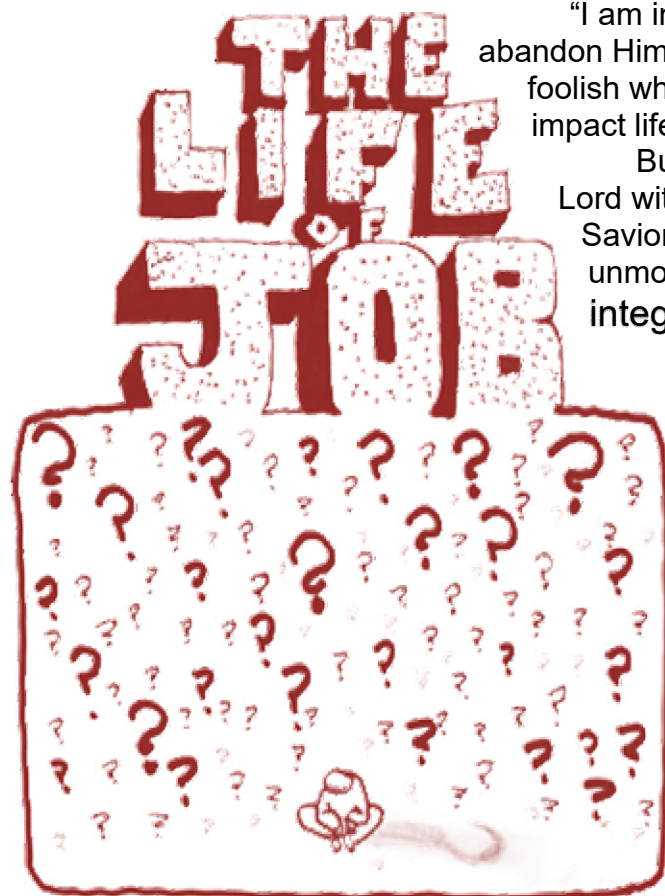


A STUDY ON GOD'S HISTORY OF JOB - PART TWO



"I am innocent. It's just not fair!", people blame God, abandon Him, speak about how God is powerless or uncaring or foolish whenever and wherever the terrible effects of sin impact life.

But how different is Job! He does not sin against the Lord with his lips (Job 1:22). Instead he holds firmly to His Savior. The word used for this transparent, solid, public, unmovable faith in God's words and promises? **integrity**

The meaning of **integrity** carries the basic idea of completeness. Integrity has to do with being complete, or undivided, wholeness, totality.

This same word was the basis for an Old Testament worship tool used by the High Priest. We do not know much about the *Thummin* (THUM*MEEN (plural)). But God's word used them to detect completeness, absolute truth whenever God's people needed it.

Whether speaking Hebrew or English, one can easily see Job had integrity. He was unwavering and undivided in his faith in God. Job had complete loyalty to the LORD God Almighty.

But his integrity did not protect Job from bad things. His doing good did not spare him the bad. Hmmm, Job's integrity did *not* keep his pain away, *nor* prevent loneliness, *nor* attacks and false accusations against his theology.

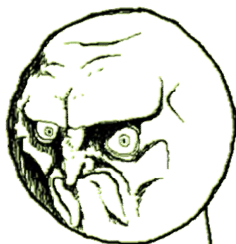
This poses a problem for us critters of dust and breath. Our sinful nature ALWAYS defaults to the wicked way of thinking that God owes me something. I am faithful, I do good, I don't go down the way of the sewer of my culture. I DON'T DESERVE THIS or THAT BAD THING! My sinful nature is ALWAYS attacking God's Grace and Mercy. I treat "our good" or "my avoidance of evil" like coins of faith. Then I walk up to God's store, put in my coin and demand His cosmic gumball machine spit out protection and good things for me.

Book of Job is essentially one long discussion, one running theology course on a single point. The LORD had the history of his child, JOB, written down like a drama. Job is on stage, we get to watch it all unfold,

the backdrop story, the heroes and anti-heroes. We can watch and re-watch, see behind the scenes, take notes, discuss, learn.

Act 1, Scene 1, is a thematic panning of the whole age-old question: **"Why do bad things happen to good people, especially those whom the compassionate and gracious God has declared good by faith? What in the world is God doing!!?"**

The conversation one has with the Book of Job begins-and-ends with heaven's awe, earth-bound wonder and blessings beyond imagining. And between those bookends is Mr. JOB, clothed with humility and unyielding faith and awe. If you do not read much beyond this page, the end of these JOB-notes summarized: "God is God."





When one looks at the first chapters like this, amazement bubbles up. Here, in this book, the LORD has the serial-murderer of mankind exposed. Satan's demented twisted plans are revealed in slow-motion; the LORD unmasks and records that demon's lie-speak, his murderous dark-will. Read the book. It is *not* God at all who is against Job. It is *not* God who is afflicting Job. Instead, it is this demon called "Satan". "Accuser" seems to do his dirty work only by groveling and obtaining the permission of God.

How God lays it out for us to take in takes our breath away! At first blush, it seems to be some high-stakes cosmic chess game; Mr. Job seems to be just a pawn? Some say this shows God is an accomplice to the hellish plans of torture? God

must be a Master of a dark-game of high-stakes cosmic competition? There's a fight between God and hell and souls are caught in the squeeze? No to all such thinking.

The question in Job is the same question in the whole of the Bible. We think it all circles around the question, "Why?" But reading JOB we discover that Jesus has laid out a much better question to ask when troubles come: — "Now what?"

The trouble has hit. My pillow is soaked in angry, pain-filled tears. "Now what?" people are turning on me and twisting my words— "Now what?" Friends make fun of my faith. I am losing out on the security of money and reputation. "Now what?" My closest family members no longer stick with the truth? People are telling me to give up on God and join the party of real life, not the foolish trust in an invisible God. — "Now what?" I have very awful pains of heart and mind and the darkest of losses. "Now what?"

VIEW CLASS POWERPOINT

We are told in Job 2:10, in and through it all, Job did not sin with his lips. Too often, the fallen world becomes the straight edge against which we make judgments about all that appears crooked to us. Not so for Job. Job knew that the way things are bear no necessary resemblance to the way God may well want them to be.

This core truth of the Lord's Word keeps a hold of JOB throughout his life. JOB trusted in the Redeemer. Everything else

was corrupt and ruined by sin and its terrible effects. Emotional, physical, financial social, spiritual Pain is a terrible thing. Period.

Unbelief and defying God is our default, defiant and doomed will. We have a wicked always-dying death, unless and until the LORD in His mercy saves us. God is able and promises to take even terrible things, PAIN,

loneliness, grief, and turn it into good for His believers.

When I think about it, God can take even the worst thing that has ever happened, the crucifixion of His own dear Son, and turn that into good. Now there's something for us to keep our feet solid and

sure as we stand on His Word! JOB is real; a model of active faithful love, a model of patient trust in our Savior and Redeemer.



Does a JOB-life happen nowadays? If so, how does that happen? In the middle of the worst financial, social, physical, emotional and personal troubles, the words of Job 19 are clear and bright as they trumpet through time. Comment.