



CAN GOD BE TRUSTED IN YOUR TROUBLES?

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Can God Be Trusted in Your Troubles?

SERMON REFERENCE: Job 13:15

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2155

We have all faced devastation at some point in our lives; it is in those difficult seasons we often ask ourselves if God is enough. Can God be trusted in our troubles?

This is what Job learned in his suffering. God allowed the devil to bring hardship on Job because the devil didn't think Job could love God just for who He is.

Yet, in Job 13:15, Job says, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." The Book of Job shows us that God Himself is not only necessary, but He is enough.

First, we can trust God even when we're submerged in suffering.

Job's troubles began with the seemingly instant loss of his livestock—his financial security. While Job was still reeling over the news, a second messenger informed him that he'd lost his ten children. His body was infected with a horrible disease, and as a result, his reputation was tarnished. But in the midst of this overwhelming devastation, Job continued to praise God.

Adrian Rogers says, "You can have faith and calamity all at the same time. Faith is not receiving from God what we want; faith is accepting from God what He gives."

We can also trust God when we are forsaken by our friends.

Job 19:14 says, "My relatives have failed, and my close friends have forgotten me." Job's friends were perplexed by his hardships; because they didn't understand, they assumed he was at fault and left him. Being abandoned by friends is one of the deepest hurts we could face. God understands every part of us and promises He will not leave us.

Third, we can trust God when we are dismayed by darkness.

Job had no idea what was happening to him, or why. When we find ourselves in this kind of complete darkness, we should remember to lean upon God, the guiding light of our soul's darkest hours.

As Job pleaded his case to God, God reminded him of His sovereignty, sufficiency, and sympathy. Job learned that in his suffering, abandonment, and dismay, God was nearest to Him. God was necessary to live through the trial; He was enough to get Him through it.

Life Application

Are you experiencing suffering, abandonment, or dismay? Remember that God is with you. He is sovereign, sufficient, and sympathetic. Pray today that He would reveal His presence to you.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Everyone has trouble.
 - i) Most of us think that we have more trouble than we really have.
 - ii) Most of us think we that have more trouble than what other people have.
 - iii) But few people, if any, have ever had the trouble that Job had.
- b) In the midst of all of his troubles, sorrows, difficulties, brokenness, and perplexities, Job made an incredible statement concerning God.
 - i) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."
 - (1) Job 13:15
- c) All of us know that God is necessary.
 - i) We could not exist without Him.
- d) But the greatest question is this:
 - i) Is God enough?
- e) God brings blessings, but He also allows troubles.
 - i) Can God be trusted with our troubles?
- f) The devil thinks that anyone who serves God without some ulterior motive is a fool.
 - i) Job 1:1-3
 - (1) The word "eschewed" in this passage means "turned from."
- g) Job was the greatest of all men in the East.
 - i) He was a great man spiritually.
 - ii) He was a great man financially.
 - iii) He was a great man domestically.
- h) The devil was suspicious of Job's motives.
 - i) He thought that Job served God only because God was good to him.
 - ii) He thought that God had bribed Job and bought him off.
- i) Job 1:6
 - i) In the Bible, Satan is called "the accuser of the brethren."
- j) Job 1:7-9
 - i) The name "Satan" means "adversary."
 - ii) Satan is still roaming the Earth today.
 - iii) Satan accused Job of having an ulterior motive for serving God.
- k) Job 1:10-11
 - i) Satan challenged God concerning Job.
 - (1) He claimed that Job didn't really love God or trust God.
 - (2) He claimed that God had just bought Job off.



- ii) Satan knew that there was a hedge around Job because he had been trying to get through that hedge and couldn't.
- l) Job 1:12
 - i) Satan caused incredible trouble for Job.
- m) Finally, after all of this trouble, Job said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."
 - i) Job 13:15
- n) Satan said that Job loved God because:
 - i) Because God had been good to Job.
 - ii) Because God had given Job riches.
 - iii) Because God had given Job children.
 - iv) Because God had put a hedge around Job.
 - (1) "Because" love is the weakest kind of love.
 - (2) A "because" kind of love can be threatened, and that is the kind of love that Satan thought Job had for God.
 - (a) Take away the "because" and Satan thought that Job wouldn't love God anymore.
 - (b) Instead of loving others "because," we should love others for who they are.
- o) The devil could not believe that Job loved God for who God is.
 - i) He believed that there had to be some ulterior motive.
- p) We will see in the book of Job that God in Himself is not only necessary, but that He is enough and that we can love God and trust God even in the midst of our problems.
- q) Today's message will present three questions.
 - i) If we can answer "yes" to these questions, then we have the same kind of faith that Job had.

