

Sermon Title: The Book of Job

I'm sure that some of you are very uncomfortable and possibly a little out of sorts tonight:

- We don't normally come to church at night
- It's Good Friday
- The sanctuary is different, so "your" seat might not be there

I am sorry, but here's a question to answer: How are you doing with all this discomfort and the fact that you don't know exactly what the tables on the outside are for?

Our book of the Bible for today is the Book of Job:

Job 1: :1-3, 6-12, 20-22

Summary of the rest of Job:

- Chapter 2 we have a similar story, where God allows Satan to give Job boils all over his skin.
- The rest of Job are speeches and dialogues between Job and others
 - Job's friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar take 25 chapters to try to explain to Job that they know who God is, and that God only sends suffering to those that have sinned as punishment.
 - Job correctly states that he has not sinned **30:18-22**
 - Elihu tells Job to look at things differently
- Then something crazy happens, God enters into the story.
- He doesn't tell Job about the encounter with Satan, and he doesn't answer Job's cries of injustice. God just explains that there is evil in the world, evil that He limits and controls for good purposes. **38:2, 4**
- Job finally understands what God is trying to say, **42:2-6**
- The book finishes with God rebuking Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, and God restoring Job's fortune and blessing Job with a new family.

I know that Job is a long book, and I know it can be a confusing book as well because most of it is written in poetry or in prose discourse.

What is the Book of Job trying to teach us?

What the author of Job is trying to do is answer the age-old question of "Why do bad things happen?"

- Unlike Google, the author doesn't actually give us the answer directly.
- God tells us that we might never find out why bad things happen, but that's ok because we can know God!
- Some tough questions...
- God doesn't need to tell us anything, and faith is more than just understanding.

The book of Job is also trying to teach that God is always more than we currently understand about him.

- One of the main points of the entire book is to show that God has true and total freedom to do whatever he wants to do.
- There is no concept of God without God.
- The Hebrew word to describe God is Hesed, which means eternal loving-kindness.
- We must also remember that there will always be an air of mystery for God, so we should never think that we have God figure out, and more so we should never believe that God *must* do something just because we believe he should. **Ex 34:6-7**

The book of Job teaches about the concept of suffering, but we cannot talk about suffering without talking about Jesus and what he suffered all those years ago on the first Good Friday. H.C. 37

Challenges:

1. Take some time and reflect on the suffering you have gone through in the past several years. (my example)
2. Celebrate Easter and Jesus' resurrection this Sunday, even though you will be dealing with all of your emotions remembering that suffering.
 - a. **Lamentations 3:1-2. 21-23**
 - b. **Psalm 30:11**

I pray that each of us in the church can rest and have peace in the midst of suffering knowing that God has it under control

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Scripture passages to go up on the Screen:

Job 1:1-3, 6-12, 20-22- In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. ² He had seven sons and three daughters, ³ and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East. ⁶ One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it." ⁸ Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." ⁹ "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. ¹⁰ "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. ¹¹ But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." ¹² The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." So in one day Job lost everything, including his entire family other than his wife. Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. ²⁰ At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship ²¹ and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised." ²² In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

Job 30:18-22 - ¹⁸ With great force my garment is disfigured; it binds me about like the collar of my tunic. ¹⁹ God has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes. ²⁰ I cry to you for help and you do not answer me; I stand, and you only look at me. ²¹ You have turned cruel to me; with the might of your hand you persecute me. ²² You lift me up on the wind; you make me ride on it, and you toss me about in the roar of the storm.

Job 38: 2, 4 - "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding.

Job 42: 2-6 - ² "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. ³ 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore, I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. ⁴ 'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.' ⁵ I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; ⁶ therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Exodus 34: 6-7 - "I am the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

Lamentations 3:1-2, 21-23 - I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; ² he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. ²¹ But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: ²² The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; ²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

Psalms 30:11 - You have turned for me my mourning into dancing.