

## **WHY ME? HELP AND HOPE FOR THE HURTING: FACTOR ONE**

### **We Reap What Adam Sowed – The Curse/Chapter Five: The Example of Job (explanation)**

Throughout redemptive history, the example of Job communicates powerfully for many who are hurting and asking the same question which he pondered: “Why me?” Job did not have the benefit of witnessing the interaction which took place in heaven between God and the devil, just prior to his time of trial and testing. But by means of the Word of God, we do. The first two chapters of the book of Job give us incredible insight into the issue of encountering adversity that isn’t the direct result of any sinful behavior on the part of the suffering individual.

Satan presents himself before God, and states that he has been “roaming about on the earth and walking around on it;” an indication of his dominion over our lost and fallen world (Joshua 1:3). The lack of any rebuke or correction from God regarding Satan’s assertion confirms its validity. However, God does point out an exception to the devil’s rule: Job! The Almighty bestows the highest compliment upon this man, describing him as “a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil” (1:8). This does not imply that Job was sinless or excluded from our human condition. During the course of his adversities, Job readily admits to his sinfulness (7:21; 13:26). Yet what Job refuses to acknowledge is direct personal guilt. Throughout his ordeal, he maintains his innocence in regard to any sinful behavior that would have been the underlying cause for his trials (Job 23:10-12).

This is why Job 1:8, in conjunction with Job 2:3, is so important in understanding factor one suffering. God confirms Job’s integrity, in advance of, as well as in the aftermath of his adversity, claiming that there is no specific sin present in his life that would merit such suffering. Nevertheless, Satan counters God’s claim and issues a challenge. He declares that Job’s righteous lifestyle is derived solely from the fact that God has placed a hedge of protection around him and his family, thus sparing them from all the hardships of life, allowing exposure only to the blessings. The devil then dares God to take the hedge down, making Job vulnerable to affliction, which in turn would result in his disloyalty (1:9-11). Surprisingly, God agrees to the challenge and permits the evil one to destroy all of Job’s possessions and kill each of his children (1:12-19). How could God allow that when Job clearly didn’t deserve it? It would seem that God at this point was guilty of injustice. As his trials continue, that was Job’s erroneous conclusion about God’s dealings with him; proving to be his great failure during this time of testing. Why? God can never be guilty of injustice or He would cease to be God.

Yet how do we explain what God allowed to occur? On the one hand, perhaps God agrees to this provocation because the devil has the authority to issue it. But in a far more significant sense, God consents to Satan’s taunt because it was Job’s turn and time to be touched by the curse. He would reap this adversity, not because of what he sowed, but because of what Adam sowed. Considering all of the above, it would have been unjust of God to do the opposite. Had He maintained the hedge of protection surrounding Job, it would have meant giving him an undeserved exemption from the necessary negatives of membership in our fallen human race. Job was a man who desired and discovered God’s best, in prosperity as well as adversity. And in the larger context of our study, Job serves as the practical personification of factor one suffering. Because of his example, numerous personal lessons can be learned from his life; which we will consider, next.