

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF  
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

Job – Sermon 1 of 4: *The Man and The Book*  
Sidney and Violet Sing *I Will Sing of the Mercies of the Lord*

**Editorial Note: What follows is one of a series of four sermons delivered by Sidney Cox on the Book of Job.**

**I do not know the church at which this series of sermons was delivered. Based upon the presence of his wife, Violet (who died in 1967), and his reference to their upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, I would date this sermon circa 1965, at which time they were living in Detroit, Michigan. Sidney Cox would have been 78 years of age in 1965.**

**In this series of sermons, we see Sidney Cox, the Bible scholar and teacher as opposed to Sidney Cox, the preacher and evangelist. Also of note, this series is perhaps the only teachings of Sidney Cox from the Old Testament of which I have knowledge. During his life, his message to others primarily focused on New Testament themes: the living Christ and the love of God found in His son, Christ Jesus.**

**John Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. August, 2009.**

It certainly is nice to be here with you dear friends and I would like to say first of all, how much we appreciate the privilege and invitation that has been given to us by this gracious pastor and equally gracious people. This makes us feel at home. I've been here a good many times before. This is not a strange spot that I find myself in tonight. We've been here many times before. And just to show you how much we feel at home, we're going to sing a little chorus for you. One that some of you have heard before, and I want you to sing it again. It's this little musical setting of the first verse of the 89<sup>th</sup> Psalm. Those of you whose memories go back to the teacher's meeting that was held in Grandma's Kitchen a few months ago, may remember that we sang it for you that night. We heard it last summer in a bible conference. Where the music came from, I do not know. I know where the words came from; they came from the first verse of the 89<sup>th</sup> Psalm. And so we'll have the first verse of the 89<sup>th</sup> Psalm set to music by some unknown writer to whom we are greatly indebted. And we want you to sing it tonight, and then tomorrow night, and then Tuesday night, and then Wednesday night. So, if you're wondering whether we're going to introduce the chorus, we are. But it will be the same one each night. And we're going to sing this one over and over and over again.

By the way, I'm quite sure that you know the words of the first verse of the 89<sup>th</sup> Psalm. Just to be quite sure, let's say them all together. Will you please? Everybody. "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever. With my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations." Nice to have an organ and a piano. And it's much nicer, forgive me, but it's much nicer to have the lady beside me that I'm going to ask to sing it with me. Come on, my dear. In case any of you folks don't know Mrs. Cox, you take a good look at her, will you? That will answer a question that may be in some of your minds, why I fell in love with her nearly fifty years ago? The reason is still here. Now, you listen while two old folks

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sing you this song, and then we'll do it all together. By the way, the choir's going to help us, too. So that you listen please; you're in next.

*I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing, I will sing.  
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.  
With my mouth will I make known, Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness.  
With my mouth will I make known, Thy faithfulness through all generations.  
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.*

Now you listen while we sing it again, but try, don't sing it along with us now. You just get behind us now, and just put it all the way around us, will you? Now you listen once more and then you're next.

*I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing, I will sing.  
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.  
With my mouth will I make known, Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness.  
With my mouth will I make known, Thy faithfulness through all generations.  
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.*

Everybody singing-

*I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing, I will sing.  
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.  
With my mouth will I make known, Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness.  
With my mouth will I make known, Thy faithfulness through all generations.  
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.*

Now, that was a good try, we're going to sing it again tomorrow night. Don't forget. Now, I want you to sing that last phrase over again, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord," remember it begins and ends in exactly the same way. I want you to sing that last phrase over again, and I want you to go up at the end instead of coming down. You just turn yourselves upside down. Go on up and hit that high note there at the end, will you? Instead of coming down, go on up there. Now if you know the difference between up and down, you just do that, will you? Now if you don't, it's alright whatever you do. But if you know the difference, you just go on up and hit the high note at the end. Please, everybody-

*I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.*

Thank you so much. We'll be doing it tomorrow night. I thought while Brother Johnson was giving us that little recycle of problems and difficulties with crowds and shadows and what not there just a few moments ago that perhaps to look at Job is not an inappropriate book to be to be considering just about this time. Come on down you folks.

