

The Patience of Job

Read: Job 13:1–28

Job 13:15

“Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him.”

reflection



1 Have you ever wondered if suffering is the result of sinfulness?

2 Has this devotional caused you to rethink your position? Why or why not?

3 Make Job’s proclamation personal to your situation: “Though he _____, yet will I hope in him.” (For example: “Though he allows breast cancer, yet will I hope in him.”)

RELATED READINGS

Job 1:1–22;
Romans 5:1–5;
2 Corinthians 12:7–10

CARING FOR A PARENT with Alzheimer’s disease takes what Carolyn Sherman calls “the patience of Job.” Carolyn and Sandy Sherman have cared for both their mothers for ten years. For two of those years the two older women lived at home with the Shermans. Carolyn says she prayed many times for the patience and strength to see this through. “You do get irritated. You do lose it sometimes,” said Carolyn. “I never realized that it would take so much time and so much patience.” Carolyn went on to say that she had prayed many times for the ability to see it through.

Even well-intentioned people, like Job’s foolish counselors, believe that all suffering or sickness is the direct result of sin. Throughout the book of Job we’ve seen Job’s friends try to convince him that he had done something to displease God, that somehow Job was responsible for the horrible things that had happened to him. But this could not be further from the truth. Everyone suffers—the righteous and the unrighteous—including Job, who “was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1). For some reason God chose to use Job as an example of patience in the midst of great suffering.

When something tragic happens, we often scramble to figure out why. Did I sin? Did they sin? If we didn’t sin, then who sinned? Like Job’s friends, we just want to affix blame so we can make some kind of sense out of the seemingly senseless. But not all suffering is the direct result of sin. Paul’s thorn in the flesh was not given to him because he was such a sinner, but because God wanted him to understand something important about suffering. God said, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The simple truth is that God is not constrained to tell us *why* bad things happen to us. But he will let us know *how* to walk through them . . . with patience and hope. Yes, Job had some questions he wanted God to answer. But despite his questions Job could still faithfully proclaim, “Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him.” Can the same be said of you?

Friday

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