

A Righteous Response to Suffering

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[0 : 00] I'm aware that listening to somebody speak with a different accent can be quite tiring, can't it? You know, you think, oh, my ears are aching. Why don't you speak right?

But hey, we have the English language first. And I am bilingual, so you're all right. I don't have a PowerPoint, you know, because I'm a bit tech unsavvy.

Plus we're on holiday. But we do have an outline, a listening guide rather than an outline. So if you have your Bibles, which I hope you do, in whatever form you prefer, electronic or paper, please turn to Job chapter 1.

In the Church Bibles it's page 417. We are going to carry on with our study through the book of Job. But before we get into this new section, I'd like to do a bit of review.

Not because David did a bad job last week. He did a great job. But the problem is most of us is probably what? It's gone.

[1 : 19] Unless we're constantly looking at the Word and reading through the outline. So just to remind ourselves, last week we saw a portrait of a blameless life.

A characterization of a man who walked close to God. And we're introduced to this man in verse 1. And we're told that there was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job.

So there's a man. And this book is about a man. It's a story about a man. And we're introduced, first of all, to Job's testimony. And it was fantastic listening to his testimony, wasn't it, last week.

We heard about his faith, didn't we? That man was blameless, upright, one who feared God and who turned away from evil. And one who was so concerned about his family, he interceded for them.

See, his faith, he had a strong personal faith, but it included others. He prayed for his family. He was concerned for his family. Not only did we see his faith then, we also saw his family.

[2 : 25] This man was a strong man, I believe, because he had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. Well, I tell you, three daughters was enough for us.

But to have seven sons at the same time. But you know, he had a wife. And his wife isn't mentioned very often, is she? In fact, she's only mentioned one, though, over in chapter 2 and verse 10, where she actually says to him, curse God and die.

How many of us would want a wife like that? We want an encouraging wife, don't we? One who would stand by us in the faith. But he also had other brothers and sisters.

And this is not brought out to us in chapter 1. But if we flick over, and you can do this later to the last chapter, chapter 42, we find that Job had many other acquaintances, people who ate bread in his house.

Now, hopefully they were friends, and not just rice friends, who came to eat and enjoy his hospitality. But we saw his faith, his family, and we also saw his fortune.

[3 : 32] This was a rich dude. I don't know if you've ever thought about that. 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke. Now, when I was at school, 500 yoke meant 1,000, right?

Because to be yoked, you had one here and one here. So 500 yoke speaks about 1,000 oxen and 500 female donkeys.

Man, he's fortune. I tried to find out in my preparation how much that would be in today's money. And the estimates range from 55 million to over 200 million dollars.

And I think David said last week we could say he was the Elon Musk or the Steve Job of that day. But he had a great fortune, didn't he? He also had fame, and we saw that. And he had very many servants so that this man was the greatest of all the people on the earth.

[4 : 43] His faith, his family, his fortune, and his fame. And he had friends. A man of that wealth would have friends, wouldn't he? And three in particular. And as you go through the book of Job,

you're going to see these three friends.

And the best thing they did was go and sit with Job and keep quiet for a week. Because as soon as they opened their mouth, things went downhill, didn't they?

And as you go through the book of Job, we're going to see that. And for the most of the book of Job, we see that dialogue between his friends and Job.

And then we saw that the scene switched from there was a man to now there was a day. And the scene switched to heaven, didn't it? And we realize that there's a lot more going on in the book of Job than meets the eye.

And we're introduced now by the words that there is a day. And we saw the accuser, the adversary, didn't we? We saw him. And we saw that he had access to God.

[5 : 49] And I don't know about you, but I'm a little bit surprised. How can a fallen, sinful creature have access to a holy and righteous God? Well, only by God's permission to start with.

And I think God probably dragged Satan into his presence and said, Now you give me an account of what you're doing in this world. I want to know.

Not that God didn't know. He knows everything, right? But he held Satan, the adversary, the accuser of the brethren. He holds him to account.

And he says, In all your patrolling and prowling through this earth, have you considered my servant Job?

And David said that this word considered actually means a little bit more than, Hey, have you noticed Job? Or have you seen Job? It means have you set your heart and your mind?