Turn with me please to the first chapter of the book of Job. The book of Job, if you please. Now this is not one of the books that we usually turn to when we are speaking of blessings. There are so many folks that determine whether a meeting is a success as far as they are concerned by whether they have or get something that they describe as a blessing. If they get a blessing, than it's a success. And the book of Job is not usually one of those books that we turn to if we are seeking that mythical something that we

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speak of as a blessing. But if this book is written by a man inspired by the Holy Spirit, holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And the writer of this book, whoever he may be, was undoubtedly one of them, and this whole scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine and for reproof and for instruction and righteousness. And certainly the book of Job takes its place along with all the other books. It has upon it the fingerprints of God. It has throbbing through it and in it and out of it that which God intended to be for our uplift, our cleansing, our instruction, and our blessing.

Now, let's stop and have a moment of prayer please.

*Our Father, we pray that Thou will do for us that which we can not do for ourselves. That Thou will supply for us that wisdom that comes from God, that touch of the Spirit that will quicken our understanding and quicken our ears, so that we're not merely listening to a human's voice, and to a book that appears even in our Bible. But that we are listening to Thy personal word to us. We pray our Father that Thou mayest be able to say, even by this means, something personally to each one of us. And so illumine this book, we pray, and fill this place with Thy glory. In Jesus precious name, Amen.*

Now, when we turn to the book of Job, we have a very remarkable thing before us. It's a book that is clothed in beauty and in mystery and you'll find question marks from one end of it to the other. Now don't expect that we are going to answer all of the questions that are raised in the book of Job. In the first place, some of them are not answered at all. A great many of them are not answered in the book of Job or anywhere else in the Old Testament. A good many of them are answered in the New Testament. Some of you may have read Dr. Campbell Morgan's remarkable little book called, The Answers of Jesus to Job.<sup>1</sup> Now, if you haven't read it, you sell your house and lot and buy it sometime, will you? And add it to your library. Be sure to do that. So that, don't look for the answers all the way through that will be coming from us. We may be able to make suggestions about certain things, I hope we will. We may be able to come to some reasonable conclusion, but when we get through, there will still be some questions unanswered, that you will find in this remarkable thing that we call the book of Job.

There are questions, for instance, about the author and about place and time, and even the purpose of it. They may be remaining unanswered. But there are two things that face us immediately. One is important, and the other is not important at all. There is a man and a place. The man is important. The place is not. Now you will notice that the theme for tonight, and by the way I don't want you to be quite sure that we're going to follow just exactly what is there on the advertising card. We may, and we may not. If we get through within the thirty minutes, we shall try to keep it within that time, or \_\_\_\_\_ good. If we don't, we shall stop when the clock tells us to stop and pick it up again the next night whether it's on the bulletin or not. We shall just go on and do as the Spirit leads us in this respect. So don't let, get too tied up with a string of titles. But the one tonight is alright, "The Man and the Book."

Right away we find we are facing a man and a place. There was a man, no question about it at all. There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name is Job. Now, don't ask me where Uz may be located, I don't know. It is more than likely that it is one of those localities somewhere between the Euphrates and

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, DD was the pastor at the famous Westminster Chapel in London from 1904 – 1917. He was known as the "Prince of Expositors." Preaching Magazine rated him among the 10 greatest preachers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was often quoted by the Late Great Dr. Vance Havner and loved by Dr. R.G. Lee. His sermons were widely published.

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the Tigris, somewhere in that thickly populated area, even in those dim, distant days so long ago. But where it is, is not as important. What kind of a place it was, is a lot of importance. The man, my dear, is important. We want to take a good look at him. If in some future day you discover, where Uz is located, all well and good. But tonight we are not interested primarily in that place, we are interested in a man. There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. Now we're interested in this man, certainly we are. The place is not important; the man is.

What kind of a man was Job? What kind of a man is he? This is important. Let's have a good look at him, because remember, if you please, that Job that we find at the beginning of the book is quite different to the Job that we discover at the end of the book. And the book itself unfolds the process by which God transforms Job as he was, to Job as he became. It doesn't look as if there was much transformation needed about Job, does it? When we first look at him, what kind of a man was he? Notice, if you please, a man "perfect." Now, that means complete. Well-rounded. Balanced in himself - the meaning of the word "perfect." That's only one word about Job. There are four of them.

