

## Job

When we read about Job's story in the bible, we learn about a man who really loved the Lord and was full of integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil. The Lord even called him blameless. He would regularly offer burnt offerings to the Lord on behalf of his children '*just in case*' they may have sinned or have cursed God in their hearts.

There is a record of 2 conversations in this book between God and Satan. God points Job out to Satan admiringly. He even called him the finest man in all the earth. He feared God and stayed away from evil.

***Job 1: 6-12 – One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. 'Where have you come from?' the Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, 'I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on.' Then the Lord asked Satan, 'Have you noticed my servant, Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless – a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.' Satan replied to the Lord, 'Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! But reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!'. 'All right, you may test him,' the Lord said to Satan. 'Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, but don't harm him physically.' So, Satan left the Lord's presence.***

Here we see that God allowed Satan to test Job. He allowed him to do whatever he wanted with Job's possessions, but Satan was not allowed to harm him physically. Job ended up losing his livestock and his children in this first testing by Satan. He mourned for his losses, but he *still* worshipped the Lord. In all this he did not sin by blaming God for his losses.

Then after that we once again see God asks Satan the second time if he noticed Job and how after all the trouble Satan caused Job, he still maintains his integrity. He still fears God and stays away from evil.

***Job 1:4-6 - Satan replied to the Lord, 'Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life. But reach out and take away his health, and he will surely curse you to your face!'. 'All right, do with him as you please,' the Lord said to Satan. 'But spare his life.'***

Satan then strikes Job with terrible boils from head to toe. His wife even tells him to curse God and die, but Job refuses to curse God. He then asked her this question: should we only accept good things from the hand of the Lord and never anything bad? In doing this he did nothing wrong. Job knew that despite his situation God was still in control of all things.

His friends came to visit him, and they try to console him. Seeing his state, they sat 7 days and nights on the ground with him and mourned. No one spoke for they saw his suffering was too great for words! Then Job finally speaks and cursed the day of his birth. His friends then start offering him advise. Eliphaz tells him If I were you, I would go to God and present my case to him. Zophar tells him to get rid of his sins and leave all iniquity behind him. They start questioning his integrity and assumed he did something wrong to be in the state that he was in. They insisted that the Lord was punishing him for some sin he committed and wanted him to confess his sin to God. Eventually, Job starts defending himself to his friends.

He eventually starts questioning God as to why he turned his back on him. He even says: ***'God is picking a quarrel with me, and he considers me his enemy'***. **(Job 33:10)**

God then challenges Job directly regarding his questions and reminds Job that he is still God Almighty - The Most High God!

***Job 38:2 – Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorant words?***

Job repents for questioning God. He acknowledges that God is still sovereign and still his God. God then rebukes his friends and asks Job to pray for his friends and afterwards he was blessed by the Lord. The Lord rewarded him and gave him twice as much as before!!

In our own lives we experience the same things as Job in times of trials and testing. We question the Lord in times of testing, and sometimes we feel that God is punishing us for something we have done. God sometimes allows Satan to do bad things just like in the story of Job. He wants to show Satan that his children will still choose him and will not turn to evil. Satan might tell us lies like we deserve it because we did this or that in the past/present and so forth. We need to realise that testing will come to all of Gods children and the enemy will be allowed to test us but only until a certain point which God gives to him.

Testing will come to all.

***Job 7:18 – For you examine us every morning and test us every moment.***

It is our attitudes and the way we respond to it, that will determine whether we will continue to love and obey God despite the circumstances. We will either run to God or run away from God. The best is always to run to God - but we sometimes run away in shame or in anger. We might even argue with God.

Only after a long period of long suffering, do we finally realise that the best option all along was to run to God and not away from him.

Also, it is noted in Job that the thing he feared most, came upon him.

***Job 3:25 – What I always feared has happened to me. What I dreaded has come true.***

Fear is real! The more it is fed, the more it grows. We need to depend on the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of fear and allow the Lord to help us in these areas by giving these areas completely over to the Lord. The enemy will then not be able to use that very fear to bring us to a point of hopelessness. For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.

Without testing, we will not know where our trust lies. We will not know in whom we put our trust in, in times of trials and storms. When we put our trust in the Lord despite what we are experiencing and no matter what the season is, we will come out stronger than before we went in the fire.

This life on earth we all currently experience is NOT our best life we will live. Don't be deceived by what the people of the world say. They live for the now and are afraid of death and the afterlife - as they put it. We are in this world but not of this world. We as children of God live, longing to live with our God for all eternity. Earth is our training ground for eternity. We need to train well and to pass the tests that come our way.

We need to trust the Lord in these processes and remember this scripture:

***Rom 8:28 – And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.***

We will grow in our faith in our God and our trust and dependence in him alone. The next time when testing comes, hold on to this one thought: The enemy only gets to test us, he does not have the final say! God will not allow the enemy to test us beyond what we can bear. ABBA Father is still in control.

He singles out his children confidently allowing the enemy to test them, knowing full well that they will still choose him and not turn their back on him.

**REMEMBER:**

1. Watch out for who you surround yourself with, especially in times of testing.

***Job 12: 4 – Yet my friends laugh at me, for I call on God and expect an answer.***

2. Do not argue with God.

***Job 40:2 – Do you still want to argue with the Almighty? You are God’s critic, but do you have the answers?***

3. Know that you are being refined.

***Job 23:10 – But he knows where I am going. And when he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold.***

4. Know during it all, God is Sovereign and in control.

***Job 42:2 – I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you.***

It is also your moment like Job, when God allows Satan to test you and to show him that you belong to God and will not curse him. It is your moment to be singled out adoringly by ABBA, to show Satan that this is my dear child. My child will still love and obey me despite of his/her situation.

So, after the test - when we pass, overcome, and come out stronger than before, just like Job, we will receive double blessings for all our troubles.