

WHAT GOD EXPECTS OF US IN THE STORMS

Job 1:1-22

You are walking through a “stormy” time in your life...the storm may be a medical storm whereby you have contracted some sickness that only you and the Lord are aware of, or you could be facing some relational storm, whereby someone you love has walked away from you, and you simply don’t understand why? You are facing a financial storm, where you are at the brink of financial ruin, and you simply don’t understand! You have attempted to be faithful, and yet life has turned south in a radical way in your life.

The storms of life have become ever more clear in recent days. Yet, the reality is, many people when facing a storm in their lives, have a complete misunderstanding of what God expects of them in the storms. What does God expect of us when we face the storms of life? Sadly, many people “pretend” that all is going well on the outside, when in truth, there is a “welling sea” breaking at the high tide of their heart.

The God that created us, knew well before our first day of life, that there were going to come to our lives “storms” for which there is absolutely no “earthly explanation”. Such was the case in the life of one of God’s most precious men in all the Old Testament, the life of Job.

God’s commentary about Job is this, “He was a perfect (mature) man and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed (hated) evil. Yet, even though he was a mature and upright man, there was a season of time in his life that the “storms” of devastation, destruction, tragedy, family death, overwhelmed his life in which He could not understand what was going on. Sadly, there are many who live “believing” that God is in heaven during our “storms” without feelings for us in our storms. That line of thinking is completely inconsistent with Scripture.

1. **GOD EXPECTS US TO GRIEVE.** The truth of our storms (regardless of what direction they come from) is that they always cause us to grieve within. In the life of Job, he discovered in one day’s time, the storms took away, those that he cherished and loved. The storms took away his possessions for which he no doubt had worked and labored faithfully through the years. When Job discovered all that happened to his life, the Bible says he “arose and rent his mantle” which was an expression of grief in his culture and time. Yet, the Bible continues in v. 22 saying, “In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”

The reality of life is, grieving and agony during our storms in life are the natural process of our humanity. God is not sitting in heaven upset or angered at us for the fact that we are hurting. Quite the opposite is true. The

Bible declares that we have a God that feels our grief and our agonies. The Bible says in *Hebrews 4:15*, “... *We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities....*”

Since God declared that Job sinned not, God makes it clear that there is nothing wrong with our agonizing and grieving. The very life of Christ was one of grieving and agony as he faced the stormy reality of death on the cross for the sins of all mankind. Paul the apostle knew God as a God of all “comfort”. It is the very nature of God to run to us in stormy times, because He is fully aware of the grieving that we will face when the storms and the troubles come. *2 Corinthians 1:3-4*, “*What a wonderful God we have...he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials.* Why does God comfort us? Because He knows well that we will grieve, cry, and hurt. Because the sobering fact of the storms is this...they are painful and devastating. Most of all, many of them come without explanation beforehand or afterwards, leaving us dazed, bewildered and confused.

2. **GOD EXPECTS US TO MISUNDERSTAND.** Not only does God expect us to grieve and hurt, but the truth of Scripture declares that God expects us to “misunderstand” the purposes of the storms in life. The reality of life is...we must live our lives looking forward, but we can only understand life, the many storms by looking backwards. While Job was in his storms, he was without understanding in his storms. The fact that Job raised questions to the Lord God, was the reality that he didn’t understand. God is not at all surprised or upset when we misunderstand “our storms”. Why? Because God knows the way we are made and wired. The psalmist said in *Psalms 103:14* *For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*

Even Paul the great apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ declared, “we see through a glass darkly”. It is the very nature of God that He expects us to misunderstand the purposes of the storms, for the simple reason that we are fallen humanity, and our mind is limited at best, and our nature has been completely altered by the destructive power of sin over this world. There is no indicator in Scripture that God belittled Job for misunderstanding, but rather in the last chapters of Job, God came to Job, and reminded Him of His infinite and perfect knowledge of all aspects of life. God is completely aware and knowledgeable of our human tendencies, and with our misunderstandings, He always awaits to comfort us. Why does He comfort? Because that is simply the nature and disposition of the God that created us and loves us.

3. **GOD EXPECTS US TO ASK QUESTIONS.** “Why am I going

through this storm?” “What have I done?” “God why are You so far away?” These questions and a thousand more find themselves coming from our lips in the time of storms. Here are just a few of the questions Job raised during his “stormy time”. “Why did I not die from the womb?” (Jb. 3:11) “Why did I not die when I came from my mother?” “Why did knees receive me or Why was I given life?” “Why is a man allowed to be born if God is only going to give him a hopeless life and uselessness and frustration?” (Jb. 3:23) “Why did the midwife let me live?” “Why is light and life given to those who are in misery and bitterness?” “Why did you let me be born O God.” (Jb. 10:18)

