

THE BIBLE VIEW

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We Don't Have A Clue

Bill Brinkworth

The Old Testament character, Job, had gone through many trials that God allowed him to experience. In Job 1, the book named after the man, it is quickly learned that Satan was allowed to test the faithful, godly man, and he did. In all the trials Job went through, Job never shook his fist at God or blamed His Creator for his difficult times.

Although Satan did his worse to get Job to turn away from God and tried shake Job's faith, other challenges were just as vexing. They were the consoling "help" from Job's three friends: Eliphaz, Bilidad, and Zophar.

Their intent was to help Job. They sat quietly for a long time with their suffering friend. Soon, however, most of their conversation tried to pin the blame on their friend. It was reasoned that affliction was always a judgment on sin and that Job must have sinned to cause the wrath of God to fall.

The suffering saint agreed that could be true, but that he was not guilty of any iniquity. His denial did not bode well with those attempting to get Job to get right with God.

After his friends insistence that Job had to be guilty, God spoke with Job. The Creator made it clear that man knows so little about Him and certainly does not know why God does what He does.

When the Lord was done speaking with patient, faithful Job, He then spoke to Eliphaz. He told the man and to tell the other two friends, that they did not speak of God as righteous Job did. Because of their not believing Job and falsely suspecting Job was in sin God was angry at the three. He commanded them to make a sacrifice for their sin and Job would pray for them.

"And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. 8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job." Job 42:7-8

Although sin certainly has its consequences, not all trials are punishments. God sometimes uses the difficult times in our lives to draw us closer to Him. Not one respected, godly person got that way without going through fiery trials. Their hard times tested their faith. They leaned and waited patiently on the Lord to guide them through, and that is how they spiritually grew.

Sometimes, as in Job's situation, the trials were to show others how a God-trusting person should behave and be faithful in all circumstances. In Job's case, one of those that needed to see how people should trust God was Satan.

So many of us fail, as did Job's three friends. We hear or see someone going through hard times, and immediately assume they are being punished by God. We need to learn as did Eliphaz, that we have no clue what God is doing in another's life. Leave the judging to God. He knows what He is doing and why!

“God doesn't give us what we can handle; God helps us handle what we are given.”

— Author Unknown

Verses for Hard Times

- *“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” James 1:2*
- *“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” II Cor. 12:10*
- *“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.” Acts 5:41*
- *“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;” Rom. 5:3*
- *“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” James 1:12*

“Some ships behave best in a gale. In light winds, they rock themselves to pieces.

“To a Christian, diversity is not the most dangerous condition. Fine weather tries him more. When we are least visibly strained, we are often most sharply tested.” — Birreli

From Problems to Hallowed Ground

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“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Rom. 8:28

Moses had more than the usual “thumps and bumps” life had to offer. As a baby, to escape death by the pharaoh's henchmen, his mother set him afloat in a bulrush bassinet down an Egyptian river. Soon he was adopted by a new “mother”, only seeing his biological parents in his younger years.

He was raised in a totally strange, ungodly culture far from his real family. He probably thought of his biological parents, how he was raised, and of the Hebrews he had lived among. When he saw one of them being beaten, Moses stepped in to protect his Hebrew countryman and killed the Egyptian attacker.

Because of this, once again, Moses found himself without a family, as he fled the pharaoh's wrath and the leader's attempt on his life. There in another strange land, Midian, he faced angry outcries from shepherds keeping women from getting water first. Again, he stood up for the underdogs. He stood up against the shepherds and helped the women get their water. As a reward for Moses' help, the maids' tale of his heroism led him to get a job tending sheep. It was a very strange, different land he was now living in. He had come from pauper to prince, and he found himself a pauper again, but employed.

His job of watching sheep was a lonely one. For months he may have been alone on the backside of the mountains with only the bleating of his sheep to break the monotony. It was there, Moses one day saw a sight that changed his life. If it were not for all the "bad things" that had happened in his life, he would not have been at that place.

Moses saw a sight that he had never seen or even heard of before. Moses saw a bush that was burning. It burned and burned, but was never devoured by the lapping tongues of the fire's flame. It should have been a charred pile of ash but on it burned. As he walked up to the strange phenomenon, God's voice talked to him out of the green, but burning bush.

Although Moses faced many hard times, it was at that bush that God called him into a special ministry. Because he was where he was supposed to be, Moses became a leader that changed history for himself and Israel.

Trials and tribulations are not necessarily a bad thing. Quite often they are used to bring a person to the place where God wants him to be, and where God can use him. God used Moses' difficult times to put him in the place where God needed him.

God also used trials and tribulations to put other biblical characters in a position where they could be used, including:

- Sarah. If Sarah had not been barren for over 80 years and then conceived a child, many would not be encouraged that God could do anything.
- Joseph. If the hard times Joseph experienced did not happen, he would not have been in the position to help save his family during a famine.
- Hannah. If Samuel's mother had not been barren and prayed for a child, Hannah never would have had Samuel and had him trained by the priest, Eli. If not for Hannah's pleading to God, Israel would not have the leader God wanted them to have.
- Elijah. If there were no drought, Elijah would not have seen God's provision at the Brook Cherith.
- Ruth. If Ruth's trials did not occur, she would not have been married to Boaz and been part of the lineage that God used to bring Jesus into this world.
- Paul. If Paul had not been shipwrecked on the island of Melita, the island leader's father would not have been healed by Paul's prayers. Also, if Paul was not imprisoned in Rome, many Romans would not have been saved.
- Jesus. If Jesus did not die the horrible death He did, none of us would have the opportunity to go to Heaven!

Every person on this Earth will or has gone through difficult times. Being a Christian does not exempt one from facing hardships. Sometimes tribulations are brought on by our wrong decisions or lustful desires. Many times, especially for a Christian, the testing times may be used to get us in a place God wants us to be so that He can get the glory and use us in a way He desires.

Difficult situations are opportunities to let go and rely on the Lord to help one through an “impossible” situation. Those times are never a time to shake a fist at God and blame Him for all that seems “bad.” Those times may be the times God intends to change one’s direction in life and use it for His glory!