[6 : 51] Have you considered him? Have you studied him? Have you observed him? Because he's different to everybody else. He's blameless.

He's upright. He fears me and he turns away from evil. Now this word considered, I found out it's actually a military term.

And it's used of generals who stand outside a city and study that city before working out a strategy on how to go and attack.

Now when we think of that word considered and what God is saying to Satan, he's saying, have you considered? Have you seen Job and how he's built his life on the fortress, my fortress, my solid rock?

Have you considered him? Have you observed him? Have you got any strategy concerning him? But God reinforces, doesn't he, Job's testimony?

[7 : 54] Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, blameless, upright, fears God, and turns away from evil? Now in Satan's response, we see that he affirms that he actually has been observing Job in that way.

He says, yes, I have. And he replied with an accusation, didn't he? He said, well, Job is only that way because you've built a, what, a hedge or a fence around him?

And you've blessed everything he does. In fact, you've paid him to worship you. That was the implication, wasn't it? In Satan's accusation.

You've actually paid him. You're not worthy to be worshipped. You have to reward people to pay you. You take away that hedge. You take away his blessings.

And he will what? Curse you to your face. And so we see, although Satan has access, and he makes accusations, and this, I think, is tremendously encouraging, Satan is held accountable.

[9 : 09] He doesn't have free reign to do whatever he wishes. He's accountable. In verse 12, and the second half, he says, God says to him, Behold, all that he has is in your hand.

Only against him do not stretch out your hand. God has set boundaries, and praise the Lord for that. The good news is that Satan has to ask permission.

The bad news is it's sometimes granted. It's sometimes granted. I don't know if you remember or even considered this, but our Lord Jesus, when he was talking to the Peter, Simon Peter, what did he say to him?

He says, Simon Peter, Satan has what? Asked permission to sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you.

Wow. Satan asking permission of God so that he can have some sort of input in Peter's life. And that's exactly how it is with Job here, didn't we?

[10 : 20] You know, Satan, and I think David mentioned this last week, Satan has some power, but he's not omnipotent. He's not all-powerful.

Satan is, he has some knowledge, but he's not all-knowing. He's present, but he has to walk around.

He has to patrol. He has to prowl. So he's present, but he's not all-present. You see, Satan is not equal to God, and Satan is not even opposite to God.

And sometimes we think that, don't we? There's God who is good and Satan who is evil. No. God who is good, Satan, a created being, is evil.

If you want an equal or an opposite to Satan, we have to look elsewhere. Maybe the archangel Michael, who's a created being. Satan is not opposite or equal with God.

[11 : 23] He has power, but he's not omnipotent. He has knowledge, but he's not omniscient. He walks about and prowls about like a lion, seeking whom he may devour, but he is not omnipresent.

Let's put him where he is. He is a created being, a fallen, created being. But God holds Satan accountable.

He cannot do anything he wants. He cannot do anything that God does not give him permission to do. And I praise the Lord that God has set boundaries for Satan's activities.

Only against him do not stretch out your hand. And then David, I mean, David left us last week on a cliffhanger, didn't he? So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and I was sat there, and...

But that's my job this week. You know, now it's my job to speak, and it's your job to listen, and if you finish before me, please don't make too much noise. You get that one? So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

[12 : 33] So what happened next? Well, the scene now shifts again from heaven, here down to earth, and we're told, and if you read on your outline, it's all there, we see Satan's attack.

Satan's attack. That's verses 13 through 19. Now we know that Satan's intent was to what? To get Job to curse God.

And we see that in verse 11, don't we? But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face. And so in this next section, we see Satan's attempt to bring about that result.

Satan's attempt to bring about the result of Job cursing God face to face. But remember, God has instructed Satan not to touch Jacob's body.

And what we're going to see here, that Satan's attack, Satan's assaults, were alternately caused by human and natural forces.

[13 : 39] That's what we're going to see, human and natural forces. First, there is an attack by men. Then there's fire. And then there's another attack by men.

And then there's another, then a fire. Well, the question that came up in my mind immediately, how is Satan able to do that?

