



## **SAFE HARBOR**

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### **“Though He Slay Me”, The Confidence Faith Brings**

One of the books of Scripture that I periodically read is the Book of Job. This narrative that possibly pre-dates the writings of Moses, contains some of the greatest insights into faith for those who read it. It stands out for its defense of Job’s faith during the most horrendous of times. Indeed it begins as a sort of challenge between God and Satan. Satan had been trying to unsuccessfully try to attack the faith of this one man who had been achieved prosperity in life and exemplified faith and devotion to God as well as obedient to the precepts of right living. The lie of Satan was that God had provided special shelter about Job which kept him from the attacks of Satan.

While we do not know anything that would connect Job with a religion as we know it, we do know that he was a man blameless and upright who feared God and turned away from evil. So by the standards of his day, he was seen as being blessed. But these same standards implied that the losses that he suffered indicated that he was not as blameless as it seemed for it looked like God now cursed him and removed his favor. Again a second lie that is perpetuated even in our own times. The blessings God promises are the blessings of his love and presence in our lives.

The case of Job is often looked at by philosophers and others as the classic example of the “problem of pain”. Or by the question of “Why do bad things happen to good people?”

If we accept the premise that God allows the bad into our lives then we make God the ultimate source of evil but if we look at the arguments given within the Job there may be another perspective on the question of pain and suffering in relation to our faith in God. It is here that we must reflect further into the condition of world which was created complete in God’s eyes but soon marred by the disobedience of Adam and Eve.

The chosen pair did not seem to realize the spiritual war being engaged and while tempted they forsook the life in the presence of God. Having faith in God often opens the door for temptation to enter our lives just as evil which entered the world at the Fall. The goodness that was seen at the culmination of Creation gained a black spot when Adam and Eve disobeyed. They let their

emotional desires rule over their bodies instead of resting in their faith in God. As such they surrendered their will to the Father of Lies.

This leads back to Job's temptation. Will he renounce his faith amidst his suffering? Or will he remain steadfast in faith? While we do not have the actual record of the Heavenly scene it clearly identifies Satan as the author of the evils that fall upon Job. Possibly the author of Job is using the model of an ancient court where the various subordinates report and receive permissions from the ruler. (This would make the action more understandable to the early readers as well as removing the concept that God is the author of evil.)

The dialogues that follow show the lack of human understanding as well the building of the faith of Job to the affirmation of "He knows the way I take and when He has tried me I shall come forth as pure gold".

We often hear the phrase, "Why did God allow this to happen?" We often try to condemn The Creator for the mess that rest solely upon human shoulders. We seek to absolve ourselves by placing blame upon God for the good and the evil that befall us. The truth is that as human beings we are continually in a war between good and evil whether we like it or not. We live in a world where the battle between faith and unbelief are constantly at war. So our response to temptation is our own.

In the end we must be like Job and say, "Then Job answered the LORD and said:

<sup>2</sup>"I know that you can do all things,  
and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.  
<sup>3</sup>"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.  
<sup>4</sup>"Hear, and I will speak;  
I will question you, and you make it known to me."  
<sup>5</sup>I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,  
but now my eye sees you;  
<sup>6</sup>therefore I despise myself,  
and repent<sup>u</sup> in dust and ashes."

In the end God reproves the "comforters" and has Job offer a sacrifice of atonement for they had not spoken the whole truth. Thereafter the fortunes of Job are restored.

Where is your faith in times of trouble? Do you try to rely on human wisdom which is still seeking the answer? Paul writes that God will not allow us to be tempted over that we are able to stand up to in faith. It is also in temptation that our faith is strengthened and bolstered. It is by faith that we must live our lives to the glory of God. It is by faith that grows through trials and temptations in power and strength to overcome and move forward towards our heavenly Father.

## *Reflections*

### **Cruising**

Life is often like the weather  
Impossible to predict.  
Sometimes hot,  
Sometimes cold.  
It moves from hour to hour.  
Sometimes rain,  
Sometimes Sun.

We move along the pathway  
And wondering what's ahead.  
Will it be peace and rest?  
Or something else instead.

Strive to live in faith and hope,  
Spreading love as we go.  
For God will keep us  
As His own.

## *Words of Encouragement*

### **Philippians 4:7-11 English Standard Version (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup>Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup>What you have learned<sup>Ⓜ</sup> and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Also a footnote: My book of poetry, **Midnight Musings: Thoughts from a Restless Mind**, is available on Amazon and also Kindle. Your patronage and thoughts would be appreciated.