

JOB PART 2
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Many people conclude that God brought calamity into the life of Job ... to his children ... his business ... to his health ... this teaching is to bring him down from his self-righteous heights.

They say that God used satan as His "attack dog".

Lesson: God might bring calamity into our lives? That's what God does to His saints. That doesn't give us much confidence? Horrible things ... painful experiences ... maybe even robbing us of our children ... that in some way ... it might teach us some strange spiritual lesson.

I'd like to offer an alternative explanation. One I believe that is more consistent with the Bible as a whole. One that doesn't involve accusing God of being cruel and heartless and working in partnership with satan the devil.

To remind us of God's nature let's have a look at a few verses.

Psalms 103:2-5 (NKJV)

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul,

And forget not all His benefits:

3 Who forgives all your iniquities,

Who heals all your diseases,

4 Who redeems your life from destruction,

Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things,

So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

These verses show God's loving kindness ... tender mercies.

Psalms 103:12-14 (NKJV)

12 **As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.**

13 **As a father pities his children,
So the Lord pities those who fear Him.**

14 **For He knows our frame;
He remembers that we are dust.** *(God knows we're human)*

And how God pities us. He understands that we are not all the strong and the mighty.

Psalms 103:17-18 (NKJV)

17 **But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting
On those who fear Him,**

And His righteousness to children's children,

18 To such as keep His covenant,

And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

And ... His mercy.

Psalms 145:5-9 (NKJV)

5 I will meditate on the glorious splendour of Your majesty,
And on Your wondrous works.

6 Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts,
And I will declare Your greatness.

7 **They shall utter the memory of Your great goodness,
And shall sing of Your righteousness.** *(God does what is right ... always!)*

8 **The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,**

Slow to anger and great in mercy. *(God is disposed to show favour and tender mercies.)*

9 The Lord is good to all,

And His tender mercies are over all His works.

Psalms 145:14-18 (NKJV)

14 The Lord upholds all who fall,
And raises up all who are bowed down.

15 The eyes of all look expectantly to You,
And You give them their food in due season.

16 You open Your hand

And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

17 The Lord is righteous in all His ways,

Gracious in all His works.

18 The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,

To all who call upon Him in truth.

God is near to all who call upon Him and gracious.

God's Nature: ... He is a good God and a righteous God.

When you read the traditional explanations of Job ... it is weird logic – even though God is cruel and heartless ... the spiritual outcome is important eternally ... so His actions are justifiable. This is the philosophy of “the end justifies the means”.

The Reality: ... Satan attacked Job ... not God. Even though the people still indirectly accuse God of being responsible (as Job himself did).

We found out last week that though The Book of Job is inspired ... but it is not all truth. The Bible is accurate ... but ... it records accurately ... lies that people have told (satan to Eve ... Jacob to Isaac ... Ananias and Sapphira) ... and ... it also accurately records

opinions ... opinions of human beings ... consider the Book of Ecclesiastes.

Also Job: ... he had many opinions

Remember the Book of Job had 20 chapters from Job where he presents his views ... and his 3 friends had 9 chapters ... to offer their counter-views. There were lots of disagreements and accusations! All full of human opinions.

What did the man Elihu make of Job's views?

Job 35:16 (NKJV)

**16 Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain;
He multiplies words without knowledge."**

Job 35:16 (MESSAGE BIBLE)

**16 "Job, you talk sheer nonsense—
nonstop nonsense!"**

The overview of Job's words and opinions were that they were "nonstop nonsense". I don't think that Elihu would recommend building a doctrine from Job's words.

What did God say about Job's views? We have here inspiration and truth ... because God cannot lie.

Job 38:1-2 (NKJV)

**1 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:
2 "Who is this who darkens counsel
By words without knowledge?"**

Job 38:2 (GOOD NEWS BIBLE)

2 Who are you to question my wisdom with your ignorant, empty words?

Job lacked knowledge. You are confusing people. You are obscuring what is really happening. Job you are an ignoramus. He did not understand the ways of God and how God acted. He said many things that were inaccurate.