How can Satan influence a group of people so much that they could go and attack an innocent man and rob him of his livelihood?

How is Satan able to influence the weather? So that fire comes down, so that a mighty wind comes and crashes down the house that Job's children are in.

Well, the first thing we need to remember is that God committed Satan to move. He permitted Satan to move both kinds of these causes, both human and natural.

[14 : 40] God permitted him to do that. Without God's permission, Satan could not have even touched Job at all. If you're taking notes right down, we're not turned here, but thinking about Satan's power in the future, he will work mightily again with God's permission, and he will deceive nations, he will deceive people groups, so that they believe a lie.

He will even be given power to the beast and the false prophet, so that fire can come down from heaven. But all this is allowed, permitted by God, in a certain point in history.

Or the future, one day it will be history. But not only did God permit Satan to move these natural and human causes for these problems, he did so with rapid and precise timing, so that Job, while reeling in shock from one, before he even had a chance to regain his balance, from the news of one shock, would be hit by another one.

And that's how Satan worked. He didn't give Job chance to breathe. So not only was he given permission to do these things, the timing of it was also granted to him.

It reminds me of the line of that hymn, and I asked John if we're going to sing it this morning, when peace like a river attends my soul. And what's the next line? We love that one, don't we?

[16 : 23] What's the next line? Let's say it together. When sorrows like sea billows roll. Have you ever been on a beach and tried to get in the water and a wave smacked you?

And you're just about to get up and what happens? Another one hits you in the back. And you're just about getting your breath and bam, another one hits you in the back. I've done that in Dakar in Africa.

And I tell you, these were 10 foot waves. And I thought I was going to die. That first one came, knocked me over. I was just about getting up for air and bam, bam, bam.

They just kept coming and coming. You know what it's like when sorrows like sea billows roll. So verse 13, we see the scene being set then for this new, for this attack of Satan, this assault on this godly man.

It says, now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. The scene is set then. And we know this was sort of a normal happening in the Job and Mrs. Job's household.

[17 : 32] Their children would celebrate. And I think it's probably talking about birthday celebrations. Because in verse 4 in chapter 1, it says, So it seems like they were celebrating on a special day.

And in my thinking, I'm thinking, birthday! It's got to be a birthday celebration. And so they were all gathered in the eldest brother's house for the big brother's birthday bash.

That should be on your outline too. Now it may not have been a birthday, but I like to think it was.

And you know what I think is amazing too? The sisters were invited.

Because usually in these Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern cultures, it's all about the boys. But here we think about Job's family. The sisters were involved too.

What a family. But they were meeting together. They were celebrating the big brother's birthday.

Now where was Job when all this was happening? We're not told he was there with them.

[18 : 40] But he wasn't there. But that doesn't mean he wasn't involved, does it? Because we know that as a father and as a priestly father to this family, I like to think that he was praying for his family at this time.

Because he knew the type of things they could get up to. We're told that in chapter 1, aren't we? Verse 5, And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them.

And he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. So as a father, he was not there. He was absent, but he was not involved. He was still involved, probably in prayer.

And probably preparing himself for his priestly duties. Because he knows that when these guys are having a celebration, they may sin and upset God in their hearts.

And I need to get the sheep. I need to get the oxen prepared so that I can sacrifice and make offerings for their sin. I don't know. Maybe that's conjecture.

[19 : 44] But I like to think that Job, although absent, was still involved with his family. It was a special day.

And Job, whatever he's doing, wherever he is, he's separated from his family, but still involved. When the first wave crashes on him.

That first billow of sorrow comes and hits him. Just like that. Verse 14. And there came a messenger to Job and said, The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them.

And the Sabians fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword. The Sabians came and carried off the oxen and the donkeys and killed all his servants.

That's the first wave. The loss of his stock and his servants then. Well, who are the Sabians? I don't know. Maybe you could ask your pastors this week.

[20 : 57] Who are the Sabians? I don't know. Several commentators offer insights into who these people were, but we don't really know.

They were from the south and probably, if you still have your map from the listening guide last week, you'll see that Uz was probably in the Arabian desert.

So they were probably raiders, Bedouin raiders, who came and stole his livestock, the oxen and the donkeys, and put the sword to all his servants.

