had to ask for permission before he could bring harm to Job. This shows that God has ultimate power over everything—including the protection of your life!

With God’s permission to test Job, Satan left God’s presence and went back to the earth to go after Job’s possessions.

One day, while Job was at home, he saw one of his servants running toward him. The





servant came to Job and told him that the Sabeans had taken all of his oxen and donkeys, and had killed the rest of the servants who were with them. While this servant was speaking, another servant ran to Job and told him that fire had come from the sky and burned all of Job's sheep and all the other servants who were watching them. At that moment, another servant came running to Job and told him that the Chaldeans had taken all of Job's camels

and killed the rest of the servants who were watching over them. In one day, Job had lost all of his wealth—all of his oxen, donkeys, sheep and camels, and all but three of his servants!

However, it got much worse! Job's ten children were celebrating the birthday of the oldest son (an act that God views as evil). A servant came running to Job and told him that a great wind (possibly a tornado) came upon the house

where his sons and daughters were and killed all ten of them!

Job was devastated! Within just a few minutes, he had lost almost everything—including all of his children! His wife was the only family member to survive.

How would you have reacted if this had happened to you? Would you have felt that all this was unfair, especially since you obeyed God? Would you have felt that God wasn't protecting you? Would you blame God for all that happened? Many would, but Job was different.

JOB WORSHIPS GOD

After hearing all of the bad news, Job stood up and tore his clothes and shaved his head, which was a sign of mourning. Job then fell to his knees and talked to God. Turn to Job 1:21 and fill in the blanks with what Job said to God: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The _____ gave, and the _____ has taken _____; _____ be the name of the LORD.” (Note that the phrase “shall I return there” actually means “shall I go to the grave.”) The next verse says, “In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.”

Incredible! After losing everything, Job was still able to recognize that it is God’s right to give to humans, and it is God’s right to take away! Many people fail to acknowledge God when times are good. However, when something goes wrong, it is common for such people to question why God would allow such a thing to happen. These people do not “bless” God dur-

ing the hard times, choosing instead to blame Him when things go wrong.

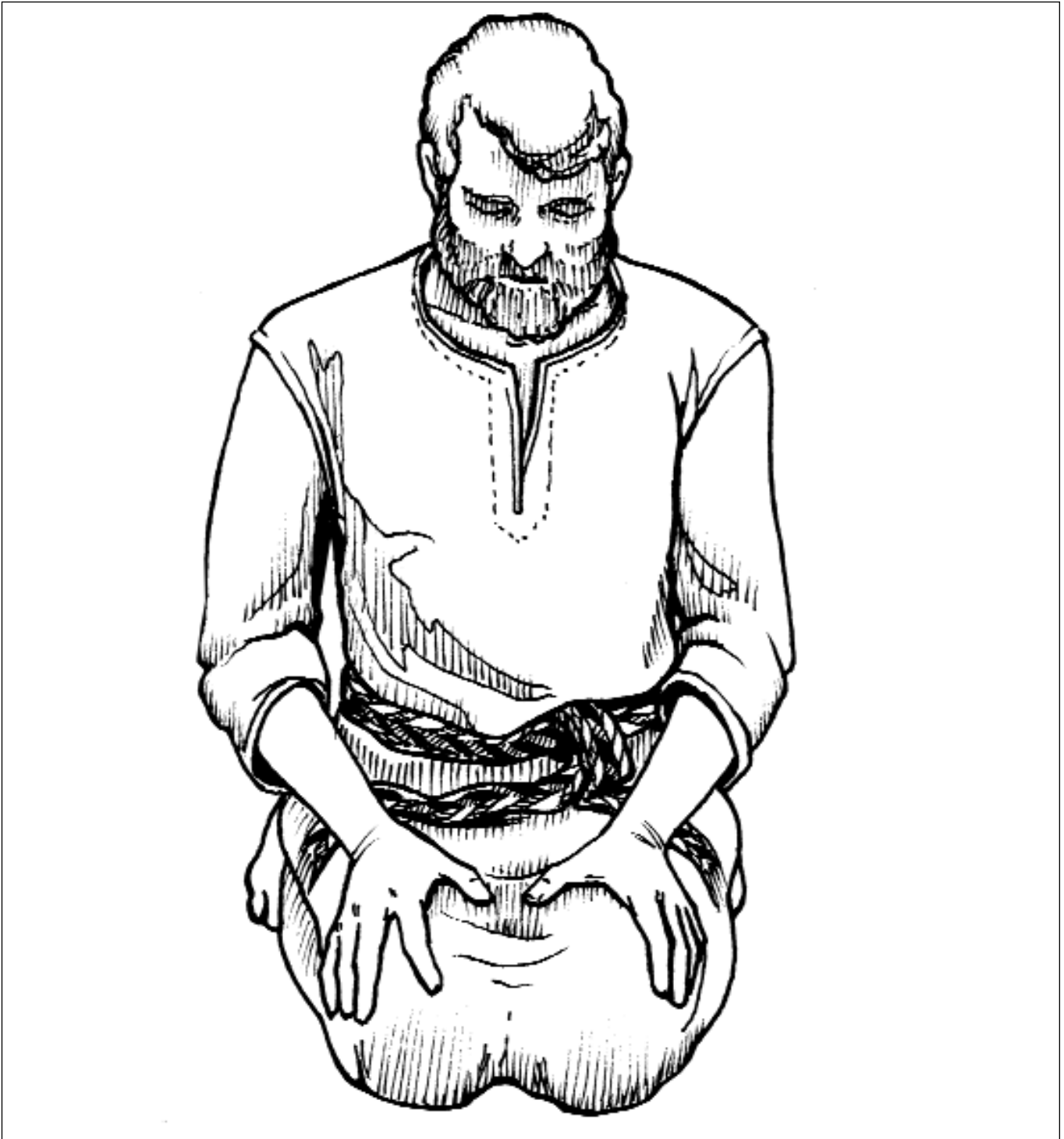
However, Job was different. He recognized that God had complete control over his life at *all times*—during the good *and* the bad.

