

# JOB 1-2

*This was posted to the Unfathomable Grace website on Tuesday, January 4, 2022*

## SCRIPTURE TEXT

*Job 1-2 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. <sup>2</sup> There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. <sup>3</sup> He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. <sup>4</sup> His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. <sup>5</sup> And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually. <sup>6</sup> Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. <sup>7</sup> The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." <sup>8</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" <sup>9</sup> Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? <sup>10</sup> Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. <sup>11</sup> But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." <sup>12</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, <sup>14</sup> and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, <sup>15</sup> and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." <sup>16</sup> While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." <sup>17</sup> While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." <sup>18</sup> While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, <sup>19</sup> and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you." <sup>20</sup> Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. <sup>21</sup> And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." <sup>22</sup> In all this Job did*

not sin or charge God with wrong. <sup>1</sup> Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. <sup>2</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." <sup>3</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason." <sup>4</sup> Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. <sup>5</sup> But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." <sup>6</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life." <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes. <sup>9</sup> Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die." <sup>10</sup> 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?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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.

## JOB CHAPTER 1

Job lived in the land of Uz. This was north of the Arabian desert. It was somewhere in the region of the Euphrates River.

Job was blessed with seven sons and three daughters – each with houses of their own.

Job was blessed with incredible wealth as noted by his numerous servants and thousands of animals.

Job was blessed with notoriety and power. He was described as the "greatest man in all the east."

Job was blessed with righteousness. God described him as blameless, upright, one who feared Him, and one who turned away from evil. Job practiced his righteousness by being a diligent patriarch, prophet, and priest who continually led his family in worship. With clear conscience, Job described his own practice of righteousness in chapters 29 and 31. One can read another account in Ezekiel 14:13–14, 20.

In some realm – earthly or spiritual – the "Sons of God" presented themselves before their sovereign Lord. Some scholars see this as referring to an earthly worship service which would have included Job. Others see

this as some sort of a spiritual counsel of divinely created beings. One can see them mentioned in the first chapters of Genesis, in certain Psalms, and in other passages throughout the scriptures.

It was at this "council meeting" that God brought Job up for discussion. It was God's doing to focus on him. Before Satan and other "Sons of God," God notes Job's regeneration, justification, and sanctification -- his blameless righteousness.

Satan replied according to form. The "Slanderer" and "Accuser" proclaimed Job only loved God because he was spoiled. Satan promised Job would curse God if his temporal blessings were removed.

God called Satan's hand. The sovereign God ordained, decreed, permitted, or allowed Satan to pour out his sinister intentions. There is no doubt about it -- God purposed or intended Job's suffering.

God limited Satan's hand. Satan was not given permission to do all his mischief. He was not permitted to touch Job's body.

So, despite Job's righteous worship, he was about to suffer under the watchful gaze of his loving Lord. In the words of Philip Yancey, "Here we are about to see the very worst things happening to the very best person." (Disappointment with God)

Consequently, Job began to suffer. He was severely damaged as he lost his ...

- Wealth – 500 donkeys, 5000 oxen, 7000 sheep, and 3000 camels.
- Workforce – his servants were decimated.
- Children – his 7 sons and 3 daughters had the walls of their house fallen upon them.
- Future – his insurance and retirement plan would not be there in his old age.

However, despite his woes, Job worshiped well. It was at this point that he uttered his famous doxology, "Naked I came; naked I shall return; the Lord gives; the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

## JOB CHAPTER 2

At the next divine "council meeting," God again brought up the topic of Job.

It is interesting to note God's own identification with Job's suffering. He proclaimed before Satan and the others, "You incited me against him to destroy him without reason." (Job 2:3)

Again, Satan slandered Job. He discounted Job's faithfulness and promised God he would prove unfaithful if his body were touched.

God then allowed Satan's maliciousness. God allowed Job's increased suffering. His body would be traumatized.

However, again, God limited Satan's harm, He could harm, but he could not kill.

With that, Satan was pleased to pour out his harm on God's friend. Job lost his ...

- Health
- Emotional Peace
- Income-making Ability

In response, Job's wife lost faith. She proclaimed, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die."

