

What's the Worst that Can Happen?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from The Sermon Notebook)

- A. In Bible study, sermons, and reading the word, as we learn about God, are we not learning about ourselves who were created in the image of God?
1. In every text, there is a message about God Who gave the text, and in every message about God in the text, there is a message about us
 2. Our scripture readings of the Book of Job have revealed a great deal about God, and in turn showed us much about ourselves.
 3. No Old Testament book better reflects our experiences here at TR than the Book of Job.
 4. We have pressed far beyond what we believed ourselves capable in working toward greater spirituality and godliness.
 5. The Adversary wants us, as individuals and as a congregation. He sees us as a threat; he knows he is losing the battle for our hearts and souls, and is working overtime to make life difficult for us.
 6. We have lost so much so quickly: family and friends to death, deteriorating health, family and friends with cancer, emotional disorders, disabilities, and financial losses, all coming so fast and so frequently we feel we can hardly breathe in between.
 7. We find this unfair that we are trying so hard to please the Lord only to have one hardship after another piled on. We want to know WHY?! We want someone to BLAME! We are walking in Job's shoes.
 8. Prayer: "If You want us to bear with it, we will; but, we feel at the breaking point."
- B. Book entitled: The Complete Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook by Joshua Piven and David Borgenicht; a few of the chapters
1. How to escape from quicksand
 2. How to hot-wire a car
 3. How to fend off a shark
 4. How to escape from a bear
 5. How to escape from a mountain lion
 6. How to survive a poisonous snake attack
 7. How to escape from killer bees
 8. How to wrestle free from an alligator
 9. How to deal with a charging bull
 10. How to land a plane
 11. How to survive if your parachute fails to open
 12. How to survive an earthquake
 13. How to survive when adrift at sea
 14. How to perform a tracheotomy
 15. How to win a sword fight
 16. How to jump from a moving car
 17. Until we are in the crisis, we don't know we will really do
- C. Job faced some of the worst losses that can happen to anyone in this world.
1. What Job endured was horrible, but what he learned was priceless.

2. There will be times when the bottom will fall out of your life and it will seem that everything bad is happening all at once. It will feel unfair, deliberate, and malicious.
3. When this happens, and it will, you need to know what to expect and how to react. The book of Job teaches us how to deal with life's worst-case scenarios.

D. Job's life:

1. The character of Job's life
2. The calamities of Job's life
3. The classroom of Job's life
4. The consummation of Job's life

I. THE CHARACTER OF JOB'S LIFE

A. He lived a godly life - Job 1:1, 5, 8, 20-22, 2:3, 10

1. A life lived for the Lord is thing of beauty. There is nothing in this world that can compare to a life lived by and for the will of God. A godly life is a precious thing.

B. He lived a good life - Job 1:2-3

1. Few can lay claim to this if a good life is measured by the amount of money and property we own, or by the size of our family, or by how healthy and good looking we may be.
2. But if a good life is measure by Solomon's wisdom: walking with God, content with our circumstances in life, hope of eternal life in heaven, peace through prayer, fulfillment through good deeds; then, life is good.

C. He lived a graced life - Job 1:9-11, 2:4-5

1. A life lived for God is never a pointless life a life, but it is a life of blessing. It is a life that God can take and use to demonstrate His grace to a lost and frightened world - Eph. 2:10; Matt. 5:16.
2. It is a life that He can hold up before Satan and the whole world, as He did with Job, and say, "Look what I can do through grace."
3. Illustration to communicate the value of holiness: A bar of steel worth \$5 can yield any of the following: If made into horseshoes it will be worth \$10. Manufacture needles, and the value becomes \$350. Use it to create delicate springs for expensive watches and it will yield \$250,000. We are like the \$5 bar of steel. Our commitment to holiness will determine whether we become Christians of minimal, moderate, or significant spiritual influence. Imagine the value of a godly life in our world today. (Dr. M. R. DeHaan)

II. THE CALAMITIES OF JOB'S LIFE

A. His calamities touched his fortune - Job 1:14-17

B. His calamities touched his family - Job 1:18-19, 2:9

C. His calamities touched his fitness - Job 2:1-8

1. A good life in not a hedge against trouble. Being godly does not guarantee freedom from calamity. We sometimes believe that when we live right, we are entitled to blessings.

