

Job 1 – Thursday, January 25th, 2018

- As we begin our study through this book I think it would be good if we first knew a little about what God has in store for us in it.
- I'll first share what I call fast facts concerning the book of Job, the first of which is it's believed to be the oldest book in the Bible.
- Also, it's the first of the poetic books, and there is some debate as to whether or not it was written by Job or by someone else.

- Another interesting fact is concerning the meaning of the name "Job." It literally means, "Hated." Truly the devil hated this man.
- But God! But God loved Job, so much so, that Satan's hatred of Job would be no match for the matchless love of God for him.
- So too is this true for us today, actually this is one of the magnificent take away's from this powerful and profound book of Job.

- Another take away from the book of Job is that it deals head on with the problem of pain, and the mystery of man's suffering.
- I say mystery because; God's ways are mysterious, especially in the way that he deals with us when it comes to our suffering.
- I should probably forewarn you ahead of time, that the answers to the why's and ways of God won't be found within this book.

Oswald Chambers in "Baffled to Fight Better," which is a writing on Job and the problem of suffering, of this says, "It is in such a book as Job that many suffering souls will find consolation and sustaining, and this because no attempt is made to explain the why of suffering, but rather an expression is given to suffering which leaves one with the inspiration of an explanation in the final issue. The problem in connection with suffering arises from the fact that there is seemingly no explanation of it."

In another devotional I'm going through right now titled, "Let go" the author writes, "I am amazed at the power that comes to us through suffering: we are worth nothing without the cross. Of course, I tremble and agonize while it lasts, and all my words about the beneficial effects of suffering vanish under the torture. But when it is all over, I look back on the experience with deep appreciation, and am ashamed that I bore it with so much bitterness. I am learning a great deal from my own foolishness."

- One of the greatest struggles we have when it comes to suffering is that we seek a peace that comes vis-à-vis understanding.
- The problem with this is that a true peace will never come in that way and even if it does it will only be fleeting and it won't last.
- What the book of Job reveals to us is we can actually have a true and lasting peace, absent our understanding of the suffering.

Proverbs 3:5-6 -- 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Philippians 4:6-8 -- 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

There's one more Oswald Chamber's quote I want to share before we jump into the book. It really sums up the matter with this question, "Will I trust the revelation given of God by Jesus Christ when everything in my personal experience flatly contradicts it?"

Job 1 -- 1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. 2 And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. 3 Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.

- The chapter begins by telling us that Job was a blameless and upright man who feared God, which is why he shunned evil.
- There is an important detail here in these first 3 verses that will be germane to our understanding of what's about to happen.
- Namely, that of how righteous and prosperous Job was being the reason that Satan uses to accuses him for worshipping God.

Of this detail concerning Job's righteousness, G. Campbell Morgan writes that it... "will save us from the mistake of thinking at any point of those experiences as having their explanation in the man himself. Nor for himself did he suffer. His pains were not penalties for wrongdoing: they were not even chastisements for correction."

4 And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5 So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer 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 Job did regularly.

- It seems that Job was not only blessed with prosperity, but also blessed abundantly with harmony in his home with his family.
- I can't help but notice as a father, how good and godly of a father Job must have been in rising early to basically pray for them.
- In doing a study of father's in the Bible, one would have to put Job at the top of the list as being a godly example for all parents.

Of this, F.B. Meyer wrote, "What a beautiful example is furnished by Job to Christian parents! When your girls are going among strangers, and your boys into the great ways of the world, and you are unable to impose your will upon them, as in the days of childhood, you can yet pray for them, casting over them the shield of intercession, with strong crying's and tears. They are beyond your reach; but by faith you can move the arm of God on their behalf."

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

- These two verses provide us with very important information about how Satan operates and what Satan will attempt to do to us.
- Specifically, that of going to and fro, back and forth on the earth stalking us as his prey waiting for an optimum time to attack us.
- Then, when that time comes, he has to obtain permission from the Lord first, as we'll see next, before he does anything to us.

1 Peter 5:8–10 -- 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

James 5:11 -- As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

8 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?" 9 So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that on it's face it seems as if Satan is falsely accusing Job.
- While Job is the subject of the accusation, God is actually the object of the accusation of Job's worship being that he's blessed.
- So much so, that Satan's challenge is that were God to allow adversity to strike, then Job would surely curse God to His face.

Here's what Chamber's had to say, "Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?" Job 1:9–12 might be paraphrased in this way: Satan is represented as saying to God, "You are infatuated with the idea that man loves You for Your own sake; he never has and never will. Job, for instance, simply loves you because You bless and prosper him, but touch any one of his blessings and he will curse You to Your face and prove that no man on earth loves You for Your own sake."

12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

- I would suggest this one verse is amongst the most telling and even encouraging in the entirety of Scripture related to Satan.
- This because, it's a much-needed reminder of how Satan cannot do anything to us unless he first has permission from God.
- Again, the only time that God will allow Satan permission to touch us is if it brings about God's glory and our good in the end.

13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; 14 and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 when the Sabeans raided them and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 16 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 17 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 18 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 19 and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

- I really don't know if it's possible for us to fully grasp the enormity and the intensity of what this must have been like for Job.
- It's interesting to note that Satan went as far as he possibly could within the scope of that which God had allowed him to do.
- The reason I mention this is because it speaks to how evil and merciless our adversary is when it comes to his attacks on us.

G. Campbell Morgan of this wrote, "Satan is here revealed in startling light. His malice is seen in the choice of time. He strikes in the midst of festivity."

20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

- One has to wonder what the host of heaven along with Satan and his demons must have thought when Job reacted in this way.
- After all that he thought he successfully did in order to get Job to curse God, instead, Job blesses God and he worships God.
- It's important to understand that Satan is not God's opposite in being omniscient and he can't know the end from the beginning.

Adam Clarke said it this way, "In this Satan was utterly disappointed; he found a man who loved his God more than his earthly portion.... He had been so often successful in this kind of temptation, that he made no doubt that he should succeed again."