And then as he's taking all that in, another wave comes and crashes over him and knocks him down, verse 16. And while he was yet speaking, while that messenger was giving his message,

there came another messenger and said, The fire of God fell from heaven, burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

The loss of his oxen, the loss of his donkeys, and then wham! Before he's even got a chance to take a breath, he's hit with this second message.

[22 : 17] Hey, you know what? God has sent fire. And he's burnt up, not only burnt, but consumed. Your sheep and your shepherds.

Consumed. And this message with reference to God and heaven, I believe, is designed to really rock Job at this time, because he trusts in whom?

God. And whether it was fire from God, or whether it was lightning, or a firestorm, nobody really knows, but just this reference to God and heaven, I believe Satan designed that to really bring doubt and confusion into the mix with Job.

Anyway, it was powerful enough not only to burn, but also consume. You know what consume means? Have you seen teenagers at a meal?

They will consume that food. Meaning what? There's absolutely nothing left at the end. It's devoured. It's eaten up. And that's what this fire did to the sheep and the shepherds.

[23 : 29] Wow. Billows of sorrow, waves of woe, and it's not stopped yet. There's another one. Yet another wave comes crashing on this godly man.

And while he was yet speaking, verse 17, there came another and said, the Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

Wow. The Chaldeans, a little bit more sophisticated than the Sabians, these were a warring faction, a very fierce group of people from Mesopotamia.

Fierce marauding people. They'd split into three groups, and one group had taken a thousand camels, another group had taken a thousand camels, and another group had taken a thousand camels.

Now the loss of these camels and his servants, this would be devastating to Job. You know, I looked at the average price of a camel today.

[24 : 39] Three thousand dollars. Three thousand dollars. Who knows what it would have been way back then. But they were probably his most prized possession.

And yet you know these billows of sorrow that roll in have not finished yet. You would think the loss of his oxen and donkeys, and then the loss of his sheep and his shepherds, and then the Chaldeans stealing his camels would be enough, wouldn't you?

But these billows continue to roll in, and they're not stopped yet. The biggest one is yet to come.

Verse 18 and 19. And while he was yet speaking, while he was yet speaking, you see the suddenness and the rapidity of these were designed by Satan to rock the faith of this man, to get him to curse God to his face.

While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness, and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon these young people, and they're all dead.

I alone have escaped. There's no message of sympathy there. Oh, Job, I'm very sorry. It comes like a wave that just crashes and hits this man on top of all the other things.

[26 : 16] A great wind collapsed the house and crushed his sons and daughters. And this is probably the worst of all the calamities that came upon Job in a matter of minutes.

Wow. I've written on my notes here, pause for effect. Let's just take a minute to take that in, and I'll have a drink.

Thank you. You know, we can read those things, and we just think, well, so what?

So what? He's a man who lived so long ago, it doesn't affect us. Yet we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us. We're able to walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit.

And we know that God disciplines us as His children, and we know that we can be persecuted for our faith. Listen, this was a man who lived when most of Europe was still in the Bronze Age, right?

[27 : 23] He didn't have the benefits and the blessings that we had, but he did have a relationship with God. And we have the reader's edge, don't we?

We have the reader's edge, as Andrew mentioned this morning. We know what's going off. We've listened in. We're privy to that conversation between God and Satan. God granted Satan permission to touch Job, but don't stretch out your hand against him, but don't touch him.

We know that, but Job doesn't. Job doesn't know what's going off. He's there on a normal day. His family is celebrating probably a birthday, and all these things, these billows of sorrow just come rolling in and rolling in and rolling in and rolling in.

His livestock is gone. His servants are murdered. His children crushed. And all in a few minutes, and it would seem that Job, well, he has.

He's gone from a position of wealth and prosperity to a place of wretchedness and pauperism. He's got absolutely nothing. Well, he still has his wife and some friends, but realistically, he has nothing.

[28 : 49] Now, remind us, we need to be reminded again of Satan's challenge, don't we? To keep this in perspective, we need to realize that these things, although they happened because of man, and they happened because of natural causes, acts of God, if you want insurance speak today, for whatever reason, they call things acts of God because most of them don't even believe in God, but lightning and winds and earthquakes are all classed as acts of God.

