

Faith in the Darkness

Job 2-3; 7; 19

Darkness exists, even for believers.

- i. Elijah prayed for death (1 Kings 19:4).
- ii. Paul experienced affliction and despair (2Co 1:8*f*; 4:8*f*).
- iii. David expressed sorrow, fear, and regret (Ps 6:6-7).
- iv. Jeremiah wrote a book called Lamentations, ran out of tears, and had a broken heart (Lam 2:11).
- v. If you've experienced sorrow and despair, you're normal.

Remember, wisdom books help us navigate this world in ways that bring God glory. We all experience sorrow and despair. How do we live through those experiences and still glorify God...

Big Idea: Darkness might overwhelm us,
but God never leaves us; so, we trust God.

⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.” ¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?”^[a] In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. ¹² And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. ¹³ And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

3 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth.
² And Job said: ³“Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said, ‘A man is conceived.’ ... ¹¹ “Why did I not die at birth, come out from the womb and expire? (3:1-2, 11)

“Therefore I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul... ¹⁶ I loathe my life; I would not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are a breath (7:11, 16).

“I loathe my life; I will give free utterance to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul... ¹⁸“Why did you bring me out from the womb? Would that I had died before any eye had seen me ¹⁹ and were as though I had not been, carried from the womb to the grave. (10:1, 18-19)

[But]

I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. ²⁶ And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, ²⁷ whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another (19:25-27).

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Faith in the Darkness

1. Sometimes, life's troubles add up (2:1-10).
2. Faithfulness does not keep us from sorrow (3:1-11).
3. Lament is the language of relationship (7; 10).
4. Hold on to Christ during the darkness (19:25-27).

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Troubles add up ...

- i. Sometimes suffering is layered.
- ii. Our pain can cause pain in other (Job 2:10).
- iii. Faith trusts God through pain; it does not get rid of pain.

2. Faithfulness does not keep us from sorrow (3:1-11).

3 After this Job [the blameless and upright one who feared God and turned away from evil] opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. ² And Job said: ³ “Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said, ‘A man is conceived.’ ⁴ Let that day be darkness! May God above not seek it, nor light shine upon it...

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After this: Job lost stuff → People → Health → Emotional stability.

Remain faithful through the darkness.

- i. Be a refuge, not a courtroom, for those in pain.
- ii. Encourage real honesty about challenges and struggles.
- iii. Instead of pretending like things are perfect, be real.
- iv. Pray. Talk to God openly about your life/suffering.

3. Lament is the language of relationship (7; 10).

“Therefore I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul...¹³ When I say, ‘My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,’¹⁴ then you scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions,¹⁵ so that I would choose strangling and death rather than my bones. ¹⁶ I loathe my life ... ^{10:1} “I loathe my life; I will give free utterance to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul... (7:11-16; 10:1).

Faith doesn't remove human vulnerability.

- i. Our vulnerability before God reveals our trust in God.
- ii. Approach God boldly in prayer (Eph 3:12).
- iii. Say it ... and know God won't leave you.

“Though he slay me, still I will trust in him”
(Job 13:15; *cf* Heb 13:5)

4. Hold on to Christ during the darkness (19:25-27).

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. ²⁶ And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, ²⁷ whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

God's silence does not mean God's absence.

- i. Job didn't understand, so he held to what he did (19:25)
- ii. When God finally answers, God tells Job about God, not Job's problem.
- iii. God uses our darkest times to grow us the most. Job, in ch 19, is different than Job in ch 1 (*cf.* 1Pt 1:6-7).

In your struggle remember:

You are not alone.

You are not unfaithful.

You are not forgotten.

Our Redeemer lives.