JOB’S HEALTH IS ATTACKED

Shortly after taking away all of Job’s possessions and his children, Satan returned to heaven and spoke with God again. God asked Satan if he had noticed that Job still did not curse Him, even though much grief had come upon him. Satan argued that the only reason he did not curse God is because he still had his health. In Satan’s mind, if he were able to take away Job’s good health, then surely the pain he was in would cause him to curse God. God was willing to allow Satan to bring physical pain to Job, to see if he would curse him. The only condition that God had was that Satan was not allowed to kill Job.

Although this may not seem like something that a loving God would do, by the end of the lesson, you will understand why God would allow Satan to do such things. Even though Job always obeyed God, he still had lessons to learn. We will soon see how God, in His wisdom, was able to teach Job these lessons.

With God’s permission, Satan rushed back to earth and struck Job with boils from head to toe. This was incredibly painful for Job. Yet, he still did not curse God. Even Job’s wife said that it would be better for him to curse God and die rather than live with such immense pain. Job responded by saying that she spoke foolishly because she was willing to accept *good* from God, but not trials.



would surely heal him and allow him to prosper.

For many chapters, Job and his friends talked back and forth. His friends were convinced that he had to repent of his sins. However, Job became increasingly frustrated with them. Job knew that

he had always obeyed God and kept His commandments. In Job 6:29, he proclaimed that his “righteousness still stands.” Job knew that he also possessed wisdom and that many people recognized this. He knew that even in the days of his suffering, he would not curse his Creator.

Even if he had committed a sin, he thought that surely it was not big enough to merit all of this suffering.

JOB ANSWERS HIS FRIENDS

Job's frustration finally showed. He accused his friends of being liars because they reasoned that his sin had brought on his suffering. He accused them of thinking that they were wiser than him and told them that he was not inferior to them (Job 12:3).

Job contrasted himself to that of a wicked person. In Job 21, he asked, "Why do the wicked live and become old, yes, become mighty in power?...Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them...their children dance. They sing to the tambourine and harp, and rejoice to the sound of the flute. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Yet they say to God, 'Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?'" (vs. 7, 9, 11-15.)

Job then speaks of his own situation. Turn to Job 23:10-12 and fill in the blanks: "But He [God] knows the way that I take; When He has _____ me, I shall come forth as _____. My foot has _____ to His steps; I have kept His _____ and not turned aside. I have not departed from the _____ of His lips; I have _____ the words of His mouth more than my necessary _____." Also fill in the blanks of Job 27:6: "My _____ I hold fast, and will not let it go; My _____ shall not reproach

[dishonor] me as long as I live."

Job felt that those who do wicked acts are not being punished, while he, who committed only righteousness, was being punished. The last two passages show that Job did not try to hide the fact that he was righteous.

Now that you have seen how Job reacted to his friends, can you see what is wrong with his attitude? Another one of Job's friends came to see him, and although he was much younger than Job and the other three, he could quickly see what was wrong with Job's attitude.

This friend's name was Elihu. After listening to Job for some time, he became angry at Job because he could see that he was justifying himself rather than God!

JOB'S PROBLEM REVEALED

Turn to Job 32 to 36 to see the fascinating things that Elihu said to Job. Use these chapters to answer the questions below:

- 1) Did Elihu first try to learn from what the older, more experienced men had to say? (Job 32:6-7) _____
- 2) According to Elihu, who gives understanding to humans? (Job 32:8) _____
- 3) Did Elihu acknowledge that humans are created by God and are merely formed out of clay (or dust)? (Job 33:4, 6) _____
- 3) Did Elihu accuse Job of unrighteousness because he proclaimed that he was without transgression but still had to suffer? (Job 33:8-12) _____
- 4) Did Elihu say that it is important to realize that God is greater than man? (Job 33:12) _____

5) Can God commit a wicked act? (Job 34:10-12) _____

6) Who did Elihu say that the righteousness of humans is ascribed [directed] to? (Job 36:3) _____

This is the vital dimension that Job and his friends were missing. They were not attributing Job's righteousness to God! Although Job did obey God and possessed great knowledge of His Way, Job began to think that he should be acknowledged for this. This is known as *self-righteousness*. He forgot that it is God who gives all understanding to humans, and people must not think that they are better than others because God has chosen to give them more understanding.