But these things have happened to him because of Satan's challenge. Verse 9, And Satan answered the Lord and said, Does Job fear God?

Job feared God for no reason. Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has and on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands and his possessions have increased in the land, but stretch out your hand and touch all that he has and he will curse you to your face.

That's Satan's challenge. And that was Satan's intent to get Job to curse God. Or would Satan be proved right?

I love a cliffhanger, don't you? Will Satan be proved right? You know the narrative, the narrator that comes after. Will Satan be proved right? With the hedge removed and all his earthly possessions gone, would Job curse God?

[30 : 13] We joke, but this is serious, isn't it? Would he plummet from loyalty to God to disloyalty to God?

What would Job's reaction be? Let me ask you a question. Don't answer it. What would your reaction be? I know what mine would be. See, Satan's intent was to get Job to curse God, but here we see the actual result.

The actual result that Job did not curse God, but he did what? He blessed God. He praised God.

And in that we see Job's victory. Job's victory 20 through 22.

So tormented by adversity, his initial response was what? To pour out his grief. To pour out his grief. Verse 20.

Then Job arose, whether he was sat down or not, or whether this arousal is emotions, and he tore his robe, shaved his head, and fell to the ground.

[31 : 22] He was in grief. He was in sorrow. He was in terrible pain. And we can't blame him for that, can we? He tore his robe, shaved his head, fell to the ground, and he demonstrated physically, visibly, and dramatically the pain he was feeling inside.

Now many people, and I find this hard to believe, many people think that believers, children of God, shouldn't experience or express grief.

But Job's example, I think, teaches us otherwise, doesn't it? Here was a godly man who was also, what, a grieving man.

A godly man is now a grieving man. And we get our first glimpse, I believe, into Job's integrity.

Because it says, in verse 22, in all this, Job did not sin.

You know, folks, it's not sin to grieve. It's not sinful to be sorrowful and in pain over some adversity or trouble or some things that are happening to you.

[32 : 40] It's not. It's really not. It's not. You see, we can have two responses to trouble. And I use this simply for an example because I know you'll probably get into this next week or some other time.

Two responses to trouble. One, we have Job's response and the other, we have Job's wife's response. See, Job's wife had a lot invested in this family, didn't she?

Man, she'd carried 10 children after all. She had a lot invested. She probably cared for those animals and loved them as farmers' wives do.

But we see in verse 10 of chapter 2, do you hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die. You see, that's one reaction to adversity. I'd like to look at another example here and this is in 1 Samuel.

1 Samuel 30. Two reactions to adversity and trouble. Now this, I don't know if you know this story, but David in his attempt to get away from King Saul has actually taken refuge amongst the Philistines.

[34 : 01] Can you believe that? He's got so desperate, he's hiding amongst the Philistines and the Philistines are so taken up with David, they've given him a city.

Or a town called Ziklag. And to cut a long story short, so David doesn't have to fight against Israel on the side of the Philistines, the king lets him off and says, look, you can't do that.

We're not going to let you come on our side and fight your own people. We don't trust you enough for that. So, David and his men set off back to this town. In verse, chapter 30, verse 1.

And when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid against the Negev and against Ziklag. That's David's town. And they had overcome Ziklag and burnt it with fire and taken captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great.

They didn't kill them but carried them off and went on their way. And when David and his men came to this city, they found it burned with fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive.

[35 : 09] Okay, adversity rolls in. Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep. An appropriate reaction, wouldn't you say?

An expected reaction to this disaster that has taken place. And that's what we see Job doing. He ripped his outer garment, he shaved his head and he fell down on the ground and he probably wept a bucket load of tears and that's an appropriate response.

But the problem is is when we leave it there. The problem is when that is our only response.

Because if we go to verse 6 in chapter 30 it says this, And David was greatly distressed for the people spoke of stoning him for all the people were bitter in soul.

You see, that's one reaction to adversity. We become bitter in our souls and our hearts. We start to shake our fist at God and those who are causing us so much problems and bitterness takes over in our hearts.