Notice please. He is "upright." Here is a man who's straight. The word implies his relationship to others. One word describes Job himself, the other word describes his relationship to others. This man who is straight. This man who is upright. There are characters that you find throughout the scriptures just like that. One for instance, that's hidden away in the fourth chapter of Chronicles, 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles, and you find them every once in awhile, an "upright man." A man who's four-square. This man, his name is Jabez. And you find him described as an, "honorable man." A man who is, "more honorable than his brethren." Now you take the word "perfect" on the one side and "upright" on the other, and put them together and you've got the word "honorable." And here we have another man of this kind. We're looking at a man, who's fine and splendid and magnificent.

Now, how come that we find a man like this? What's the secret of a life like that? Well, the next two words tell us. He, "feared God." Now that doesn't mean that he feared God in his wrath, but he feared God in his righteousness. And remember, beloved, the beginning of wisdom is to fear God, not to fear the wrath of God, but to fear the righteousness of God. And when any man stands in the presence of God's righteousness, then there comes to him the sense of awe, that came to Isaiah when he stood in the temple that day and looked up and saw the Lord high and lifted up, and heard the chanting of the children as they sang, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty." This fear that came to the heart of a man like that, that's the fear that came into Job. Not the fear of the wrath of God, but the fear of the righteousness of God.

Now, see what the fear of the righteousness of God did as far as Job was concerned. He, "feared God and eschewed evil." Now there's an old-fashioned word for you if you like. That's dressed in long old-fashioned garments, you don't find that word very many, in very many places. Occasionally you'd find it here in the scripture, but you will find this word is a very interesting word. It means, "a turning away from." Not merely a recognition of the fact that evil is evil. Not merely an awareness of its presence, but a deliberate turning away from it. You will remember the Thessalonians did exactly that thing. They turned to God from idols. And here you have a man who turns to God from evil. He not only considers evil for what it is, but he turns away from it with the deliberate action of his entire life. His back towards evil; his face towards God.

Now this is Job. This is the man. The man who refused to listen to the subtle, silent voices of evil. Remember my dear, we can only see evil for what it is when we stand in the light of God's righteousness. It has been that a man who was fine to powers he was concerned. There are many of them like that. Many folks that we look at them and we doubt whether they need to be improved at all. Nicodemus was a man like that. He was so splendid and so magnificent, just like Job. Until he stood in the white light of the presence of our Lord. Then, he discovered something about him. Isaiah was just the same, until he stood there in the presence of this Holy One, high and lifted up. Saul of Tarsus was the same. He had a righteousness of his own. He had magnificence of his own. He was born this, and that, and the other. And so far as the righteousness which is of the Lord is concerned, he was blameless. What could be done for a man like that? But one day, he stood in the presence of God, and then all of those things that he had counted so valuable and so beautiful, he set on one side, not merely as refuse, but of \_\_\_\_\_. That he might win Christ.

Job, this man, whom we look at and wonder, can any improvement be made in him? And, we're all the more impressed when we notice the testimony of God himself, regarding this man Job, "There is none like him in the earth." What a man we are considering. Not only was a man like that of interest to God, but he was of interest to Satan as well. And you can be quite sure, my dear, that if you become four-square with God and the things that God stands for and God's standards for our lives, we shall at the same time become of unusual interest to Satan. If Satan isn't interested in you, you better watch yourself and look at that life of yours and see whether it is worth getting disturbed about. If your life is what God wants it to be, you can be quite sure not only will God be interested in it, but Satan will too. You remember that how God threw down the gauntlet for Satan; "hast though considered my servant, Job? Have you taken a good look at my servant, Job? Have you considered him? Have you weighed him? Have you measured him? Have you tried him? Would you like to? Hast though considered my servant, Job?" God was interested in a man like this, so was Satan.

Now, we're going to talk about the man in the book. And seeing that we shall be talking about the man tomorrow night and Tuesday night; we shall be talking about, "When God speaks" on Wednesday night. But we're going to talk about the book for a little while. Let's talk about this book of Job. I want you to notice certain things about it. In the first place, I want you to notice its size. It's a large book. It was written by a man who composed a large and important book - 42 chapters. It's important because of its position in the Old Testament canon- it's right straight in the center of the Old Testament. It stands right there in the center of this structure that we speak of as the Old Testament. I want you to notice its antiquity. Every time you come near the book of Job, you can put out your hands to touch it, there is a sacredness about it that comes when you touch old things. You're looking at something that's precious, wrapped in the garments of antiquity. This lovely thing that we speak of as the book of Job.

