

**Subject: *When Trouble Comes***

**Scripture: *Job 1:1-12***

We are never fully prepared for trials and troubles in life, but we are much better prepared if we know and believe the Word of God. The truth of God's Word is a solid foundation to stand on.

One preacher said he was going to preach a simple message on the subject of troubles in life. He had three points and would close with a poem: 1) I've got 'em; 2) You've got 'em; 3) We've all got 'em, and the poem was Adam had 'em.

A young man went off to medical school and someone offered him this advice: "You will need one pocket for your income and other for your troubles." In the Book of Job we find a summary statement that holds true for all time.

**Job 14:1** *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*

### **1. When trouble comes we may or may not deserve it**

As the curtain rises for the first chapter of this drama we are introduced to the main character, a man named Job. Notice that he was a man, just a man and nothing more. He was not a superman. He was a normal man, no different than you and me. When did he live? He probably lived at the time of Abraham. Where did he live? He lived in Uz, a city in the northern part of Arabia. How did he live? That's the big question about Job.

As far as we can tell, there was no reason for Job's suffering. He was a godly man, a morally upright man, a man that feared God and shunned evil. He was a successful business man and a faithful family man.

All of this information about Job sets the stage for what is about to unfold. This man would experience some of the worst trouble anyone could imagine, but the Bible makes it clear that Job's trouble was undeserved. The Bible teaches about four different kinds of trouble and suffering:

- Trouble because of our own sin (Adam and Eve; David and Bathsheba)
- Trouble because of someone else's sin (Joseph and his brothers; Achan and the nation of Israel in Joshua 7)
- Trouble for the sake of righteousness (Paul and the apostles)
- Trouble for no apparent reason (Job)

The Bible tells us about four people who experienced undeserved trouble (Joseph, Job, Jeremiah, and Jesus).

Job probably suffered more than just about anyone else, and He probably deserved to suffer less than anyone else. J. C. Ryle said, "The grace of God exempts no one from trouble." Trouble is no respecter of persons.

## **2. When trouble comes we may not know why**

Sometimes trouble and suffering are not only undeserved, but also unknown. Things happen and we can't understand why. That is what happened to Job. He never knew about God and Satan's meeting and conversation. Job never knew about Satan's accusation. He never knew about God's commendation of his character. And he never knew about God's permission and limitation given to Satan.

God is planning and working behind the scenes of life. We call it the providence of God. He works through good and bad circumstances to accomplish His will. Job never knew why all his trouble came. He didn't know before it came, when it came, or even after it came. God never explained the whole story to him. God doesn't owe us an explanation. He expects us to trust Him and His providence.

***Romans 8:28*** *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

## **3. When trouble comes we may be surprised**

John Chancellor was just settling into retirement at age 67 after being the anchor of NBC Nightly News when he discovered he had stomach cancer. Shortly before he died he said, "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans."

In verses 13-19 we read about a sudden turn of events. One messenger after another came to Job and told him some terrible news. First, it was about his oxen. Then came news about his donkeys; then his sheep and the servants who were tending the sheep; then his camels and the servants who cared for the camels. And then, worst of all, came news about his seven sons and three daughters who were all killed when a great wind (tornado) came and the house collapsed on them. Job was stunned.

It was one thing to lose his possessions, but it was another to lose his children. It would be bad enough to lose one child. I remember attending a funeral in Arkansas several years ago in which a whole family was killed in a car accident (father, mother, and three children). Five caskets were lined up end to end across the sanctuary. My heart sank and I remember praying, "I hope I never have to see anything like this again."

Can you imagine how Job felt? We know from experience that trouble comes when you least expect it. I remember the phone call about a week before Christmas in 2016 when I found out that our son David was driving a truck and had been hit by a train and they were airlifting him to the hospital. You're never ready to hear news like that.

#### **4. When trouble comes we may feel overwhelmed**

Sometimes our trouble is more than we can bear. Job was overwhelmed. He tore his clothes as a sign of grief, shaved his head, fell down on the ground, and worshiped God.

In Job chapter 2 we read about the second wave of Job's trouble. This time God allowed Satan to afflict Job with sore boils from head to toe. Again Job didn't deserve it, he didn't understand why, he didn't see it coming, and he was completely overwhelmed.

#### **5. When trouble comes we may be tempted to blame God**

Satan predicted that Job would curse God, but he didn't. In chapter 2, Job's wife acted like the mouthpiece of Satan and told Job to curse God and die. But Job knew better and he rebuked her for such a foolish idea. When trouble comes we may be tempted to blame God. One of two things will happen when trouble comes: you will either turn against God or you will turn to God. Trouble and suffering will either make you bitter or it will make you better.

#### **6. When trouble comes we have an opportunity to glorify God**

Job's trouble brought out the best in him. He didn't blame God; he blessed God. He honored God by his attitude and his words. When trouble comes we can glorify God by our reactions. We can plan our actions, but we can't plan our reactions.

Job glorified God as the one who gives and takes away. He glorified God for good things as well as bad things. Job knew that God is sovereign. He is in control and He does all things well.

When trouble comes it is our opportunity to reveal the truth about God. When trouble comes we need to remember it's not about us...it's about God.

The issue is not whether we can avoid trouble. The issue is how we respond when it comes. We can glorify God in many ways. We can glorify Him in our service. We can glorify Him in our worship. And we can glorify Him in our suffering.