But we see an opposite reaction from David, don't we? And David was greatly distressed for the people spoke of stoning him because all the people were bitter in soul each for his own sons and daughters.

[36 : 30] But, and I love that word but, it's a word of contrast. It's a contrasting word. It opens the door to something greater. But, David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

Praise the Lord for that. That is encouraging. You see, we all face adversity, we will face trouble and we will all grieve and sorrow.

But what after that? Do we remain in that grief and sorrow and bitterness takes root in our hearts? Or do we find strength in the Lord our God?

Just as David did. Though the fig tree does not blossom, though there be no what? Do we know that one? I can't remember it. Let's have a look. It's in Habakkuk. Anyway.

Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit beyond the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls, oh woe is me.

[37 : 33] I have absolutely nothing left. Yet will I rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God the Lord is my strength.

Amen? Shall we say that together? Let me hear you. God the Lord is my strength. And again, God the Lord is my strength.

Do you believe that? Do you believe it? God the Lord Because we need to have our hearts and our minds anchored on God and His strength for when those billows start rolling in.

When the billows roll in is not the time to start and think about having an anchor. It needs to be done now when peace like a river attends my soul.

So that when the billows of sorrow roll in, we can say it is well with my soul. You know, for Job it was more than and I don't know I like to I think I thought of it like this maybe someday in the time of Job had written a book three steps to deal with your grief.

[38 : 46] Or maybe it's seven I don't know. You see, it was more than a three step method to end his grief.

Number one, rip your clothes. Number two, shave your head. Not a problem. Number three, throw yourself down on the ground.

But don't cut yourself and don't do any tattoos. You find the Old Testament speaks about that the heathen's way of dealing with grief.

At least Job didn't do that. He didn't cut himself or get any tattoos. You know, the Gende people we used to we had a ministry with for many years.

After somebody died, I mean, they would throw themselves on the ground. They almost followed this three step method. They ripped their clothes and they didn't shave their head but they got clay.

[39 : 47] The whitest or reddest clay and they just rubbed it all over and if that wasn't enough they would roll in the ground in mud until they're absolutely covered from head to foot in clay and that was a way of showing their grief when somebody died.

And they could do that for three days. You know, after three days they used to make a fire. A big fire. And somebody would cut a length of bamboo.

Now, you know what bamboo is? I mean, we're talking big thick stuff like this. And somebody would throw that on the fire. Don't do it at home.

Because that little capsule in that bamboo when it gets hot will expand and there will be an almighty explosion. And that's what they were after. And they said that when that bamboo exploded their grief was gone.

But we know and you know that a little bit of bamboo exploding on a fire does not get rid of grief. And we're able to share that with them.

[40 : 55] And so Job didn't just pour out his grief. Period. He poured out his grief to God. And that's the difference.

That's the difference. He poured out his grief to God. And in doing so he acknowledged the greatness of God.

And then Job arose and tore his robe, shaved his head and he fell to the ground and did what? Moaned and groaned? Took out his cell phone and checked his social to get his mind off things? No. He worshipped God. You see he had a relationship with a person. The tearing of the clothes, the shaving of the head and the falling on the ground was simply a cultural way of expressing grief. But there has to be more so that bitterness doesn't set in. He poured his grief out to God and if pouring his grief out was the expected result then what he did next I would say was the quite unexpected result.

[42 : 06] Right? He poured out his grief and he worshipped God. Wow! Another pause for effect. Wow!

Wow! He acknowledged the greatness of God. He acknowledged the greatness of God.

He actually worshipped God in his grief. Are you kidding me Job? He's a better man than I am. Probably a better man than you or woman than you are.

not only did he acknowledge the greatness of God he considered the goodness of God. He considered the goodness of God didn't he? Verse 21 and he said naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away blessed be the name of the Lord.

He recognized that his loss resembled his birth and also his death. He had been naked at birth and he would be naked at death. Similarly now he was figuratively naked.

[43 : 17] Now I don't know about you but it says naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return. Oh we have a problem here don't we? Is it possible that when we die we return back to our mother's womb?