Finally: ... What did Job himself say about his former opinions?

Job 42:1-6 (NKJV)

1 Then Job answered the Lord and said:

2 "I know that You can do everything,

And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.

3 You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?'

Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,

Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

4 Listen, please, and let me speak;

You said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.'

5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear,

But now my eye sees You.

6 Therefore I abhor myself, *(Hebrew word ... to repudiate or retract)*

And repent in dust and ashes."

Job 42:6 (AMPLIFIED BIBLE)

6 Therefore I retract [my words and hate myself] and repent in dust and ashes.

Job 42:6 (NLT)

6 I take back everything I said, ..."

So it is safe to conclude that much of the many chapters devoted to Job and his 3 friends arguing and debating is of limited value to us.

It is doubtful if you'd want to build any doctrine on their views ... especially if it goes against the clear teaching of the rest of the Bible??

For instance: ... a well-known and often quoted verse ... that people build a doctrine on.

Job 1:20-21 (NKJV)

20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped.

21 And he said:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb,
And naked shall I return there.

**The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away;
Blessed be the name of the Lord."**

Job said it. It's an inspired record. Job was sincere ... he believed it. But ... was it true? Job didn't understand the ways of God. Job was an ignorant man ... he lacked knowledge. He misunderstood.

NO! Maybe God gave? But the scripture is plain. Satan took it away. Job did not know that. We do. Previous verses ... and much of the remainder of scripture tells us so.

God is not in the business of inflicting tragedy and suffering on His saints ... God is gracious. His disposition is to show favour. His loving kindness is over His people. The saints frequently blame Him for doing so.

I've often heard this passage quoted following tragedies. Perhaps the death of a young child in a Church family? The Lord does not take away young children. The Protestant world might say, "God wanted another flower in His Heavenly garden". Some in the Church

of God say, "the Lord gives and the Lord takes away". No! That is not what the Bible teaches!!

What is the context of the Bible? God is good!!

James 1:16-17 (NKJV)

16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

17 **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.** *(NB Every good and every perfect gift comes from The Father. He is consistent. Dependable. True. Compassionate. He is disposed to show favour. With no variation.)*

Job had a great attitude ... at least to start with. In that verse he was not accusing God in a bitter hostile manner. But ... in his ignorance ... he did put the blame on God ... the responsibility on God.

But ... it was satan who took away.

It seems that Job had some problems in his life which left him vulnerable to satan. Satan took advantage ... as he will of us ... if we don't remain vigilant.

There are several lessons from Job.

- 1 The Bible is inspired ... but not all truth
- 2 Watch out for satan
- 3 Don't be presumptuous (assuming that leading a good and moral life brings automatic protection)
- 4 Don't misunderstand the Sovereignty of God

Job himself was definitely a good and upright man ... so might you be. But that in itself is not enough to protect us from tragedy. Satan

got to Job. He wants us too ... and we must take action if we want to be protected from satan. Is it automatic? No!

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NKJV)

8 **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.**

9 **Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.**

If we don't remain vigilant ... if we don't resist? Potentially we are prey for the devil. This gives us more knowledge (did Job know?) ... that we must apply.

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NKJV)

26 **"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,**

27 **nor give place to the devil.**

YOU! Don't YOU give opportunity to the devil!

It's us who give the devil opportunity ... not God who sets him on us. Satan's here now in 2016 ... he was there in Job's day. His methodology hasn't changed.

If we use knowledge that we have ... and apply it ... we can be protected. BUT ... IT'S NOT AUTOMATIC! Don't you give the devil an opportunity ... he will take it.

If we are protected automatically ... why would we need the whole armour of God?

Ephesians 6:10-17 (NKJV)

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11 **Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (You put it on!)**

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. *(They were there in Job's day. They are there today)*

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

14 Stand therefore, having **girded your waist with truth**, having **put on the breastplate of righteousness**,

15 and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace**;

16 above all, **taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.**

17 And **take the helmet of salvation**, and **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**;

If we don't use God's armour ... then we won't be able to stand against his attacks. We will be vulnerable.