2) WHEN YOU ARE SUBMERGED IN SUFFERING (JOB 1:13-15)

- a) Can God be trusted when you are submerged in suffering?
 - i) Job 13:15
- b) Job suffered incredible loss:
 - i) Loss of finances
 - (1) Job 1:13-15
 - (2) Job was a rancher; and all of his animals, flocks and herds were taken away all at once.
 - (a) If tomorrow morning you wake up a pauper, can you still trust God?
 - (3) Job became bankrupt overnight.
 - (4) Job 1:16-17
 - ii) Loss of family
 - (1) Job 1:18-19
 - (2) A great tornado, from the hand of Satan, struck the home where Job's children were.
 - iii) Loss of fitness and health
 - (1) Job 2:4-6
 - (2) Job's body was covered with great ulcers and boils from the top of his head to the soles of his feet.
 - (3) Job's body was consumed with infection.



- iv) Loss of face (reputation)
 - (1) Job 4:7
 - (2) Job's friends accused him.
 - (a) They asked what he had done wrong.
 - (b) They claimed that no one ever suffered like this who was innocent.
 - (c) They insinuated that Job must have had a secret sin.
 - (i) If Job had been doing right, then none of this would have happened.
 - (3) What if your reputation were taken away from you?
 - (a) What if you had done nothing wrong, but everyone thought that you had?
 - (b) What if you were criticized and blamed?
 - (4) There are those who believe that if a person will only get right with God, then they will be healthy and wealthy.
 - (a) They have the philosophy that people suffer because they have done wrong.
 - (b) They believe that if you get right with God and believe God, then you can have anything you want.
 - (c) This philosophy is wrong.
 - (d) Some of God's choicest of saints have suffered.
- c) Job was submerged in suffering.
- d) In the midst of all of his suffering, Job praised God and gave God the glory.
 - i) Can you do that?
 - ii) Can you trust God when you are submerged in suffering?
- e) Faith is not the way to get out of suffering.
 - i) Faith may be the way to endure suffering.
- f) Hebrews 11:32-35
 - i) God gives a roll call of the heroes of the faith and tells of people who did incredible things by faith.
- g) Hebrews 11:36-39
 - i) The Bible also tells of those who suffered.
 - ii) This passage states that they had obtained a good report through faith.
 - (1) They had done nothing wrong.
 - iii) Those who escaped the suffering were given faith to escape.
 - iv) Those who endured were given faith to endure.
 - v) Others were delivered, but some died.
 - (1) Do you have faith to be delivered?
 - (2) Do you have faith to die?
- h) A person can have faith and calamity at the same time.
 - i) Faith does not mean that we will always escape trouble.
 - ii) Faith is not receiving from God what we want but accepting from God what He gives.
- i) Can you trust God when you are submerged in suffering?
 - i) Can you say with Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him?"
 - ii) If you can, then you will shut the devil's mouth.



- (1) The devil thinks that if trouble comes to a Christian, then he or she will curse God.
 - (a) But Job praised God.

j) Job 1:20-22

3) WHEN YOU ARE FORSAKEN BY FRIENDS (JOB 19:14, 19)

- a) Can God be trusted when you are forsaken by friends?
 - i) It is one thing to be submerged in suffering, but what about when we suffer and there is no one there to suffer with us or no one who really cares?
- b) Job had three friends, three comforters, but what kind of comforters were they?
 - i) They gave platitudes, critiqued him and criticized him.
 - ii) They were not really friends at all.
- c) Job 19:14
 - i) Job's kinsfolk failed him.
 - ii) Job's familiar friends had forgotten him.
- d) Job 19:19
 - i) Has your spouse forsaken you?
 - ii) Have your children abandoned you?
 - iii) Has a friend whom you've trusted turned on you?
- e) Job's friends could not understand because they did not know what was happening any more than Job did.
 - i) Job was completely in the dark, and so were his friends.
- f) Perhaps even worse than suffering physically is to have friends forsake you.
 - i) There may be no deeper hurt than this.
- g) Psalm 41:9
 - i) This passage of Scripture is a prophecy of what Judas would do to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- h) Psalm 55:12-14
- i) Job was in his deepest need, and his friends turned their backs on him.
 - i) This happened to Paul when he was in the Philippian jail.
 - (1) 2 Timothy 4:10
 - ii) It can happen to any of us.
 - (1) It can happen to preachers.
 - (a) Don't think that if you preach the Gospel that the world is going to love you.
 - (b) The same world that hated Jesus is going to hate you.
 - (c) Sometimes the people with whom you take counsel within the house of God will turn against you.
 - (d) Trust God when friends forsake you.
 - (2) It can happen to kids at school.
 - (a) Sometimes friends will leave you when you take a stand for God.
 - (3) It can happen in business.
 - (a) You can take a stand for righteousness, and your business partner may turn against you and perhaps undercut you.
- j) Even Job's wife turned against him.
 - i) Job 2:9-10



- ii) Job's wife told him to curse God and die.
 - (1) She was doing the work of the devil when she said this.
 - (a) This was exactly what the devil had said that Job would do.
- k) When no one understands, when friends forsake you and you are suffering alone, can you trust God?
 - i) If you can, then you will shut the devil's mouth.
 - ii) Job 13:15