Well not physically not literally no. But actually this phrase naked I shall return it refers to returning back to the earth because the earth was often seen in these ancient cultures as being mother.

I mean we talk about mother earth these days. Some translate it as I will return or I will depart so the earth is likened to a mother's womb.

And the psalmist says that doesn't he in Psalm 139 my frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

So this mother's womb becomes a picture man is made from the dust he will return to dust. He's born of a woman but he's returned back to the earth.

[44 : 28] So whatever these phrases mean I think the message is clear and plain don't you. We can't take it with us when we die.

If you don't get anything else from this message this morning remember this you cannot take it with you when you die. You know and all those pictures and jokes about U-Haul trailers and no trailer

hitches on the back of hearses and no pockets in shrouds.

Well there may be jokes and there may be little slogans but they're true. We cannot take it with us when we die. Hold on to stuff lightly.

Hold on to it lightly. We're only stewards after all of God's goods gifts. Hold what I hold what I have of God in trust for God.

See everything Job had he knew and he recognized that God had given him. The Lord gave and the Lord can take away blessed be the name of the Lord.

[45 : 40] You see for Job it wasn't oh I have worked so hard and the Sabians have taken away. He didn't even say I've worked so hard and the fire of God has taken it away or the Chaldeans or even the great wind has taken it away.

He didn't even say the Lord gave and the Sabians and Chaldeans have taken it away. The fire and the wind have taken it away. He considered not only the direct causes the wind and the Sabians and the Chaldeans but he also saw behind that the sovereignty and total control of God in all circumstances.

And in this we see that Job remained blameless before God verse 22 in all this Job did not sin. He maintained his integrity before God didn't he?

In all this everything he faced and everything he said Job did not sin. That included having grief being grieved and pain for what was happening.

You know it kind of reminds me of some New Testament verses 1 Corinthians 10 31 whether you eat or drink or whatever you do man that covers everything doesn't it?

[47 : 07] Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do do all to what? To the glory of God. And I believe that's what Job did at this time. In all this Job did not sin.

Whatever you do in word or deed do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ Colossians 3 17 giving thanks to God the Father through him. So he remained blameless.

He maintained his integrity but he also refused to blame God. He didn't engage in this blame game. Now many people do when adversity comes.

Neither did he blame the Sabeans or the Chaldeans and he didn't blame the government because of their lack of concern about climate change in the fact that fire could come and burn up all his sheep and his shepherds and a massive wind could come like he'd never be seen before and although their house was built to building codes it still fell down.

He didn't play that blame game. He refused to play it it says in all this Job did not sin or charge God with any wrong.

[48 : 20] many times we find when we in adversity when those billows of sorrow begin to roll over us we begin to blame God don't we and blame everything for our situation.

Now these are good examples to us should our world cave in or should we face calamities that are not quite up to this standard but the question still remains at least in my mind how was he able to deal with this in the way he did.

We've already mentioned he doesn't have the benefits and blessings that we have. How did he deal with it? So by way of application I want to think about Job's assurance here and we'll look at three statements of faith that give us insight into how Job could handle these things.

And I think it's because he knew something. He had knowledge about God and he had knowledge about God's ways. And just like us Romans 8 28 says and we know and we know that for those who love God all things work together for good because they're making us more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see Job knew something we have to know something too. that God is working things out for our good to make us more like the Lord Jesus Christ. The first statement then and we'll just look at these real quickly.

[49 : 57] We don't need to spend much time on them. The first statement of faith is in verse 15 of chapter 13. Though he slay me yet will I trust in him.

Though he slay me yet will I trust in him. I will hope in him. To know that we have a deep unconditional relationship with the God of the universe and we can trust him with our lives.

That's what got Job through this situation. He recognized. I mean what else could happen to Job? He'd lost everything. His health was gone and yet he could say look I'm trusting God and even if he slays me I'm still going to keep trusting God.

And that's what got Job through this time and it will get us through too. The second statement of faith is in verse 19 verse 25 through 27.

And I think these verses are amazing. An amazing statement. And listen Job was not just making a theological statement here. This was from the heart.

[51 : 14] Job chapter 19 verse 25 and I'm going to emphasize the personal pronouns here. For I know that my Redeemer lives.