Job may have understood very little of this ... so again we can't be personally critical. But ... we can't take Job's example (of an ignorant man who talked nonsense at times) and say that's an illustration of the normal Christian life. We are not in that position at all. "I'm suffering just like Job". You've no business suffering just like Job!! We have the Bible.

Job acknowledged his words were without knowledge. He had a weakness in this area. He was a good and upright man ... but lacked important knowledge.

He seemed to assume ... if you read between the lines ... that ... by being good ... he would be protected/blessed.

What about us? We keep The Sabbath ... Holy Days ... don't eat pork ... don't keep xmas ... so are we automatically protected? Right? NO!! Wrong? Yes. There are promises ... but we must take action to obtain them.

Job also seemed to think that everything that happened in his life must have had God's express approval. No. Not true either. This was a misunderstanding of God's Sovereignty.

Also a common misunderstanding among many Christians is that God is sovereign ... so everything that takes place must be expressly approved or permitted by God. No!! Not accurate!

This is not accurate! We can allow many things to happen. We can give the devil opportunity ... We can fail to wear God's armour ... We can choose to make foolish decisions ... We can sow poor quality seed into our lives ... We are responsible for a great deal of what happens. Don't be so quick to put the blame on God ... as part of some unknown Cosmic purpose. And ... don't forget what comes from satan ... not God. And of course ... we live in a fallen world too.

Right knowledge is important ... Job multiplied words without knowledge ... as per Elihu and God.

You and I are different ... You and I have access to knowledge ... the whole Bible ... the whole of the revealed Word ... we have no excuse! We can't claim to be like Job. He was an ignorant man. We have no such excuse.

2 Peter 1:2-11 (NKJV)

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the *knowledge (*Epignosis*) of God and of Jesus our Lord,

3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the ***knowledge (Epignosis)** of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

4 **by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises**, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue **knowledge**, (*Greek:Gnosis ... in a general sense*)

6 to **knowledge** (*as in verse 5*) self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the ***knowledge (Epignosis)** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 **For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.**

10 **Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;**

11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

***knowledge** ... Greek: Epignosis ... precise, accurate knowledge ... with discernment. Much deeper ... much wider.

To walk God's way successfully ... to enjoy the promises and avoid stumbling and falling or being vulnerable to satan ... we need precise, accurate knowledge.

We don't want to be ignorant like Job ... a good man morally but he ended up blaming God for satan's activities. Being zealous ... enthusiastic ... committed believers is of limited use if we are ignorant of how God works.

Romans 10:1-2 (NKJV)

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

2 **For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.** (*Epignosis*)

Romans 10:1-2 (NEW CENTURY VERSION)

2 **They really try to follow God, but they do not know the right way.** (*A bit like Job? Like us? Zealous to go God's way but we don't have an accurate knowledge*)

We need accurate knowledge ... of God's nature ... satan's activities ... our responsibilities.

And ... for example ... that would include what makes us vulnerable. Job was morally upright ... a good man ... we know he was ignorant ... lacked knowledge. But he had at least one significant area where he was vulnerable.

Job 3:24-26 (NKJV)

24 For my sighing comes before I eat,
And my groanings pour out like water.

25 **For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me,
And what I dreaded has happened to me.** (*Dreaded*)

26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest, for trouble comes."

Job 3:25 (NET)

25 **For the very thing I dreaded has happened to me,
and what I feared has come upon me.**

We have no great details about that. It looks like Job lived to some extent in fear and dread of calamity?

Remember in Chapter 1:5 he gave burnt offerings on behalf of his children ... he feared that they might be cursing God ... bringing destruction on themselves. He was in fear of what they were doing.

What else did job fear? Quite a lot by the look of it. Dread?