One sobering reality in the life of Job was that there was a thousand questions that he wanted to ask the Lord, out of the bitterness of his soul, and the plight of his situation. And Scripture never declares that there was sin involved with “question asking”. Sadly, there are those who say the following, “It’s not good to ask God questions!” The truth is, God loves for us to honestly come to Him in our storms with all the questions that we have in our heart. We are encouraged to come boldly to the throne of grace...and coming boldly means coming openly and honestly. If there are questions in our heart, then we cannot come honestly apart from asking God those questions in our spirit. But the truth is, there are answers that we cannot receive in this life due to the limited understanding of our mind based on our humanity. At the end of Job, God revealed to Job, His utter wisdom in all the universe, and Job realized that he was speaking as a little child. The truth is, God does see the end from the beginning of the storms, and He knows fully His purposes in the storms. While we may have many questions in the storms, the truth is...there is never a storm that comes to destroy us...but to refine us, purify us, and strengthen us.

4. GOD EXPECTS US TO LEARN HOW TEMPORARY

“THINGS” ARE. The Bible reveals of the life of Job, that he had 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 team of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and many servants. As far as wealth, he was of all men the richest in that particular area. Yet, on the day that the storms came into the life of Job, God taught him a lesson that he would never forget. The lesson was this...it is totally possible to lose “all tangible possessions” in one day’s time. The storms of life shed sobering truth to the “brevity” of things in life.

The world has been captivated by the tornadoes, but not only are they captivated, the world has seen once again, how “storms”, “tornadoes” can sweep across the land and take what a person possesses in a matter of minutes. The Bible doesn’t say if Job had ever experienced any type of loss prior to this, but this one day brought home the reality to him and a watching world around him that “things are extremely temporary”. It is the desire of

the devil to lead us to invest in things, and then to crush our spirit once those things are gone, but God has a sobering way of reminding us in the storms of “the tempory nature” of those things we hold dear. It was in the reality of recent storms that we have come to realize how quickly the “the best” of houses can be pulled part, and the most secure facilities laid bare. While storms can take things, storms cannot take: 1) us away from God’s love, 2) us out of the hand of a loving God, 3) the gift of salvation given us through Jesus Christ, 4) the peace that only comes from God’s Holy Spirit during the difficulties of life, 5) our eternity with God (if we are genuinely God’s children). Paul put it this way in *Romans 8:38-39* *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

5. GOD EXPECTS US TO REVIEW HIS FAITHFULNESS

THROUGH THE PAST. When Job was in the middle of his storms, and the high tides of agony, misery, questions, were beating at his spirit, here is his response before God... “*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.*” (Jb. 1:21). Did Job understand his dilemma? No. But his inability in understanding his situation didn’t prevent him from realizing and knowing that God had been faithful to him all throughout his life.

It was God that had blessed him with all that he had. It was God that had given him the blessings of family, friends, servants, and possessions. Job “knew” that God had been good to him, and had shown his love to him, all through his life, and he wasn’t going to let “this storm” alter his understanding of Holy God. When we are in our storms, God expects us to review the past, and recall His many acts of faithful devotion to our lives through the years. The reality of God’s nature is that He has always been faithful, and will be faithful to a thousand generations. *Deuteronomy 7:9* *Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.* No storm, no matter how devastating will ever alter the “nature” of God that is loving, merciful, and kind. Job realized that since God was the One that gave, if He chose, He had the total right to take away. Yet, this was not the end of the story, as Scripture reveals. The truth of Scripture reveals that we have an “unchanging” God. Storms may affect our understanding of God, but storms never alter one iota the nature of God. If God ever ceases to be faithful, the

world would in that moment evaporate...for the world is held together by His very Word and Power.

6. GOD EXPECTS US TO WATCH HIM AS HE COMES

THROUGH FOR US. When you read the life of Job, the Word of God is silent for 38 long chapters. Job and his friends are discussing and deliberating his suffering, losses, pain, and devastation. Through the eyes of his friends, they have come to believe that Job has done something sinful to cause his situations. Yet, in chapter 38, God begins to speak, and declare accurately and clearly to Job. God makes one thing clear in 38:2, the best of man's knowledge is but ignorance before Holy God. It is God who laid the foundations of the world! It is God that knows the complete dimensions of His world! It is God that established the boundaries of the sea! It is God who cloths the clouds! It is God who commands the morning and night! It is God alone that has explored all the depths of the sea! Yet, all of these are not near as significant to God as His creation mankind! Job, realized that he had not been forgotten by God but in truth had been "chosen" by God as one that feared God and would retain his integrity. Job was brought to understand...that he didn't realize the ways of God. Yet, Scripture declares in Job 42:10, *"Then when Job prayed for his friends, the Lord RESTORED his wealth and happiness! In fact, the Lord gave him twice as much as he had before."* (LB)

Just as quickly as the storms came and took everything away, God revealed that He could move just as quickly and bring about abundance, wealth, and happiness once again. But it only came as Job retained his integrity before Holy God.