Wow this is from Job. Right? This is from the book of Job. Not from the New Testament. I know that my Redeemer lives. That's fantastic. Right? And at the last he will stand upon the earth.

Yet in my flesh I will see God. See Job had an understanding and knowledge concerning the Redeemer.

He had knowledge and understanding concerning redemption. And he had knowledge and understanding somehow about the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are things he knew.

And they made a difference to how he handled this adversity. Whom I shall see for myself and my eyes shall behold and not another.

[52 : 15] My heart faints within me. So the truth of the Redeemer, the redemption of the soul, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the end of the world and the promise of eternal life are what saw Job through this adversity.

And you know something, it's truth like this that will see us through those rough times. Though he slay me, yet I will trust him.

I know that my Redeemer lives. Chapter 23 verses 8 through 10. Job was waiting for God to come down and hear his case.

But God sent to be absent. So Job says in verse 8, behold, I go forward, but he is not there. I go backward, but I don't perceive him. On the left hand, when he is working, I do not behold him.

He turns to the right hand, and I do not see him. But, he knows the way that I take. Through all this trouble, he didn't know where God was and what God was doing, but he knew one thing, God knows me.

[53 : 30] And he knows what I'm going through. He knows how I stand. He knows how I am blameless and upright. He knows how I follow his word.

And when he's done with me, I will come forth as gold. That's amazing. I don't know if it affects you. It really affects me things like this.

I don't know what God's doing. I don't know where God is in all this, but my confidence is that he knows me. He knows where I am. And when all this is over, I'll be like pure gold.

Pure gold. Tested in the fire if you wish. Coming to an end here. Let's just go to 42 verse 1.

Chapter 42, the last chapter in the book of Job. And then Job answered the Lord. Remember the Lord actually presents himself and makes his case.

[54 : 37] Chapter 42 verse 1, Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that you can do all things. Do we know that? God can do all things.

And no purpose of yours can be thwarted. You could have stopped all this happening to me, God, but you allowed it anyway. Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?

Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not speak. Hear and I will speak and I will question you and make it known to you. Listen, I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now, but now I really know you, but now my eyes see you.

Last week David asked a question, how did Job and the patriarchs know so much about God? By the hearing of the ear, right? By the hearing of the ear. What Job had gone through here brought him from theoretical understanding of God to experiential understanding of God.

He says, yeah, I've heard all about that. It's great, and I've put my trust in that, but now I really know you because you brought me through this situation.

[55 : 55] Listen, I used to know it under this morning. There's got to be some application here, weighed down with trouble, and you're saying, I don't think I can make it. I really don't think I can make it.

The pressures are too heavy on me. Consider Job. And that's the New Testament interpretation of the book of Job, isn't it? Consider the steadfastness of Job, how he dealt with adversity, and how the end was to show that God is merciful and compassionate.

Job said, I'm going to trust God no matter what. I'm going to stand with God no matter what. I know that my Redeemer lives and one day I will be with him forever.

forever. And really I don't understand what's going on here now, but he's working things out for my good, making me more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, and this is what it boils down to. If we can trust him for our eternal destiny, can we trust him with the things that happened to us on the way?

[57 : 11] Most of us would say yes, I'm saved, I'm going to spend eternity with my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord. But we stumble with the things that happened to us on the way.

And if anything, that's what the message of Job is, and I hope you'll take that away this morning, is that we can trust God for what happens on the journey, just as we can trust him for the end result where we'll be with him in glory.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We know that these stories and truths are so familiar to us that we can sometimes just pass over them or take them for granted.

Father, we pray that we would recognize this for what it truly is, your word, the truth of the living God, and that this story is definitely truth, and it just teaches us, Father, that even when we're going through trials and tribulations, we can trust you.

We can trust you, even when we don't know what is going on at this time. So, Father, we pray that our hope that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ and his return would also help us to go through the trials, tribulations, and sorrows, and billows that roll over us during this life, and we pray, Father, that our trust will be like Job, who says, even if he kills me, I'm going to trust him.

[58 : 44] For me to live is Christ, to die is gain. And, Father, we thank you for your word this morning. Amen.