4) WHEN YOU ARE DISMAYED BY DARKNESS (JOB 23:1-9)

- a) Can you trust God when you are dismayed by darkness?
 - i) We have read Job 1, and we understand that Satan had slandered the character of God and the character of Job.
 - ii) We understand that God allowed Job to be tested, not to show that Job would fail but to show that he would not.
 - iii) But Job did not understand this.
 - (1) He was in absolute darkness.
- b) Job 23:1-5
 - i) The word "seat" in this passage means "throne."
 - ii) Job was saying in this passage that he had some questions for God and that God owed him some answers.
- c) Job 23:8-9
 - i) In the darkest of suffering, Job was searching for God.
 - ii) When suffering comes, we want to know why.
 - (1) We cannot answer the question "why" because that is God's question.
 - (2) "How" is our question; how are we going to react?
 - (3) God doesn't tell us the why's.
- d) Many of God's saints have gone into deep darkness and have not known why.
 - i) Isaiah 50:10-11
 - ii) It is good to fear the Lord.
 - iii) It is good to obey God.
 - iv) Sometimes a person who fears God and obeys God will still walk in darkness.
 - (1) A "stay" in this passage is a staff, a rod.
 - (a) This passage is talking about leaning upon God.
 - (2) When you are in darkness, don't light your own fire.
 - v) A person can be serving, fearing, and obeying God, and darkness can come.
- e) Darkness is merely the absence of light.
 - i) The only way there can be darkness is for the light to be withdrawn.
 - ii) God is the light.
- f) Sometimes God may back off and leave His servant in darkness.
 - i) Almost all of the biographies of great Christians will mention what they call "the dark night of the soul."
 - (1) They are serving God, loving God, and then perplexities come that they cannot understand.



- ii) The prophet Habakkuk is an example.
 - (1) Habakkuk saw things that he did not understand and asked God how and why He was doing things.
- iii) Luke 7:28
 - (1) Jesus said that not a greater was born of women than John the Baptist.
 - (2) Yet, John the Baptist, the one who said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," experienced such darkness that he sent his servants to ask Jesus if He was really the Messiah.
 - (a) John 1:29
 - (b) Luke 7:19
- iv) The apostle Paul said on one occasion that we are perplexed but not in despair.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 4:8
- g) There will be a time when you will be in such darkness that you will not understand where God is.
 - i) At that time, just stay upon your God and trust Him.
- h) If you can trust God when you are dismayed by darkness and do not know what is happening, then you will shut the devil's mouth.

5) LESSONS JOB LEARNED (JOB 38:1-7, 42:5-13)

- a) God finally does speak to Job, but He doesn't answer even one of Job's questions.
- b) God teaches Job three things:
 - i) The sovereignty of God
 - (1) Job 38:1-7
 - (a) God asks Job some questions.
 - (2) There are some things that only God knows.
 - (3) God has the right to do as He chooses.
 - ii) The sufficiency of God
 - (1) Job 42:5-6
 - (a) Job had gone from mere theology to a personal relationship through this trouble.
 - (2) The time when God will be the nearest and dearest and the most precious to you is when you are submerged in suffering, forsaken by friends, and dismayed by darkness.
 - (a) God alone is not only necessary, but at that time, God will be enough.
 - iii) The sympathy of God
 - (1) Job 42:10-13
 - (a) God gave Job twice as much as he had had before.
 - (2) Job received twice as much of everything he lost, except for his children.
 - (a) Job never lost his sons and daughters; they just went to Heaven.
 - (i) Death can hide, but it cannot divide.
 - 1. They are but on Christ's other side.
 - (ii) They with Him, and He with us.

**6) CONCLUSION**

- a) Man that is born of woman is full of trouble.
 - i) Job 14:1
- b) God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servants.
 - i) Psalm 35:27
 - ii) But we need to have the faith of Job.
 - (1) Job 13:15
- c) Everyone, whether they are a Christian or not, will have trouble.
 - i) As Christians, we are the ones who have the answer in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
 - i) 1 John 5:13
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Take your Bibles, find the book of Job, you'll find Job just before the book of Psalms, and turn to the thirteenth chapter of the book of Job, and we're going to look at one verse and then many other verses in the book, but this is the verse that sets the tone for what I have to say today.

You know all of us have trouble. Most of us think we have more trouble than we really have, and most of us think we're having more trouble than other people are having. But few, if any, perhaps none, have ever had the trouble that a man named Job had. And in the midst of his troubles, his sorrows, his difficulties, his perplexities, his heart brokenness, his consternation, his bewilderment, he makes one incredible statement. And here it is, Job chapter 13 and verse 15. Job says concerning Jehovah, "Though He slay me, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

Now, the title of the message is, "Can God Be Trusted in Your Troubles?" All of us know that God is necessary, we know we could not exist without Him, I hope you know that. But that's not really the greatest question. Not only is God necessary, the great question is, is God enough? And we all know that God brings blessings, but we have to admit also that God allows troubles. Now, can God be trusted with our troubles?