2. Some of God's most precious saints endured great affliction
 - a. Paul - 2Cor. 11:23-28
 - b. Daniel - Dan. 6
 - c. The three Hebrews - Dan. 3
 - d. David and all the trials of his life - Psalms
 - e. Jesus was called "a man of sorrows" - Isa. 53:3
 - f. What does the Bible say about this? - Job 14:1, 5:7; John 16:33
 - g. Why do we often feel that we should be exempted from the difficulties of life? Instead, rejoice that we have this in common with Christ and the other soldiers of the cross
 - h. 1Peter 4:12-14; Acts 5:41

III. THE CLASSROOM OF JOB'S LIFE

- A. He learned lessons about the person of God - Job 38-41
- B. He learned lessons about the purposes of God - Job 3-37, 42:1-5
- C. He learned lessons about the power of God - Job 38-41, 42:10-12
 1. While God Himself testified about the godly, good and graced life of Job, He knew there were areas of Job's life that needed attention. Therefore, to work on these areas, God sent Job to the classroom of affliction. There, Job learned lessons not easily forgotten.
 - a. He learned that nothing in life is safe from difficulty or disruption. Before his trials, Job was in love with God, but he was also in love with his stuff. During his trials, he learned the valuable lesson that God alone must be his object of love - Matt. 6:19-21.
 - b. He learned that God's purpose in trial is not to punish us, but to perfect us. Often, the best lessons in life are learned in the furnace of affliction, just as gold is made pure in the fire. We will never fully know our own strength and endurance, and we will never know the fullness of the power of God, until we find ourselves in the extremes of trial
 - c. He learned that God's purposes and plans for our lives are often beyond our comprehension. What God does and why He does it are things better left with Him - Isa. 55:8-9.
 - d. He learned that God is absolutely sovereign in all of life; nothing happens without bringing us spiritual good and bringing Him glory - Rom. 8:28; 2Cor. 4:17; Psalm 37:23
 - e. He learned all things work out in the end - Rom. 8:18; 1Cor. 2:9

IV. THE CONSUMMATION OF JOB'S LIFE

- A. It was a time of personal repentance - Job 42:6
 1. Job realized that though he was a good man, he did not know God as well as he thought he did, and he did not know how much more growing he had to do in faith and wisdom. He had to learn that it wasn't about his righteousness; it was about God

B. It was a time of piercing revival - Job 42:7-10

1. Note that Job did not wait until things were better in his life to humble himself; he did not wait until the trial was over and God blessed him with good times before repenting
2. The valley of tears is designed to bring us closer to God; the dark valleys of life are simply God's classrooms
3. A minister was recovering from a prolonged, dangerous illness, when one of his friends addressed him: "Sir, though God seems to be bringing you up from the gates of death, yet it will be a long time before you will sufficiently retrieve your strength, and regain vigor enough of mind to preach as usual." The good man answered: "You are mistaken, my friend; for this six weeks' illness has taught me more of God and His will than all my past studies and all my years of ministry put together."

C. It was a time of powerful restoration - Job 42:10-17

1. God blessed Job with more than he had when he was a righteous man before the trials.
2. We should not wait until we are out of the valley and on the mountain before we deal with the sins and problems that are in our lives. Their removal is the object of the valley of the shadow of death.
3. Regardless of what God gives us when the trial is over, the ordeal teaches us that we are far richer for the experience, gives a deeper appreciation for the spiritual blessings in Christ, and confers to us a sense of contentment with the temporary things we have in this life.

D. It was a time of profound reflection - Job 42:14

1. The names Job gave his daughters reveal the condition of his heart.
 - a. Jemima - Daylight dove - God gave Job enlightenment in place of his darkness and peace in place of his turmoil.
 - b. Kezia - Joyful fragrance - God replaced Job's sorrow and loss with the sweet savor of His blessings.
 - c. Keren-Happuch - Eyes that glow (also used to refer to Moses when he came off the mountain with his face aglow with the glory of God) It refers to the glory or brightness of Job's eyes and face that God gave him in place of the pained expressions and downcast eyes.
2. Regardless of how dark the valley, God is always there with us as we travel through - Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:20; Psalm 23:4; 1Peter 5:7
3. No matter how bad things become, they will not last forever. Therefore, as you travel through your dark valley, remember that just as there was an entrance into it, there will be an exit from it
 - a. Ecc. 3:1, 4, 6; Lam. 3:31-33