

How the Book of Job Can Help You Break Your Depression

This is Part 1 of a two-part series.

The life of Job, a man whose story is told in the book of the Bible by that name, contains many lessons for us today. In it, we see the value of patience, perseverance and the importance of holding our tongue, not to mention God's faithfulness, restorative power and goodness.

Job's story sticks with us because it's quite epic and vivid: A rich man loses everything, suddenly and without warning, and yet remains faithful to God. His friends, and even his own wife, discourage and accuse him, but Job's faith remains: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He will stand at last on the earth" (Job 19:25).

Eventually (after more than 40 chapters), the Lord vindicates Job and restores everything that the devil stole, with increase (Job 42:12).

Although Job's story ends well, there is much we can learn from the long journey it took to get there. These truths can encourage us when we're facing loss or hard circumstances, or even in the ups and downs of life.

1. God Is in Control

Start to finish, the Lord remains on His throne—no matter what happened to Job or what happens to us. We often don't see it, and we usually don't feel it, but God's power does not decrease when life is stormy. His strength is unchanging, and His will is good—at all times.

As Job confesses once he hears from God: "I know that You can do everything, and that no thought can be withheld from You.

‘Who is he who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not know” (Job 42:2-3).

Understanding God’s sovereignty and power to bring good out of evil can sustain us in times of trial. Scriptures that contain this same truth can guide our prayer lives. For example: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want ... Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me” (Ps. 23:4). “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever” (Matt. 6:13).

2. Satan Is Subject to God

In the first two chapters of the book of Job, the devil has to ask God’s permission before he can attack Job. And the Lord allows the attack because He knows Job has the faith to endure it (Job 1:8).

Nothing Satan does is outside of God’s control. Although his rage is great (Rev. 12:12), he cannot function beyond what God allows.

Some liken the devil to a pawn, which God uses to bring about His will. It’s a deception that the devil has power or authority; he has nothing but what is given to him, and that power is temporary—and always subject to the will of God.

We live in a world that is “passing away, but the one who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:17).

Let us take heart. Satan may attack, but God is always able to deliver from temptation (1 Cor. 10:13), give grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:16) and work all things for our good (Rom. 8:28).

3. The Lord Will Vindicate the Righteous

God brings order to chaos (Gen. 1:1–31), and His arm is not too short to save (Isa. 59:1). Even in persecution, Job knew that his Redeemer would save him: “I know that I will be vindicated” (Job 13:18, NKJV).

God promises vindication for His people all throughout Scripture. Take these following verses to heart through prayer and meditation:

“For the LORD will vindicate His people, and will have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their power is gone, and there is none remaining, bond or free” (Deut. 32:36, ESV).

“For the Lord will vindicate His people and will have compassion on His servants” (Ps. 135:14).

“Now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?” (Luke 18:7, NASB).

We don’t know the timing or the way, but God is faithful to restore what the enemy stole (Joel 2:25–27). He’s looking for people like Job, who will faithfully proclaim His goodness, sovereignty and salvation, no matter the circumstance: “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against the ones doing evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth. The *righteous* cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles” (Ps. 34:15-17).

Where do you need God’s vindication in your life? {eoa}

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