You know what the devil thinks? The devil thinks that anybody who serves God without some ulterior motive is a fool. Just go back to the first part of this book. Go back to Job chapter 1, and look if you will in the first three verses, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed," that means and turned from, "evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels and five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-asses and a very great household, so that this man," now here's a big statement, "this man was the greatest of all the men of the East." Now he was the big shot. Spiritually he was a great man. Financially he was a great man. Domestically he was a great man.

But the devil is suspicious of the motives of Job. The devil says, "Well now, wait a minute, the only reason that Job serves God is that God has been so good to him, God has bribed him and God has bought him off." Skip on down to verse 6 and you'll see this, Job chapter 1 verses 6 through 11, "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord," and watch this, "and Satan came also among them." Did you know that Satan is called in the Bible the accuser of the brethren? And so, the angelic creatures are coming to present themselves, and along comes Satan. "And the Lord said unto Satan," and by the way, the word Satan means adversary, "'Whence comest thou?' Then Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From going to and fro in the Earth and from walking up and down in it.'" And by the way, he's still doing that today, isn't he? "And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there's none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, and one that feareth God and escheweth evil.'" Now watch verse 9, "Then Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Doth Job fear God for naught?'" That is, "God, isn't there some ulterior motive that he serves You?" Then verse 10, "'Hast not



Thou made an hedge about him and about his house and about all that he hath, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands and his substance is increased in the land.”

Now here’s the challenge that Satan throws into the face of God concerning Job. “But put forth Thine hand now and touch all that he hath and he will curse Thee to Thy face.” “God, he doesn’t really love You, he doesn’t really care about You, he’s not really trusting You, You’ve just bought him off, You’ve bribed him. He doesn’t even know what trouble is; You’ve put a hedge around him. I know there’s a hedge around him because I’ve been trying to get through that hedge and You won’t let me.” Satan says, “You just let me at him, let me give him some industrial-strength problems. Let me hurt him, let me put him into darkness, let me cause him loss and suffering and pain. God, I’ll tell You how much he loves You, he’ll spit in Your face, he will curse You to Your face.”

And notice Job 1 verse 12, “And the Lord said unto Satan, ‘Behold, all that he hath is in thy power. Only upon himself put not forth thine hand.’ So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.” Now Satan, we’re going to see, is going to cause incredible trouble for this man Job. And finally, after all of this trouble, Job says in Job 13:15, “Though He slay me, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” Now, the devil said, “God, he loves You because. He loves You because, because You’ve been good to him, because You’ve given him riches, because You’ve given to him children, because You’ve put a hedge around him. That’s the kind of love he has for You; because love.”

And by the way, that’s the weakest kind of love, isn’t it? You say to your wife, “I love you because you’re beautiful.” Or you say to your husband, “I love you because you provide for me.” Well what if he loses his job or she loses her beauty? You see, that kind of love can be threatened, and that’s the kind of love that Satan thought that Job had for God. “You love Him because. Take away the because and he won’t love You anymore.” And by the way, let me just say parenthetically and incidentally here, that if you’re expressing love to your children, to your wife, to your husband, to anybody that you truly love, take the because out of it and just say, “I love you. I love you, not for what you have or for what you’ve done, but I love you for who you are.”

Now the devil could not believe that Job loved God for who God is. There has to be some ulterior motive, and the world is that way. You know what the world will say? “Well that man just goes to church for business reasons.” Or, “That man is in the ministry just for what he can get out of it.” Or whatever! You see, the devil, he’s full of that kind of a lie, that no one can simply love God simply because he loves God! And so the book of Job is going to show that God in Himself not only is necessary, but God Himself is enough that we can love God and trust God even in the midst of our problems.

Now, here are three questions that I want to ask you. And if you can answer, “Yes” to those questions, you have the same kind of faith that old Job had. Question number one: **can God be trusted when you are submerged in suffering?** Can God be trusted when you are submerged in suffering? Now remember what Job said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” Job suffered incredible loss.

Beginning about in verse 13, we’re in Job chapter 1, read verses 13 through 15, “There was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house and there came a messenger unto Job saying, ‘The oxen were plowing and the asses feeding beside them and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away. Yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.’” That is, first of all, **Job had lost his finances.** He had all of these things,



his animals, his flocks, his herds, he was a rancher. And in one fell swoop, they were all taken away. Now, if tomorrow morning you wake up a pauper, if the stock market crashes and goes to the bottom and you have everything in stocks and bonds and your so-called fortune is gone, can you still trust God? Can you? Well, I hope so. Job became bankrupt overnight. There was the loss of finances, that's chapter 1 verses 13 through 17.

