

we must not forget that Satan is our enemy. He wants us to doubt God's love for us and curse God - just as he hoped Job would! God allows evil for a time although He will turn it around for our own good (Romans 8:28). We may have no answers concerning why God allows us to go through hard times, but we can be sure that He is all powerful and knows what He is doing. We must remember that God's ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9) Our life on this earth is temporary, but if we have prepared our souls for an eternity with God we have His promise that He will wipe away all tears from our eyes and there will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain. (Rev. 21:4) Next time you face trials and suffering, use them as opportunities to turn to God for strength and most of all to develop a stronger faith and a closer relationship with God.



By Bill Davis

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Olsen Park Church of Christ

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
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Job's Perseverance

When things around us seem to go against us, we will usually think of one book in the Bible and that is the book of Job. Have you ever seen hard times that seemed to feed upon themselves? When those around you, such as your immediate family members, would turn against you and seek to do you harm. Have you ever been in a position where your so-called close friends would condemn you by making false accusations against you? Has the world ever turned against you? I dare say a lot of us reading this bulletin would say that we have been there and seen it first

hand. In the book of Job, we read about a man who was blameless and upright. He feared God and shunned evil. We read about a man who would pray for his children and have them purified, he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking perhaps his children may have sinned and curse God in their hearts. We read about a man who is a righteous man and fears God, yet he will have hard times come upon him. As we learn from the book of Job, these hard times came from Satan himself. when suffering or troubles come our way, can they come from Satan?

In the book of Job, the story of his troubles and tragedies did indeed come from Satan. In our lives today, when our lives are turned upside down, do we blame the devil or do we blame God? As we go through life, we will face many problems and have to deal with much grief such as the death of a loved one, loss of a job, a serious illness (cancer, heart problems, etc.), perhaps a divorce, or have our own children curse us and walk away from us. You see, set backs and yes tragedies and many sorrows will strike Christians and non-Christians alike. In our daily tests and trials, God will expect us to show our faith to the world by keeping close to His words and walking by faith no by sight. We must persevere in our faith. When Job's wife said to Job, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" (Job 2:9) Job did not let even his own wife pull him to turn his back against God when the times got tough. His reply to her was, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?" (Job 2:10).

The question is shall we accept good from God and not trouble? Even when Job was losing his material possessions and his family, he reacted right toward God by acknowledging God's sovereignty and authority over everything God had given him. Could we say or do what Job did if we lost everything we had worked for or experienced the loss of our children? Would we

still praise God? The theme to this book is "trouble and suffering" not merely punishment for sin. Suffering and trouble may serve as a trial or test for God's people. It may serve as discipline to help us as Christians to become more spiritual and more mature as Christians. I have often heard people say that Job was a very patient man, and he was to a point. Job, like us today when we go through hard times in suffering, will want to lash out at somebody or at God. In Job 3, we find that Job even cursed the day he had been born. Job 3:1-4: "After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. And Job spoke, and said: "May the day perish on which I was born, and the night in which it was said, 'A male child is conceived.' May that day be darkness; May God above not seek it, Nor the light shine upon it." In Job 3, when Job says "May the day of my birth perish," he expresses that which had been a joy to him because he found favor with God is now his burden of being alive. In Job 9:21, Job will despise his life, "I am blameless, yet I do not know myself; I despise my life." In Job 9:32, Job wanted to confront God face to face "For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him, and that we should go to court together. Nor is there any mediator between us, who may lay his hand on us both. Let Him take His

rod away from me, and do not let dread of Him terrify me. Then I would speak and not fear Him, but it is not so with me."

In chapter 3 and 9 Job is as close as he will ever come to cursing God but he does not do it. When we go through much suffering, do we wish we could speak to God face to face? Do we sometimes want to challenge God regarding "Why" We must go through this much suffering? We may not get the chance to speak to God face to face, but Job did and it was not what he bargained for. In Job 38 God asked Job a few questions which Job could not answer. Job 38: 1-4: "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you and you shall answer Me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me if you have understanding." Job got his wish out of the whirlwind from which God spoke. God's response to Job was to ask him rhetorical questions, each of which Job had to answer in ignorance. God says nothing about Job's suffering nor does God address Job's problem about divine justice. Job gets neither a bill of indictment nor a verdict of innocence. More importantly, God does not humiliate or condemn Job which could have been the case if God had wanted to as seen in Job 40:1-8: "Moreover the LORD answered Job and said: "Shall the one who contends with

the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it." Then Job answered the LORD and said: "Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further." Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: "Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you and you shall answer Me: "Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?"

In Job 42 Job is restored. The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first and Job does not have to experience suffering. Job like many of us today when we go through much suffering will be patient to a point, but as time goes on we will want answers from God. Job's perseverance through this ordeal was held fast by his faith in God, knowing that God's word is true and that God is a just God. As Christians today we need to have perseverance like Job did when times get tough and we go through much suffering. When we as Christians go through difficult times does this mean that God is indifferent or uncaring or unjust or powerless to protect us? Not at all! Bad things do happen because we live in a fallen evil world where believers and unbelievers will go through hardships, sometimes due to the consequences of sin. Also,