Once someone denies the true Source of the righteousness that is in them, then that person has turned to *human* righteousness. Turn to Isaiah 64:6 and write what God compares human righteousness to: _____

What does the Bible compare God's righteousness to? (Psalm 36:6) _____

If we become self-righteous, then, according to God's Word, that righteousness amounts to filthy rags. However, if we seek after God's righteousness, then we are seeking after a treasure that is compared to a great mountain.

Hundreds of years after Job's time, another servant of God spoke of God's righteousness with proper understanding. Turn to Psalm 23 to see what King David had to say about righteousness. Verse 3 says, "He restores my soul; He _____ me in the paths of _____ for His name's

sake." King David understood that God leads us in the paths of righteousness for His sake—not for ours. God chooses those in the world that He wants to have understanding of His way. Once He chooses such people, He will work with them through the power of His Holy Spirit so that they can walk in the paths of righteousness (which simply means to choose *right*). He does not do this to bring glory to any specific human being, but rather to glorify His way of life!

A LESSON FOR US

This is an important lesson for us today—especially at a time when so many around us do not understand God's Way. God has set you apart from the world because you are the son or daughter of a member of God's Church. By doing this, God has given you understanding that others in the world do not have.

For example, you understand that it is wrong to keep Christmas. This is probably something that is very noticeable to your friends and teachers at school. However, if you are asked questions about your beliefs, it is important that you do not feel that you are superior to others because you have this understanding. Remember, you understand certain things about God's way of life because He chose to work with you and give you this understanding. However, we must be sure that we continue to view God's truth as something very special.

GOD SPEAKS TO JOB

After Elihu was done speaking to Job, God started to speak to him. By this point, Job had begun

to see his wrong attitude. However, God also had strong words for Job, because He wanted Job to understand that no one is as righteous or as powerful as God. It is important for us to understand this, especially when we consider what happened to Satan.

Satan forgot that God is the most powerful Being in the universe. He rebelled against God. This has caused Satan to be miserable ever since.

It is out of love that God wants us to understand that He is the most powerful Being in the universe. If we forget this, then we will start to rely on ourselves to figure out what is right and what is wrong. God—who knows everything—knows that human beings do not have the ability to figure this out. Without God in our lives, we would be miserable—just as can be seen with people in the world, who do not have God’s knowledge.

So God challenged Job. In Job 38:3, God told Job to “prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.” Can you imagine what Job must have been thinking at this point? The Creator of the entire universe was speaking directly to him—telling him to be prepared to answer the questions that He was about to ask!

God starts by asking Job where he was when He laid the foundations of the earth. Then He asked Job who it was that determined the measurements of the earth. God says to Job, “surely you know, since you proclaim to be so righteous.” God did this to make the point to Job that he was not yet alive when God created the earth and determined its measurements.

God continued asking Job such questions for four chapters. This must have felt like an eternity to Job. With each question, Job real-

ized more and more that he had the wrong attitude. He realized that he was merely a human being, who was granted by God a chance to live. It was God who put the spirit in man in Job, and it was God’s Spirit that worked with Job’s spirit to give him understanding of God’s way of life. Job began to clearly understand that there was *nothing* that he did that led to his righteousness. It was all done by God working with him!

These four chapters can help us appreciate all that God does for us and for His creation. God asks Job many times if it is he who performs such tasks as causing the sun to rise in the morning (38:12), or directing the path of a bolt of lightning (38:25). Search through chapters 38 to 41, and in the blanks below write out three things that only God has the ability to do.

JOB REPENTS

After God was done speaking, Job acknowledged that God was right. He told God that he abhorred [despised] himself. He came to see himself for what he really was. This is exactly what God had planned. He knew that although Job was righteous, he was also *self*-righteous. He knew that Job needed to become humble and recognize where all his knowledge and wisdom came from.

Recall that Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar concluded that God was punishing Job because he had committed a large sin. This made God angry

toward these three men because they incorrectly accused Job and had misrepresented God's purpose for allowing Job to suffer.

God told these three men to offer a burnt offering and to ask Job to pray for them. The friends did ask Job, and he prayed for them.

JOB'S WEALTH RESTORED

Eventually, Job's wealth was restored. In fact, Job received twice as much as he had before! Turn to Job 42:12 and fill in the number of each type of animal God blessed Job with.

- _____ Sheep
- _____ Camels
- _____ (yoke of) Oxen
- _____ Donkeys

Job also had seven more sons and three more daughters. He lived to be 140 years old, which means that he was able to see children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and even great-great-grandchildren! Job's self-righteousness had stood in the way of true happiness. However, Job did find true happiness once he was able to humbly acknowledge the *true* Source of his righteousness.