I want you to listen to a minute, for a minute or two as to what the great thinkers of the world consider in thinking of the book of Job. Listen to them. Tennyson said, "The greatest poem, whether of ancient or modern literature." This book. Luther said, "It is more magnificent and sublime than any other book in the scriptures." Listen again. Victor Hugo said, "The book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind." And Carlisle said, "I call this book apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written. Our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem- man's destiny and God's ways with him in the earth. There is nothing written, I think, of equal literary merit." Now, we don't often invite these men to come to meetings with us, but we have invited them to give their testimonies tonight, and there it is. We have invited Alfred Lord Tennyson to say what he thinks about

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this book. And what Martin Luther thinks about it. And we have invited Victor Hugo to come and give us his witness tonight. And we have invited Thomas Carlisle to come and say what he thinks about this book that we are daring to consider during these few days together. It ought to grip our hearts, don't you? Don't you think so? If it gripped the hearts of men like those we have just mentioned, how tight a grip it ought to have upon our hearts! What a reverence there ought to be as we approach a book like this.

Now, let's take a moment to look at the title of it and the subject of it. We shall not take long to look at the subject, because we shall be considering that tomorrow night and Tuesday night. But the book of Job takes its name of course from the patriarch whose history it records. Job is the one prominent human character in this book. All other persons referred to are but secondary. However important they may seem for the moment, they are secondary things. This book is the story of the character and the testing and the humiliation and the triumph and the ultimate great blessings of Job.

Now, let's pinpoint another thought here as we go along. Job was a real character. He was a real historical person. Now, right there we are going to run into conflict with some of our brothers, and maybe sisters...who think differently. There are any number of folks who will tell you that Job is a mythical character. But, I think we can find from the scripture itself, that that is not so, that Job is a real person. Now in the first place, notice this: the fact that Job is named at all indicates that he was a real person. Now, fictional characters do appear in the scripture. As a matter of fact, our Lord used fictional characters many, many a times. But you will notice this, that in the \_\_\_\_\_ teaching of our Lord, you will notice this thing: that whenever a real character, a genuine person, a real circumstance was mentioned, the name was given. Where the circumstance is being used as an illustration, and the people as an illustration, the name was not given at all.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Two men went up into the temple to pray. Harken, behold, there once was a sower to sow. What was the name of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho? Give me the names of the two men who went up into the temple to pray. You know what they were, one was a Pharisee, the other was a publican. What was the name of these two folks? What was the name of the sower that went out to sow? What? Well, we stand and we say, "Well, the names are not written." Quite right. They are not written. But when our great Lord speaks about a certain incident, that concerned a man named \_\_\_\_\_ and Lazarus, and it was a real incident, then the names are given. And the fact that Job is named at all is one of the indications that Job was a real character.

Now remember, if you please, that these, this real character is mentioned three or four times in the scripture without any sign of a question as to whether he was real or not. When Ezekiel mentions him there, you can be quite sure in that fourteenth chapter in the twentieth verse, and lists him with other great names - Daniel is one of them. You can be quite sure that Ezekiel was aware of the fact that the man whose name he had included in his book was a real person. When James mentions him in the other end of the book, you can be quite sure that he was a real person as far as James is concerned. And there is a more important testimony that stands between Ezekiel at one end and James at the other, and we shall refer to that in just a moment or two.

Now, again remember, that this man, the story of this man, has been put into a great epic poem. As we have seen, one of the greatest in all of the literature of the world. But, this poem is a scriptural first

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poem. It isn't a poem written by some great one about a mythical character, not at all. It takes its place in the great poetry of the scriptures. Now notice something, that every great poem in the scripture is written around a real person, and a real incident. When the great song is written in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, this is a real thing. It's not a mythical affair at all. When Deborah writes her magnificent poem there of the deliverance of Israel from the Canaanites, Deborah was a real person, and so was that deliverance from the Canaanites. She was describing a real thing. And somebody, I think we know who, but somebody wrote this great, magnificent thing, and wrote it about a real person, and about real incidents. Something that actually happened. Job, my dear, was a real person.

