

Why Job?

If there ever was a man that truly had his faith tried, it would be Job. Job was a man, full of faith, truly blessed by God with the abundances of possessions that he had, until one day, he lost everything. The reason for this is explained in the first chapter of Job, in which we find a conversation between God and Satan. God talks about Job and asks Satan to consider him and all the faith that he has in God. God talks about how blameless Job is and how he shuns evil and stays strong in the faith. Satan told God the only reason Job was so strong was because God blessed him so much. Satan said that if God were to take it all away, Job would no longer remain faithful and would curse God's face. God accepted the challenge and placed Job in Satan's hands and told him he could do whatever he wanted, except harm Job physically.

It was then that Satan reached out his hand and took everything Job had away from him, taking the lives of his sons and daughters and leaving him all alone with nothing. Even though Job's possessions were all gone, he still did not sin or do wrong against God (Job 1:22).

In the second chapter of Job we find almost the same exact conversation with God and Satan in which God is again telling Satan about Job and about how faithful and strong Job is. He asks Satan to consider how there is still none like Job, even though he has lost everything. Satan then tells God that if he were to stretch out his hand and this time harm Job, he would turn and surly curse God's face. God once again places Job in Satan's hands and tells him he can do anything to Job, except take his life.

Satan then went a second time and this time struck Job with painful boils from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. Job then sat in ashes scraping his boils with a potsherd -- broken pottery. It was then that Job's own wife told him to curse God and die, but Job still refused to turn his back upon God.

Throughout the book of Job, there are several instances in which four people came to him, questioning him and telling him to repent. They wanted to know what Job had done because they thought Job's trouble was a punishment from God. These four people, Eliphaz, Zophar, Elihu, and Bildad, each confront Job, telling him he must have done something to deserve all his sufferings. Job is very confused and says that he doesn't know what he did wrong. All the while, Job ponders and questions himself and longs for death, pleading that God would answer him and tell him why this misery has come upon him.

In the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, God answers him. But instead of answering Job's question, God asked Job some questions. God said in Job 38:2-5, *"Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements -- surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?"* God basically continued to ask Job questions like this until the forty-second chapter of Job. The Lord doesn't give Job a straight out answer, but instead asks him questions concerning who Job is compared to God. God is basically telling Job that He created him and all the earth and knows what is best for him.

Finally, in chapter forty-two, we find that God not only restored what Job lost, but restored twice as much to him. We find that Job lived a good and peaceful life after all his turmoil and in the last verse of the book of Job, we find that Job died, old and full of age.

But what does this story have to do with us? How can we apply Job's life to ours? Many times, we go through hard times ourselves, and wonder why things happen the way they do. The best thing to ask yourself when you're going through painful and hard times is not "why me Lord?" The best question to ask yourself is "why Job?" Think about Job and all that he went through, still remaining faithful to the Lord. Why did he go through what he went through? The answer is simply because God chose to test him, just as he chose to test Abraham when He told him to offer up his son, his only begotten son as a burnt offering. It was truly a test of faith, but Abraham got through it, Job got through it, and you can too, with God's almighty power and help. When you're tried like this, simply pray to God for strength and remember what your goal is. Your goal is Heaven. Think of what Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:58, *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."* We may be shaken but we must not be broken! We must prove ourselves worthy of God's love as Job did. And when we come to the end of our days, and pass from this life into Heaven, we will look back on all of our troubles that we had in this life and realize that our suffering was not in vain in the Lord!

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