

Prophet Ayyub (as)

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Prophet Ayyub (Job) was a descendant of Prophet Ibrahim. Ayyub's mother was the daughter of Prophet Lut and his wife was a direct descendant of Prophet Yusuf. Ayyub lived in Rome with his wife Rahma and fourteen children.

Job's story in Islam is parallel to the Hebrew Bible's story, though the main emphasis is on Job remaining steadfast to God; there is no mention of Job's discussions with friends in the Qur'anic text, but later Muslim literature states that Job indeed had brothers, who argued with the man about the cause of his affliction. Some Muslim commentators speak of Job being an ancestor of the Romans. Islamic literature also comments on Job's time and place of prophetic ministry, saying that he came after Joseph in the prophetic series, and that he preached to his own people rather than being sent to a specified community. Tradition further recounts that Job will be one of the leader in heaven of the group: "those who patiently endured."

In the Qur'an

Ayyub is first mentioned in the Qur'an in the following verse:

Indeed, We have revealed to you, O Muhammad, as We had revealed to Noah and the prophets after him. And we revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, their descendants, Jesus, Job (Ayyub), Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave the book (the Zabur, the Psalms).

Qur'an 4: 163

The Qur'an describes Job as a righteous servant of Allah, who was afflicted by suffering for a lengthy period of time. However, it clearly states that Job never lost faith in God and forever called upon God in prayer, asking Allah to remove his affliction: "And mention Job, when he called out to his Lord, "Indeed, adversity has touched me, and you are the Most Merciful of the merciful."

Qur'an 21: 83

The narrative goes on to state that after many years of suffering, God said to Job: "Strike the ground with your foot!" At once, Job struck the ground and God caused a cool spring of water to gush forth from the Earth, from which Job replenished himself. The Qur'an states that after Satan had given up trying to turn Job away from his Lord, God removed Job's affliction and returned his family to him, doubling them in number. He returned Job's wealth and showered Job with gold. Once Job's wife had seen her husband restored to prosperity and health, she thanked God, but then worried over the oath her husband had taken earlier, in which he had promised to beat her with a hundred strokes. Job was also deeply grieved over the oath he had taken, amidst his suffering. God, however, sent a revelation to Job, which told him to not beat his wife, but to gently hit her with a bundle of soft grass.

Qur'anic commentary and Muslim tradition

Ibn Kathir narrates the story in the following manner. Job was a very rich person with much land, and many animals and children - all of which were lost and soon he was struck with skin disease as a test from God. He was afflicted with sores. He remained steadfast and patient, so God eventually relieved him of the disease.

Job's lineage was an important field of study for many of the early Islamic scholars. A prevalent belief among early commentators was that Job descended from the line of Esau, the son of Ishaq. Although various commentators gave different genealogies, they all traced his ancestry to Abraham through Isaac's son Esau. Those scholars who traced Job's lineage back to Abraham did so by using the following Qur'anic verse as the basis for their view:

"That was the reasoning We gave to Abraham to use against his people. We raise whom We will in degree, your Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge. We bestowed upon him Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all three We guided; and before him We guided Noah and among his progeny David, Solomon, Job (Ayyub), Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. We do reward those who do good."

Muslim historical literature fleshes out Job's story and describes him as being a late descendant of the patriarch Noah. Similar to the Hebrew Bible's narrative, Ibn Kathir mentions that Satan heard the angels of God speak of Job as being the most faithful man of his generation. Job, being a chosen prophet of God, would remain committed in daily prayer and would

frequently call unto God, thanking God for blessing him with abundant wealth and a large family. But Satan planned to turn the God-fearing Ayyub away from God and wanted Job to fall into disbelief and corruption. Therefore, God allowed Satan to afflict Job with distress and intense illness and suffering, as God knew that Job would never turn away from his Lord. Although Job's possessions were destroyed and he suffered many calamities, he remained steadfast in his worship of God and remained committed to his religion. Satan then appeared to Job in the guise of an old man and suggested that God was not rewarding Job for his prayer. Job, however, rebuked Satan and told him that God is all-knowing and does what He thinks is best.

It is said that then Satan, having failed at tempting Job, turned to Job's wife, who was also a faithful woman. Satan reminded Job's wife of her life before Job's affliction and how they were abundant in family and fortune. Job's wife, although she did not lose faith, burst into tears and asked Job to tell God to remove this suffering from her household. Job, in his misery, rebuked his wife and told her that this suffering had been for a relatively short period of time and, without thinking, told her that he would beat her with 100 strokes for complaining. After Job was cured, Allah ordered him to take some grass and to hit her 100 times. By doing this, Job fulfilled his promise to Allah without hurting her. This Islamic narrative is symbolic and is often used by Islamic preachers as a reminder to be kind to wives.

The Hebrew Bible states:

The characters in the Book of Job consist of Job, his wife, his three friends (Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar), a man named Elihu, God, and angels (one of whom is named Satan).

It begins with an introduction to Job's character - he is described as a blessed man who lives righteously in the land of Uz. God removes Job's protection and gives permission to Satan to take his wealth, children, and his physical health. Despite his difficult circumstances, Job does not curse God, but rather curses the day of his birth. Job's miserable earthly condition is simply God's will.

In the following, Job debates with three friends concerning his condition. They argue whether it was justified, and they debate solutions to his problems. Job ultimately condemns all their counsel, beliefs, and critiques of him, as false. Job stresses the point that he understands that his afflictions are by God's decree, even though he despairs at not knowing why. Job appears faithful without direct knowledge of God and without demands for special attention from God.

The text gives an allusion to Job 28:28: "Unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

God rebukes the three friends and gives them instruction for the remission of sin, followed by Job being restored to an even better condition than his former

wealthy state (Job 42: 10 - 17). Job is blessed to have seven sons, and three daughters named Jemimah, Keziah, and Keren-happuch. His daughters were said to be the most beautiful women in the land.

Ayyub's claimed shrine in Al-Qarah Mountains, southern Oman.