And then right on the heel of that, not only the loss of finances, **he lost his family**. Look if you will in verse 18 and 19 of Job chapter 1 and you're going to see what else happened. "And when he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, 'Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, and behold there came a great wind from the wilderness and smote the four corners of the house and it fell upon the young men and they are dead and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.'" A great tornado like that, from the hand of Satan, hit the home where Job's kids were, and they were blown into eternity. I mean the entire house fell in upon Job's family.

Now he's just lost his finances and then right on the back of it, back to back, he now loses not only his fortune, he loses his family. But the devil is not finished with him yet. **He's going to also lose his fitness**, he's going to lose his health. Go to chapter 2 and look if you will in verse 4 through 6, "And Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life, but put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face.' And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Behold, he is in thine hand, but save his life.'" And now Job is covered from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet with great huge ulcers and boils that wrack his body with fever and pain, his body is consumed with infection. Infections that erupt with such putrefaction that Job goes out on the ash heap and takes a broken piece of pottery and begins to scrape away the substance that oozes from his boils. Can you imagine, just covered, not with one painful boil, but from the top of his head to his feet. He has lost his fortune, he has lost his family, now he has lost his fitness and the devil's not finished with him yet.

Now he has three friends who come, his comforters, to speak with him and to try to give him comfort, some comforters they are. I want you to hear what one of them said, you might look in Job chapter 4 and verse 7, and this was a man named Eliphaz and he says, "Remember, I pray thee, whoever perished being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off?" That is, "Job, you old rascal, what have you been doing wrong? Nobody ever suffered like this who was innocent. Righteous people have never had God turn His back on them? Old Job has a secret sin. If old Job had been doing right, none of this would have happened." You see what he lost: he lost his fortune, he lost his family, he lost his fitness, and now he loses **his face**. What I mean is this, that even his reputation and all of us are grateful for our reputation. What if your reputation were taken away from you? What if you'd done nothing wrong and everybody thought you did? What if people are criticizing you and blaming you?

You see, there are a lot of people who have that philosophy today. They're some of the people who will get on television, I call them the joy boys. They get on television and they have this message: if you get right with God, you're going to be healthy, you're going to be wealthy. It's cash, comfort, Cadillacs, key to Fort Knox; you'll have it all. Just, by the way, send me a little money, send me a little money, but you can have it all. There's a lot of that going on, have you noticed that? Have you noticed that? The idea, the philosophy is that the only reason you suffer is that you've done wrong. You can just get right and believe God and have anything you want. There's just one thing wrong with that philosophy; it ain't so, it ain't so. Some of God's choicest of saints have suffered.



But here's old Job, now Job has lost it, folks. I mean, he is submerged in suffering, he becomes bankrupt, his kids die in a tornado, his body is infected with a horrible disease, and then on top of that everybody's saying, "I wonder what he did wrong. I wonder what he did wrong." Well, now, in the midst of all that, Job praises God and gives God the glory. Can you do that? Can you trust God, can you trust God when you are submerged in suffering? Now don't think that faith is the way to get out of suffering, faith may be a way to endure suffering.

Put a bookmark there in Job, the book of Job, and turn to the book of Hebrews, would you please, for just a moment? Turn to Hebrews chapter 11. In Hebrews chapter 11, God gives a roll call of the heroes of the faith, those people who did incredible things by faith. And like most preachers, he's running out of time, and so he begins to collapse, and just give little vignettes, little snapshots of victories. And he says, beginning in verse 32, I mean he's been going for 31 verses and now he comes to Hebrews 11 verse 32 through 39 and he says, "What shall I more say? For time would fail Me," see, I told you, "For time would fail Me to tell of Gideon and of Barak and of Samson and of Jephthah and David also and Samuel and of the prophets." And then he tells what they did by faith, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of aliens, women received their dead raised to life again." Boy, if that's all I read I'd say, "Sign me up. Boy, if that's what the Christian faith is, sign me up. Looks to me like it's all honey and no bees."

But now wait a minute, verse 36 there is a change. Just underscore this phrase, "And others, and others," now look at this, "And others had a trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the Earth."

Well, you say, what did they do wrong? Well let's continue to read, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith." A good report, they hadn't done anything wrong, not one thing wrong. We think of all of those who escaped and we say, "How did they escape?" Well they were given faith to escape. We think of the others who endured. How did they endure? They were given faith to endure. Some had faith to escape, some had faith to endure. Others were delivered; some were delivered and some died. Do you have faith to be delivered? I'm happy for you. Do you have faith to die? I wonder.

What am I trying to say? I'm just simply saying folks, that you can have faith and calamity all at the same time. Faith does not mean that you are going to escape always. Faith is not receiving from God what you want, faith is accepting from God what He gives. Now the question again is this, can you trust God when you are submerged in suffering? There are some who are listening to me through television. Perhaps you're so sick and shut in that you can't even get out of the house and the only way that you can worship is through television. Can you say with Job today, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him?" If you can, if you can, you will shut the devil's mouth.

