

Women's Bible Study ~ Fall 2017
When Calamity Strikes ~ JOB 1: 13 - JOB 2:10
September 27th ~ Juli Fischer



Chapter 1

13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 14 and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." 16 While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." 17 While he was yet speaking, 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." 18 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, 19 and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you." 20 Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." 22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Chapter 2

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.

RUINATION.

God let satan strike Job with human foes, with" divine intervention", a meteorological phenomenon, and a personal affront on his body. Different avenues were used to hopefully obliterate Job's love for God and his integrity. It is noticed that in the first set of calamities God took away the good but in the last one God brings in the bad. More hurtful and more personal.

It is difficult to view God in this manner. It just does not make sense to us. But, unlike Job, we have the whole Bible. His character is seen clearly throughout. We know the word says,

Psalms 103:11, For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;

Isaiah 54:10, Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken

What happened to Job was truly horrible, but I don't think we are to stay with that thought. I think we are to acknowledge it, ponder it, discuss it, but not dwell there. Dwelling on our problems is not beneficial. Using our thoughts and our minds to think about things that are worthy of our attention and bring glory to God is much more productive.

Now let's think about Job's **RESPONSE** to all of this. Let's remember that Job was not privy to the conversation going on in the heavenlies. He was completely unaware of the workings of satan. His response is remarkable. He

1. Tore his robe and shaved his head. This response was a normal response of grief.
2. He fell to a prostrate position. This was abnormal for a time like this. By his position he was acknowledging God as Lord of all and that what God had done was immense and remarkable.

By his response Job was declaring that God was in charge of everything. Job was also stating that God knew best what was to happen.

God was pleased with his response, but nowhere is it stated that this response is required of us. It only says that God was pleased.

3. He corrected his wife in a curt manner and did not give her any credence for her thoughts. Remember her reaction is probably more like our reactions. Her reactions were more humanly understandable.

4. He sat among the ashes, which was a pile of dung ashes on the outskirts of the community.

Look at Ephesians 6:13

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

The natural reaction to this narrative is to want to know why all of this is going on. Is there a **REASON** for this? We are not given a reason here.

My story from these chapters.

Africa has captivated me from an early age. I remember listening to a missionary tell of her work and thinking that would be a wonderful career. My little church had many missionaries come through and show their slides, and I got the clear impression that being a missionary is something worthy and "special". We had a missionary live in our town and my parents heard that she needed a coat so my mom went to buy her one with the comment from my dad, "Buy the best there is". Missionary work was something I grew up with and had a desire for.

During my college years I went to various churches and heard many fabulous sermons. One Sunday I was at my brother's church in LA and a visiting missionary was speaking. After the service, I heard from the people I was with how boring the message was and how they wished the regular pastor was there. I, on the other hand, had felt God speaking to my heart and during that service I decided to actively pursue missions. I finished my degree for elementary education, and also met Phil, who also had wanted to be a missionary. We both spent several months in Africa as short termers.

We prepared for a few years with medical training, Bible classes, and visiting churches. We also spent one year in France learning French and 4 months in Liverpool where Phil took a tropical medicine course. It was with fear and joy I began living in Nyan Kunde, Zaire as a wife and mother and hostess to an ever present group of visitors.

Our time in Zaire was blessed, but not without fairly significant struggles. Phil's health was challenged, our house was always busy, and there were the ever

present mosquitoes to remind us of malaria. We lived there for 6 years when rumors starting happening of civil unrest in the country. After several months, the unrest turned worse and the American embassy advised all Americans to leave the country. We heeded this advice, along with thousands of others, and left with one suitcase for all of us (this was what we were allowed because of weight). We expected to be back within a few months.

Those few months turned into never returning. The country never seemed safe enough for families to come back, and God made it abundantly clear that we were to stay. The decision to not return was incredibly hard. It meant a loss of our career, our living, our language, our friends, and our possessions.

Fast forward now 26 years. Years of daily living, raising kids, working, going to church. But as we look back on what God has done, our “missionary” status has never left and the love we have for people of other cultures has never been extinguished. In fact, it has turned into a roaring bonfire! The contacts we have now with mission hospitals, and the work that is being done in several countries, and the visitors that have lived with us have turned into something that only God could orchestrate. The stories we have of churches starting in outermost Mongolia to an unreached people group in Bangladesh to an ongoing partnership with pediatricians in Bhutan have left us in awe of how God works. Our departure from missions was really our beginning. Only God could work it all out like this.

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