Now, let's see if we can get some conclusion about another question that arises. When did Job live? Now here again, we are in conflict with many and many of our intellectual brethren who assign this beautiful book somewhere beyond the captivity of Babylon or somewhere else. But there seems to be every evidence to support the thought that this book is the oldest thing there is in the scriptures - the oldest of all the scriptural books. And one of the things has to do with the age of Job. Now, Job was a man who in all probability lived somewhere between the time of the Flood and the appearance of Abraham. Now, let's support that, if you please. Let's see if that would be correct. Let's put Job right in that period - between the Flood and the appearance of Abraham. In that case, he would come about the eleventh chapter of the book of Genesis. Now, let's put him there, and see if we can find something to support that. In the first place, every book in the scripture, but this one, has to do definitely, positively with God's chosen people, Israel. Every book in the scriptures, but this one. And in this book, you will not find one single mention of Israel or anything connected with it. Now that gives us the thought that this story is about a man living in a time before Israel had appeared at all. And you'll remember that the dim beginnings of Israel are seen there in the loins of Abraham.

Now, let's look again, if you please. In this book, certain important events connected with Israel, such as the Exodus, are not even mentioned. Now certainly if these things had happened, you would have found, have found some small echo of it somewhere. There may be in this book of Job, just a reference, a faint reference to the Flood, and possibly to Sodom and Gomorrah. But that's as far as one can go. And the conclusion is, Job lived at a time before Israel had appeared at all. Now, notice it again, if you please. The length of Job's life is usually considered to be two hundred years. Now, let's underscore that figure, two hundred years. Now, remember, if you please, that on the other side of the Flood, the life of man was much longer than it is now. It went up to a thousand years. Most of the men, or a good many of the men whose names appeared in the scriptures lived almost that length of time - between nine hundred and a thousand years. Now, immediately after the Flood, the length of human life was shortened until it finally became three score years and ten. But remember, that that change in the lifespan of man did not take place all at once. It was a gradual lessening of the life expectancy of a man in those days. Now, if Job is two hundred years old, then it puts him right in the same class with Abram's father, Terah, who was two hundred and five years old. It puts him in the same class, notice how the age gradually is declining, with Isaac, a hundred and eighty years. With Jacob, a hundred and forty-seven years. Notice it coming down. With Joseph, a hundred and ten years. With Moses, a hundred and twenty years. Now, if this man be two hundred years, he automatically finds himself in that age bracket. And we put him there, and we find some evidence that supports the thought that Job lived in those days, before Israel had appeared at all.

Now, here is another interesting fact about him. And with this, we're going to close. I can see the clock, whether you can or not. We'll close with this. Job was a priest in his own family. Now, let me read it to you in this fifth verse of this first chapter, "And it was so when the days of their feasting had gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said it may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually offer burnt offerings." He was the priest in his family. Now this family relationship, or this family arrangement of the head of the family being priest in the family continued until the time the Levitical priesthood became established. And from that point on, it was contrary to the law of Moses, which God had given, that any man should be priest in his own family circle. Now, here was a man who acted as priest in his family circle. And consequently, we put him into the place where that kind of thing was in order and in accordance with God's rule for that particular time.

Now, I think we've got a very interesting character before us, this man Job. And an equally interesting book. And that was our subject tonight. Now we haven't at all covered the ground, not at all. We shall be doing a little bit more of it tomorrow night. That's what I meant when I said, "Let's not be too tied down by some title that is there." Because what we do not do on one night, I'd like to do on the next. And so we shall be picking up the story at this particular time.

Now, God thought it worth while to bring certain influences to bear to make Job what he wanted him to be. You can be quite sure, my dear, that God is very anxious indeed that you should be what He wants you to be. And there is no way to be what God wants us to be, except to come as helpless, undone sinners to the foot of the cross from whence flowed blood to cleanse, light that can guide, power that can transform. And God wants every one of us at the foot of the cross, in order that transformations may take place in your life and mine, that can only come when God can bring us into contact with the precious, flowing, loudly speaking blood of His only begotten Son. If you are not saved tonight, if you are not a Christian, if you've been on around the edges of things, and you've had a name to live, but are dead. If you've been around just in contact with things. If you've just tasted that the Lord is gracious, then why not come tonight, as every sinner must come and receive the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and Lord. How glad He will be, if someone makes that decision tonight.