



Midweek Study Notes
6th February 2021
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Giants of Faith - Job (Part 1)

We kept our focus on the Bible's amazing giants of faith by looking at the story of Job, as told in the Old Testament book of the same name.

Job is *not* mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11, but as Kathryn explained, we couldn't possibly explore the subject of people's faith being tested without studying this exemplary man, who kept trusting God despite his horrendous circumstances.



Job was devoted to God and was totally honest, inside and out. The first verse of the book that is devoted to him - which Kathryn suggested we read for ourselves - tells us he was a man who *'was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.'*

The Bible tells us that we - like Job, Cain and Peter - can be vulnerable to and targeted by Satan. God is always aware of what Satan is up to, setting the boundaries for what he can and can't do, but in this instance He allowed Job's faith to be tested by removing some of those boundaries from his life.



Job had no idea of the extent to which his faith would be tested, and in a couple of weeks we will discover more about what happened to him. But for now, let's be inspired by Job's amazing endurance by remembering that, even when he was urged by his wife to curse God because of his terrible suffering, he chose to remain *utterly* devoted.

As **2 Corinthians 4:8-9** reminds us, *We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.*

And we walk with God in obedience and trust, when the trials come, not only will He help us to endure them, but they will eventually lead to blessings and fruitfulness.

Discussion Suggestions

Kathryn suggested that some of us may be able to identify with Job, in that we have something in our life that has caused us to cry out to God, saying “I wasn’t expecting *this* when I made the decision to follow you.”

Is this something you can identify with? If you are willing to, please share what it is you are grappling with.

Even though life can often feel unfair, we were reminded that God can create a redemptive story with even our most difficult circumstances.

Can you give an example of how God brought a positive result from a challenging time in your life?

1 Peter 1:6-7 says that *‘In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.’*

Does it encourage you to know that going through difficult times can bring God ‘praise, glory and honour’?

Have you ever prayed that God would increase your faith about something? Did your faith increase as you prayed, and if so, what effect did this have on your situation?

Kathryn reminded us that we are stakeholders in a spiritual kingdom that is gaining ground. Our faith in God is our power, rendering Satan’s kingdom absolutely useless, and it advances the kingdom of God until the day when it will fill the whole Earth.

What practical steps can we take as a church to step out in faith? What are some of the things that we can expect to happen - within our congregation and our local community - as we do this?



It Is Well With My Soul

Steve told us something of the story behind the 1873 hymn *It Is Well With My Soul*, which was written by the American lawyer and church elder Horatio Spafford.

The hymn was written by Spafford after a number of tragic events took place in his life. The death of his four year old son was followed by the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which brought him to financial ruin after a number of properties he owned were destroyed. Further economic problems led to Spafford making the decision to travel to England with his family to assist in the evangelistic campaigns of Dwight L. Moody, and Spafford sent his family ahead of him whilst he wrapped up some business matters.

Tragically, in the early hours of 22nd November 1873, the steamship his family were travelling on - the *Ville du Havre* - sank in just 12 minutes after colliding with another vessel. 226 lives were lost, including all four of Spafford's daughters. As he travelled to meet his grieving wife, who had managed to survive the sinking ship, Spafford was inspired to write the words to the hymn that we closed our service with on Sunday.

Take a moment to read or sing the words to this famous hymn once more. How are you affected by Spafford's hope and faith in the face of such tragedy and adversity?

*When peace like a river, attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to know, It is well, it is well, with my soul.*

***It is well, (it is well),
With my soul, (with my soul)
It is well, it is well, with my soul.***

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate, And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

*My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought! My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more, Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

*For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live: If Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life, Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.*

*But Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait, The sky, not the grave, is our goal;
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord! Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul.*

*And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight, The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend, A song in the night, oh my soul!*