You see, the devil just thinks, "Let those Christians have a little trouble. Let them have some persecution. Let them have some bankruptcy. Let one of their children die. Let them have some greedy malady that consumes their body. Let them have those kind of troubles and then let people blame them for doing wrong when they haven't done anything in the world wrong. They'll curse God." But old Job said,



"I'm not going to curse Him; I'm going to praise Him." Job said, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Now folks, I want to tell you, we're doing something, we're deep right now. Look in Job chapter 1 verse 20 to 22, "Then Job arose and rent his mantle and shaved his head and fell down upon the ground and worshipped and said, 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'" Now watch this, "In all of this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly."

Now here's the second question. First question: is can God be trusted when I am submerged in suffering or when you are submerged in suffering? Here's the second question: **can God be trusted when you are forsaken by friends**, when you're forsaken by friends? Now, it's one thing to be submerged in suffering, but what about when we suffer and there's nobody there with us to suffer with us? There's nobody there who really cares? As I say, Job had three friends, three comforters, but what kind of comforters were they? Ultimately we're going to see all they did was to come and give platitudes and to critique him and to criticize him. They weren't really friends at all.

Turn to Job chapter 19, go back to the book of Job and turn to Job chapter 19 and look what poor Job had to say in verse 14. Job said, "My kinsfolk have failed and my familiar friends have forgotten me." Can you trust God when you're forsaken of friends? "My kinsfolk have failed and my familiar friends have forgotten me." And then look in Job 19 verse 19, "All my inward friends abhorred me and they whom I loved have turned against me." Am I talking to somebody who's going through that right now? Has your husband forsaken you? Have your children abandoned you? Has a friend that you've trusted turned on you, perhaps a business associate? The devil says, "Yes, let that happen to him. God, he'll curse You to Your face." But that wasn't true for Job.

Now I thank God for friends; friends are wonderful. But what happens when your friends don't understand, when you're in trouble and nobody seems to understand? And by the way, they cannot understand because they didn't know any more about what was happening than old Job did. Job was completely in the dark and so were they in the dark. And perhaps even worse than suffering physically is to have friends to forsake you, there's probably not a deeper hurt than this.

Put these verses in the margin. Psalm 41 verse 9, "Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." That was a prophecy of what Judas would do to the Lord Jesus Christ. And then the Psalmist saith in Psalm 55 verses 12 through 14, "For it was not an enemy that reproached me. Then I could have borne it. Neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me, when I would've hid myself from him. But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together and walked into the house of God in company." Think about it. Here's Job's best friends, here's Job in his deepest need and his friends have just turned their back on him. It's like old Paul was in the Philippian jail, and Paul in Second Timothy 4:10, needing some comfort had to say, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

Now, that can happen to you. Perhaps I'm talking to some preacher right now, and your church has turned on you. Perhaps the pulpit committee that called you to the church now wants you to leave, and the reason is you're just preaching the Gospel. Don't think that if you preach the Gospel the world's going to love you. The same world that hated Jesus is going to hate you. You can get in trouble for preaching the



Gospel. Sometimes your closest associates, the people that you take counsel within the house of God will turn against you. That's what happened. Preacher, listen, you'd better trust God when friends forsake you.

It can happen to kids at school. You can go to school, some of you students. Now I know that you think this doesn't happen, but it does. A student will go to school and he'll have his best buddies at church, his friends at church and they laugh and they're in the youth group together and all this, and then at school you take a stand for what is right, there's some event that's put on by the school and you say, "I don't think a Christian ought to go, I don't think a Christian ought to attend." And so you take a stand for God and all your friends leave you, all your friends leave you, they forsake you.

In business it can happen. You can take a stand for righteousness and your business partner will turn against you and perhaps undercut you. Now, the question is, can you trust God when you're submerged in suffering? Can you trust God when you're forsaken by friends? Did you know that even Job's wife turned against him? In Job chapter 2 verses 9 and 10, "Then said his wife unto him, 'Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die!' But he said unto her, 'Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.' What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?' In all this, Job did not sin with his lips." His wife comes in there, old Job is suffering, he's right down and sitting on the ash heap. She comes in, she says, "Just look at you. Look what God has done to you. Job, why don't you just curse God and die?" Now this is his wife! You know what he says to her? He says, "Woman, are you crazy?" That's really what he said, he said, "You're speaking as one of the foolish women. Woman, are you crazy? I don't understand this, but I tell you one thing, I am trusting God and I will not deny. When she said, "Curse God and die," do you know what she was doing? She was doing the work of the devil. That's exactly what the devil said that Job would do.

Now the question is this, when everybody else turns their back on you, when nobody understands, when friends forsake you, not only are you suffering, but you may be suffering alone, can you trust God? If you can, you'll shut the devil's mouth. If you can, you'll shut the devil's mouth. If you will say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

Now here's the third question. First question: can you trust God when you're submerged in suffering? Second question: can you trust God when you're forsaken by friends? Third question is perhaps even harder: **can you trust God when you are dismayed by darkness?** When you are dismayed by darkness? Now remember, you understand why all of this was happening. I mean, you've read the first chapter of the book of Job, and you understand there's a contest here and Satan has slandered the character of God and Satan has slandered the character of Job. And you understand that God is allowing Job to be tested, not to show that Job would fall, but to show that Job would not. You understand that. But Job didn't understand that. Job had not read the book of Job. He did not understand all of this. He is in absolute darkness! He hasn't got a clue as to what is happening to him.

