

No One Is Trouble Free

Job 1:1-3, 13-22 (New American Standard Bible)

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was **Job**; and that man **was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.** ² Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. ³ His possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east. ¹³ Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the female donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ and the **Sabeans** attacked and **took them.** They also **killed the servants** with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another came and said, "The **fire** of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another came and said, "The **Chaldeans** formed three units and made a **raid on the camels and took them,** and **killed the servants** with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁸ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and behold, a **great wind** came from across the wilderness and **struck** the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and **they died,** and I alone have escaped to tell you." ²⁰ Then Job got up, tore his robe, and shaved his head; then he fell to the ground and **worshiped.** ²¹ He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." ²² Despite all this, **Job did not sin, nor did he blame God.**

Introduction

Job was enjoying his life. He considered himself truly blessed in every sense. He was happily married. He had ten children. He was rich (a multi-million rancher). He 'was the greatest of all the men of the east.' All was good until one day when he was struck by both man-made disasters and natural disasters. The **Sabeans** (modern day South Arabia) attacked and **took the oxen and donkeys.** They also **killed the servants.** The **fire** of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them. The **Chaldeans** (modern day Iraq) made a **raid on the camels and took them** and **killed the servants.** A **great wind** came from across the wilderness and **struck** the house where his children were dining, **they all perished.** *Raid, fire from heaven, another raid, and desert storm.* What a tragedy! What a trauma! A perfect case study in psychology for a life's victim! Speaking of

life's trauma, Job had it all. In such a short time! This morning we will think about Job's troubles and dig out wisdom from God's Word how to overcome tribulations and trials.

Content

Definition of trouble:

This is what I mean by trouble. Anything that causes distress and pain. An unnecessary, unfortunate, and unforeseen event that causes stress. In general, we call them difficulties in life. Synonyms are adversities, hardships, afflictions, tribulations, trials, worries and anxieties.

Nature of trouble:

First, no one is trouble free. We all go through life's troubles, don't we? Whether it is physical, mental, emotional, financial, or even in relationships. As long as we live in body, we will experience troubles in life.

Next, no one but God can fully understand or explain the cause of trouble. Obviously, some troubles are easy to explain because we ourselves caused them. For instance, we pay the consequences of our foolish mistakes and decisions (e.g. in debt due to gambling). However, when troubles surround us even though we are innocent, it surely baffles us. A good example is Job. He lost all his flock one day. He lost ten children on the same day. Later, he came up with a terrible skin disease (as a reaction to his troubles). Mind you that Job didn't cause any of those troubles. His troubles had nothing to do with what he had done or hadn't done. Remember he was a righteous man before God. He lived a blameless life. Yet, all these troubles still came upon him. If you go through right now unexplainable troubles in life, you may want to consider Job.

Thirdly, why doesn't God remove troubles from our life once and for all? I don't know the answer. Why can't our life be stress-free and tears-free? Ask God. By the way, such a life only exists in Heaven (Revelation 21:4), not in this life on earth. Like temptation is here to stay with us, so are troubles in our lives. If you ever wonder that your life ought to be trouble free and pain free, consider Jesus our Lord, God's own Son. He too suffered, all for others (1 Peter 3:18, Acts 17:3).

Here's good news: In times of trouble, we are not alone. God is with us. He delivers us from our troubles. Listen to His promise. *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they will not overflow you* (Isaiah 43:2). Even when we get ourselves in trouble due to our poor judgments and desires, God never forsakes us. In the

day of trouble, let us take refuge in the Lord. He is good to us and knows us by name (Nahum 1:7, Exodus 33:12). He is our stronghold (Psalm 9:9).

People in the Bible:

I checked in the Bible how God's people endured life's hardship. They handled troubles well and came out strong, all with God's help. Consider Joseph, for instance. Joseph, as a teenager, was sold into slavery for 13 years by his own brothers (Acts 7:9-10). During that time, God was with him and delivered him from all tribulations. In fact, in the end, God made Joseph prime minister of Egyptian kingdom. When he finally met his brothers in person, he forgave them saying, *"⁵ Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save lives.... It was not you who sent me here, but God"* (Genesis 45:5-8). Like Joseph, with God's help, we too can turn our tragedy into triumph. Now, for the rest of my sermon, I am going to focus on three ways to handle life's troubles.

Ways to handle troubles:

The best way to handle life's trouble is to wrap it up with God's ways. Like the white blood cells in our body wrap up any foreign bacteria to eat them up, wrap up your trouble in the following ways.

1. Pray: James 5:13 says, *Is anyone in trouble? Let them pray.* Overwhelmed with troubles? Pray more. Day and night (Psalm 88:1-2, 13). E.g. In the belly of the big fish, Jonah prayed to God saying, *when my life was ebbing away, I remembered You, Lord. My prayer rose to You and to Your holy temple* (Jonah 2:7). E.g. 2. David prayed: *In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried to my God for help; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry for help before Him came into His ears* (Psalm 18:6). Our Father in Heaven will hear our cry for help and save us (Psalm 145:19).

E.g. 3. A Christian man had a dream. In his dream, he was sailing in the sea. All of a sudden, he spotted a huge rock standing in front of his boat. He tried to steer the boat to the right to avoid the crash. In his desperation, he cried out to God for help, to remove the rock from his way. Then, he saw something miraculous happen. The waters began to rise higher and higher to the point where the rock was entirely submersed under the waters. His boat, without changing directions or touching the rock, went over smoothly. Then, he woke up. Here, the rock is our troubles. The water rising is God's grace, strength, and deliverance. In the day of trouble, cry out for God's help. He will listen and rescue us from our troubles.

2. Persevere (Romans 12:12): Consider Paul the Apostle. He had been through more troubles than anyone else I know. Through those tribulations, Paul became a strong

believer in Christ, because he persevered. About his troubles, he wrote: *I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.* ²⁴ *Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes.* ²⁵ *Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent adrift at sea.* ²⁶ *I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea, dangers among false brothers;* ²⁷ *I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure (2 Corinthians 11:23-27).*

He continues: ⁸ *we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;* ⁹ *persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed;* (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). The same person declares in Philippians 4:13: *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* You don't see any sign of defeat, despair or depression in him, do you? On the contrary, we see a man of strength. Therefore, in the day of trouble, persevere and be patient. Do not despair. You will come out strong with God's help. You will become a character.

3. Trust in the Lord: In the throes of his afflictions, Job didn't understand why he went through so many troubles in a short time, but he never blamed God. Rather, deep in his heart, he knew that the Lord saw his troubles. Somehow, he knew that he would come out as gold after the test. So, he declared: *But God knows the way I take; When He has put me to the test, I will come out as gold. He sees our troubles (Job 23:10).* The lesson? When you don't understand why you suffer, trust in God and in His good will. He will make all things beautiful in His time (Romans 8:28). You will come out as gold and refined silver (Psalm 66:10).

Conclusion

When troubles come your way, pray. And pray more. Remember that the Lord is with you. Claim His promise that He will rescue you. Fix your eyes on Him and hold tight unto His good will. Trust in Him so that it may be well with you in the end. By the way, if you know someone going through troubles right now, be there for them. Don't even try to explain the cause of their trouble. Just cry with them. Grieve with them (Job 30:25, Romans 12:15). Pray for them. They will appreciate your kindness. Amen.