

MESSAGE:

SUFFERING IN THE LIGHT

PASSAGE: JOB 2:1-10 ESV

1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. 2 And the Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 3 And 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, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason." 4 Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. 5 But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." 6 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life." 7 So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes. 9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die." 10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to encourage people to maintain faith in God despite suffering and adversity. It emphasizes the importance of trusting God and not letting human logic or emotions lead to foolishness or turning away from Him. It ultimately highlights the purpose and hope found in Jesus Christ, who suffered and overcame, assuring believers that their suffering has meaning and will be transformed by God's power.

SERMON NOTES

After experiencing the same 'hand' that gave Job good health, substantial wealth, and ten children in one season of their life take all of it away in another, Job's wife told him to curse God and die. Have you ever experienced the hand of God giving and then taking away? How did you respond initially? How do you respond now? Job's wife, who witnessed this firsthand and experienced the loss herself, told Job to "curse God and die."

Job called his wife's advice foolish. Foolish. Lacking understanding. Foolish. A form of disrespect to God. To put things into perspective, Job and his wife lost all ten of their children, all their riches and possessions, and Job, once healthy, was now afflicted with a grave illness. She watched her husband, who was once a loving and caring father, a protective and providing



husband, and a loyal and committed man of God, lose everything. Deeply hurt and distressed by the tragedy, she advised Job to curse God and die, and Job responded by calling her advice foolish. This response to his wife was his way of saying that, despite God allowing his ten children to be killed, taking away all his riches and possessions, and afflicting him with a grave illness, turning away from God was not the answer. Giving up on God was not the answer.

If Job was right, friends, could it be that when we fall too deeply into our feelings, and hence too far from our faith, we risk venturing into foolishness? Could it be that if we stray too far into human logic and understanding, attempting to fill gaps that only faith can address, we venture into the realm of foolishness?

What's even more interesting is that while Job's wife's advice to curse God and die was not a statement of faith, even in that moment of vulnerability and deep hurt, there was a seed of faith buried in her heart that just needed some watering, which gives us hope that even when we get deep in our our feelings and drift away from our faith, God provides a way out. Consider this: In Job 2:9, when Job's wife tells him to "curse God and die," the Hebrew word used for "curse" is pronounced *bārak*, which typically means "to bless"! Her use of the word "bless" instead of a direct term for cursing is an example of a euphemism, which is a linguistic technique where a milder or indirect term is used in place of something more harsh or blunt. Ancient people of God had such a high reverence for the Most High that they had a strong aversion to directly

cursing or blaspheming God. Using "*bārak*", which means "to bless," was her way of avoiding uttering something blasphemous or disrespectful, even in her distress. This seems to suggest then, that at that moment, her feelings and her faith were in conflict. Her feelings, seeing the loss of their ten children, their wealth, and her husband's grave illness, led her to advise her husband to curse God and die. Yet, despite her distress, she couldn't bring herself to directly disrespect God because she still held a deep reverence for Him.

Ladies and gentlemen, your feelings are not necessarily an enemy to your faith, and your faith is not necessarily an enemy to your feelings, but faith should guide you, not your feelings!

Ultimately, even in her apparent irreverence, there was a trace of reverence. This indicates that, even when we struggle with God's actions or allowances, we should not deny God. It is natural to have feelings, but if we let those feelings override our faith, we risk sinking into foolishness rather than swimming to deliverance. You see, foolishness reveals not just a lack of understanding but a misunderstanding, and if we let foolishness drive us to curse God and give up, we will miss the revelation that will come from God in our season of pain and suffering!

Let me nudge you a bit further right here before I move on:
don't give up on God when your feelings are hurt.

Don't give up on God when things don't go your way.

Don't give up on God when times get tough, because even in the worst of times, God can turn things around for the best!

And While you may know God in a specific way based upon your best moments, you can discover God in a new way during your worst moments!

If you remain faithful during the worst times and hardest seasons of your life, God will reveal himself to you in new ways!

You will learn that His strength is made perfect in weakness!

You will learn that his grace is sufficient!

You will learn how to trust and depend on God!

You will learn what it means to pray without ceasing!

God will break you down and then build you back better!

God will literally do exceedingly, abundantly, above all, you can ask or think!

You see, Job and his wife were suffering in the dark, and what I mean by that is, they endured suffering in a time when God's plan of redemption was not yet revealed.

They faced their tribulations without the knowledge of God's promises or the future revelation of salvation.

And Despite their suffering in the dark, Job did not curse God or sin.

He remained steadfast, even though he had more questions than answers.

He remained steadfast, even though he did not know God's plan of redemption.

He remained steadfast, even though he did not know the promises of God's word.

But you, my friend, do not suffer in the dark.

You, my brother, do not suffer in the dark.

You, my sister, do not suffer in the dark, for the Light has come into the world.

God has revealed his plan of redemption to you and I.

God has sent his son, Jesus the Christ!

And with that being said, we must ask the question: "Shall we accept only good from God and not trouble?"

I say to you, family and friends, to accept both the good and the trouble, for while God is just, His justice cannot be evaluated, because no one has sufficient information to call Him out.

There is no searching for his understanding. His justice is beyond human understanding. It is too wonderful for us to understand.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord!"

I say to you, family and friends, to accept the good and the trouble, trusting God through it all!

God allows things to happen for a reason, and our human logic cannot fully grasp divine reasoning, so we must trust God, even when we can't fully trace God!

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

You and I, like Job, will suffer, but the good news I have for you is that we don't have to

suffer in the dark, but we suffer in the light, meaning that

We suffer with the revelation that “our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal!” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

We suffer with the revelation that God has told you “in this life you will have trouble, but take heart because He has overcome the world!” (John 16:33.)

We suffer with the revelation that “if you suffer for doing good, this is commendable before God.” (1 Peter 2:20).

We suffer with the revelation that in all things God works together for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28).

And let me tell you, The Apostle Paul used the Greek word συνεργέω (sunergeó) in Romans 8:28, which means “working together.” This term combines συν (“with”) and εργέω (“work”) to convey that different elements cooperate to create a result greater than their individual effects.

And I'm here to tell you that you will have to suffer, but accept the good and the trouble, because the Most High God is taking the good and the trouble, working it together in such a way that the end result of the good and trouble together will be greater than the good by itself, and will outweigh the trouble by itself!

I'm finished now but let me close by telling you about the victory of one that suffered greater than Job so that you will leave here knowing we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but He was tempted in every way yet He did not sin!

This person had power that Job did not have!

His name is above every name.

In English, His name is Jesus!

In English, His title is Christ!

He was the truth, but they lied on Him.

He was innocent, but they declared Him guilty.

He suffered in the hands of the Roman Empire.

He suffered in the hands of the powers and principalities.

They beat Him, they flogged Him, they lynched Him, they left Him for dead!

But God took what the roman empire meant for evil,

God took what the devil meant for evil and turned it around for good!

God raised Him from the dead!

And now, according to 2 Timothy 2:12, if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.

I'll leave you with this: I reckon that the sufferings of this present time do not compare to the glory that shall be revealed (Romans 8:18).