It'd be just like tomorrow morning if you wake up and everything went wrong, I mean everything! Tomorrow morning you become bankrupt, tomorrow morning your children die, tomorrow morning you get some disease and everybody's pointing a finger at you of accusation. I mean tomorrow morning it happened just like that to this man. And then all of his friends leave him and his wife says, "Why don't you just die?" And he doesn't know what on Earth is going on. He is in darkness.



Look if you will in chapter 23 of Job, just turn to chapter 23 here, verses 1 through 5, “Then Job answered and said, ‘Even today is my complaint bitter. My stroke is heavier than my groaning.’” He says, “I’m not even groaning compared to the way I feel.” “‘Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to His seat,’” and the word seat means throne here, “I would order my cause before Him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which He would answer me and understand what He would say unto me.” What Job is saying, “God, I’d like to talk to You! I’ve got some questions for You! They are welling up within me. God, You owe me some answers! What is going on?”

Look in chapter 23 verses 8 and 9. Job says, “Behold I go forward, but He’s not there; and backward but I cannot perceive Him. On the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him. He hideth Himself on the right hand. I can’t see Him.” Here’s old Job, I mean in the darkest of suffering, “Maybe God’s over here. No, He’s not over here. Maybe He’s back here; I know He’s not over here. Maybe He’s over here; no He’s not there. Maybe He’s over here! God, where are You? Where are You, God? I don’t understand. God, what is going on? I sure would like to talk to You, God. I want to know. Tell me why!”

As a pastor, I’ve been asked that question so many times. “Why, Pastor, why, why?” And I can’t answer the question why because why is God’s question. How is our question, how are we going to react? God doesn’t tell us the whys. You’re going to find that many of God’s saints have gone into darkness, I mean deep darkness, and they’ve not known why.

Put in your margin Isaiah 50. Turn to Isaiah 50, turn to it. If you’re in darkness right now, if you’re saying, “God, You owe me some answers.” Turn to Isaiah chapter 50. Isaiah asked a great question here in Isaiah chapter 50 verses 10 and 11, “Who is among you that feareth the Lord?” Well that’s good, isn’t it, to fear God? Yes, “And obeyeth the voice of his servant.” That’s good, isn’t it, to obey God? But now what’s the next thing? “That walketh in darkness.” Wait a minute, that doesn’t seem to fit. A person who fears God and obeys God and yet he’s walking in darkness, “and hath no light,” not even a little? Well what does God say to do? “Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God.” You know what it means to lean upon God. A stay is a staff. His rod and his staff, he’s talking about leaning upon God. What do you do when you’re in darkness? Look in verse 11, “Behold ye that kindle a fire that compass yourselves about with sparks. Walk in the light of the fire and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand. Ye shall lie down in sorrow.” What’s he saying? When you’re in darkness, don’t light your own fire. Don’t light your own fire. You can be serving God, fearing God, obeying God, and darkness can come.

Now what is darkness? Darkness is merely the absence of light. The only way there can be darkness is for the light to be withdrawn. Who is the light? God, God is the light. And so sometimes God may just back off and leave His servant in darkness. If you will read biographies of great Christians, almost all of them will talk about something they call the dark night of the soul. I mean, they’re serving God, they’re loving God, and then things come, perplexities, they can’t understand.

Habakkuk was one of these. Read the book of Habakkuk. Habakkuk saw things that he just couldn’t understand. He said, “God, how can You do this? Why are You doing this? God, I just don’t understand.”

John the Baptist, Jesus said in Matthew 11:11, “Not a greater was born among woman than John the Baptist.” And John the Baptist got put in a prison by old Herod and he’s down there in such darkness he can’t understand what’s going on. He’s the one who said in John chapter 1 and verse 29, “Behold, the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” He’s the one of whom Jesus said, “Not a greater was



born of woman than John the Baptist.” He’s a prophet, and more than a prophet. But John the Baptist got into such darkness, he sent his servants and said, “You go ask that man Jesus, is He really the Messiah or should we look for somebody else?” That’s John, I mean in darkness.

The apostle Paul, the great apostle Paul said on one occasion, “We are perplexed,” but thank God he said, “but not in despair,” but not in despair. Second Corinthians 4 verse 8. There’s going to come a time when all your theology will go upside down. There’s going to come a time when you won’t understand where God is, you’re going to be in such darkness you won’t see your hand in front of your face. Do you know what you do then? Isaiah says in Isaiah 50 verse 10, “Just stay upon your God.” Trust Him, trust Him. “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

Can you trust God when you’re submerged in sorrow? Can you trust God when you’re forsaken by friends? Can you trust God when you are dismayed by darkness and you don’t even know what’s happening? Perhaps if you knew why you were suffering and why you were forsaken, then perhaps you could deal with it. Well, if you can, you’ll shut the devil’s mouth.