Fear is dangerous to a believer. Fear is a perversion of faith. Faith is to believe good things will come from God. Fear is to believe bad things. Faith comes from hearing the Word of God ... Fear from hearing the word of satan. Faith in two places ... in our heart and in our mouths ... what we believe and what we say. Fear in two places ... what we believe and what we say.

If we fear ... we can put bad things into motion in our lives. If we're in fear ... we're not in faith!!

Although Job was a good man ... the door was open ... he feared greatly ... believing bad things were coming. Satan could exploit the situation (remember: Give no place to the devil).

You and me? Fear ... worry ... anxiety ... what's going to happen to me ... sick ... end up in poverty ... die prematurely? We are giving opportunity to the devil.

Matthew 6:25-34 (NKJV)

25 "Therefore I say to you, **do not worry about your life**, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? *(We have a Father. Fathers look after their children)*

27 **Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?**

28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will He not much more** clothe you, O you of little faith? (*A much more God*)

31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. **For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.**

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Job didn't have our advantages ... he dreaded ... feared ... worried. He didn't have those words from the Lord Jesus. The words "fear not" appear about 100 times in the Bible.

Philippians 4:6-8 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; (*Several translations say, "Never worry about anything"*)

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (*Poor old Job didn't have that piece of information*)

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. (*Meditate on bad things = worry*)

We are told to meditate on good things. It's not easy. Is it faith or fear? We need to know and trust God ... or not? Confident of our relationship?

Job had fear and dread. We don't need to ... but it doesn't happen automatically. Take action! Prayer ... supplication ... Thanksgiving ... then we will receive the peace of mind which comes from the Holy Spirit.

Let's go back to Job now. The backdrop ... he's vulnerable ...satan is then as he is today ... a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour ... and he's got Job firmly in his sights. Job is in his cross-hairs. Satan is planning to take him down. By the way ... he will do the same to you and me. Hence the information to put on the whole armour of God.

Job 1:6-11 (NKJV)

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.

7 And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?"

So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." *(Like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour)*

8 Then 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, one who fears God and shuns evil?**" *(God said to satan ... "Have you set your heart on my man Job?" It was a rebuke from God)*

9 **So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"**

10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? *(Did God place a hedge around Job? Doubtful ... I don't think so. There is no scripture to say so ... but it requires accurate knowledge and action)* **You have**

blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

11 **But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"**

There are promises in the Bible ... but they require knowledge and action. Satan may have believed that there was a hedge around Job ... but he doesn't know everything! Satan provoked God in verse 11. He told God to reach out and afflict him ... then watch what happens. God is not going to participate in some sort of challenge from satan!! People think He is. That's the weird idea that some come up with.

God commands us to resist satan! He's not going to yield Himself!! Satan is not going to entice God who is good and gracious ... disposed to show favour ... to trick God ... to share in a Cosmic game of cruelty and suffering ... on a saint. No way!! It's not going to happen!

Job 1:12 (NKJV)

12 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, (*see ... observe ... look*) **all that he has is in your power**; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

God is just stating an existing bald fact ... Not ... "Oh well then ... you've persuaded me ... go on ... have a go".

Job lived in a fallen world ... in enemy territory ... satan was an adversary of Job then ... an enemy of Job then ... of all men then ... just as he is today. If we don't remain vigilant and watchful ... with our armour on ... we're all vulnerable. God doesn't have to give us into satan's hand ... the whole world is already in satan's hand.

1 John 5:18-19 (NKJV)

18 We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

(NIV) "We know that the whole world is under the control of the evil one"

(NASB) "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one"

God said to satan: "Look. All he has is in your hands". He was just stating a fact. The fact is the same today. The whole world is under the control of satan today.

It's still a fact today. The reason we're repeatedly told to be watchful ... vigilant ... give no place to the devil ... resist evil ... put on the whole armour of God ... take up the shield of faith ... which will help us to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one etc etc.

It's not just filling up scripture! It's vital knowledge ... precise ... accurate ... that we need to know and apply! Let's heed the words of scripture and be vigilant and alert at all times.