Let me just draw this to a conclusion. God finally does answer Job, at least He speaks to Job, but He doesn’t answer one of Job’s questions. Go to chapter 38 and look at it. He’s going to teach Job three things. First of all He’s going to teach Job about **His own sovereignty**. Chapter 38 verses 1 through 7, “Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, ‘Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?’” That is, “Job you’re just talking, you don’t even know what you’re saying.” “Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou Me, where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Declare if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? And who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the cornerstone thereof when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

“Job, sit down, I want to ask you some questions, son. Job, were you here when I made everything? Job, when I created this universe, when I flung this world out into space, when I fashioned it all, were you there, do you understand, Job?” Well, friend, the scientists today with their Hubbell telescope are still trying to figure out the same thing and they’ve not figured it out and Job has not figured it out and you won’t figure it out and there are some things that God knows when nobody else knows, isn’t that true? And what God is saying to Job, “Job, when I did all this, did I ask your advice, were you my instructor?” He’s saying to Job, “Look, Job, I have a right to do as I wish.” And in your trouble you better learn the sovereignty of God.

Something else he learned, **he learned the sufficiency of God**. Finally, when he sees God in a new light, Job chapter 42 verses 5 and 6, he says this, a great statement in the book of Job, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee.” What is that, what does he mean by that? He said, “Listen, I’ve gone from mere theology to a personal relationship through this trouble.” The time when God will be the nearest and the dearest and the most precious to you is when you’re submerged in suffering, forsaken by friends, and dismayed by darkness. God alone is not only necessary, but at that time, God will be enough.

And then finally he learned, not only the sovereignty of God, and not only did he learn of the sufficiency of God, **but he learned the sympathy of God**. The book ends this way, Job 42 verses 10 through



13, "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends," and God'll turn your captivity too, friend, "And the Lord gave to Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren and all his sisters and all that had been his acquaintance before and did eat bread with him in his house and they bemoaned him and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him. Every man also gave him a piece of money and everyone an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning, for he had fourteen thousand sheep," that's twice as many, "six thousand camels," that's twice as many, "and a thousand yoke of oxen," that's twice as many, "a thousand she-asses," that's twice as many.

But watch this, "He had also seven sons and three daughters." Now wait a minute, how come He didn't give him fourteen sons and six daughters? He's got twice as much of everything else. I'll tell you why. He never lost his sons and daughters; they just went to Heaven. I've got a little boy in Heaven, I haven't lost him, I know where he is. Somebody talked to the late great Vance Havner and said I'm sorry that you lost your wife. He said, "I haven't lost her, I know where she is." "Death can hide, but it cannot divide. They are but on Christ's other side. They with Him and He with us." That's what it's all about, folks.

Friend, listen to me, Job 14 verse 1, "Man that is born of woman is full of trouble." Thank God for His blessings, He blessed Job. God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servants, but you'd better get the faith of old Job and say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Okay? Okay? There's a song, I love the song, "When Answers Aren't Enough, There's Jesus," there's Jesus. Sooner or later, sooner or later, you're going to have to have the faith of Job. You're going to say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Well you say, "I don't think I want to be a Christian if I'm going to have all that trouble." My precious friend, you're going to have trouble anyway. "Man that is born of woman is full of trouble." We're the ones who have the answer in the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen?

Bow your heads in prayer. Father God, I pray that You'll give us the faith of old Job and You'll teach us, Lord, to trust You in our troubles. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. How many can say today, "Pastor Rogers, I know that I know, by the grace of God and the Word of God and the witness of the Spirit that if I should die today, I'd go straight to Heaven. I have a Bible reason for knowing it."

If you could not answer that question, let me talk to you. I believe you'd be saying, "Pastor, if I can know it, I would like to know it." I don't think you'd be here if you were not concerned about it. Well, you can know it, because salvation is a gift. There's nothing to earn. There's no requirement except that you bring your sin to Him and we're all sinners. If you'll come to Him in repentance and faith, He'll save you and the Bible says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the son of God that you may know that you have eternal life." You can know it today by receiving Christ.

Would you pray a prayer like this? "Dear God, I acknowledge that I'm a sinner. My sin deserves judgment, I need mercy. Jesus, You paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. Thank You for being my substitute. Thank You for taking my place. I now repent of my sin. I turn to You, Jesus. I receive You now into my heart as my Lord and Savior. I don't ask for a sign, I don't look for a feeling, I stand on Your Word and with all of my heart I trust You. Come into my life, forgive my sin, save me, Jesus." Did you pray that? Then pray this, "Thank You for doing it. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be. Give me the courage to make it public this morning. I will not deny You because You died for me. In Your name I pray, Amen."



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