Job's friends were of great help for a time -- at least until they started speaking. Throughout the story, they made horrible assumptions. They concluded they knew the "*why*" and "*what to do*" about Job's situation. In many ways, they proved to be Prosperity Theologians proclaiming health, wealth and prosperity if he had more faith and repentance.

Still, Job worshiped well. He famously proclaimed, "Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil." He proclaimed God was responsible for the work of Satan and sinners. He proclaimed God Lord of storms and sickness. Yes, at this point he worshiped well. And throughout the book, evidence of his faith would be seen. R. C. Sproul wrote, "Job's trust wavered, but it never died. He mourned. He cried. He protested. He questioned. He even cursed the day of his birth. But he clutched tightly to his only possible hope, his trust in God. At times Job was hanging on by his fingernails. But he hung on. He cursed himself. He rebuked his wife, but he never cursed God." (Surprised by Suffering)

However, Job was also prove to be unfaithful. He was a sinful saint as first proven in 3:1. In later chapters he would repent of his sin. Yes, Job was "holding on by his fingernails," but his hope was in God who held on to him with his Almighty hand.

## SCRIPTURE APPLICATION

Is there anyone here who has watched someone walk in Job's shoes?

Is there anyone here who experientially understands the story of Job?

- Family
- Neighbors
- Enemies
- National Disaster
- Deformities
- Disabilities
- Disease
- Dementia
- Death
- Habits – Addictions

- Consequences of Sin
- Emotional Struggles – PTSD, Anxiety, Depression, Fear, Loneliness, Suicide
- Poverty
- Old Age

Buddhism and Christian Science – Evil and suffering are illusions that one must get beyond.

Deism – God is not watching or he is not great,. He is doing the best he can. This is “finite godism” and it is the worldview of Rabbi Harold Kushner<sup>i</sup>, Tony Campolo,<sup>ii</sup> and some well-meaning, non-Calvinistic, evangelicals who see God “taking a chance” on love and free will.

Atheist and Evolutionist – Evil and suffering are random and purposeless. This is best presented in a song written in the 80's by the British band XTC; it was later remade by Sarah McLoughlin, “Dear God, I hope you got the letter, and I pray you can make it better down here. I don't mean a big reduction in the price of beer. But all the people that you made in your image, see them starving on their feet 'cause they don't get enough to eat from God, I can't believe in you. Dear God, sorry to disturb you, but... I feel that I should be heard loud and clear. We all need a big reduction in amount of tears. And all the people that you made in your image, see them fighting in the street 'cause they can't make opinions meet about God. I can't believe in you. Did you make disease, and the diamond blue? Did you make mankind after we made you? And the devil too! Don't know if you noticed, but your name is on a lot of quotes in this book, and us crazy humans wrote it, you should take a look, and all the people that you made in your image still believing that junk is true. Well I know it ain't, and so do you,. Dear God, I can't believe in I don't believe in, I won't believe in heaven and hell. No saints, no sinners, no devil as well. No pearly gates, no thorny crown. You're always letting us humans down. The wars you bring, the babes you drown. Those lost at sea and never found, and it's the same the whole world 'round. The hurt I see helps to compound that Father, Son and Holy Ghost is just somebody's unholy hoax. And if you're up there you'd perceive that my heart's here upon my sleeve. If there's one thing I don't believe in you.

God is the First Cause of all that is. He is the original inventor and developer of Satan, demons, sinners, storms, and sickness. He is the cause, not directly, but indirectly, of evil. He is responsible for making evil possible, but free creatures are responsible for making it actual. He is responsible for the possibility of evil, but men must bear the responsibility for the actuality of it.

God is Holy. He hates rebellion.

God is Just. He judges, condemns, and curses evil.

God is Omnipresent. He is everywhere present in the eternal now

God is Omnipotent. He is powerful over everything.

- Proverbs 16:4 The LORD works out everything for his own ends-- even the wicked for a day of disaster.

- Psalm 33:10-11 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.
- Isaiah 46:9-11 ... I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do.
- Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.
- Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.
- Romans 8:28-29 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose ....

God is Omnipotent -- powerful over Satan. Adam and Job presents this at the beginning of time. Revelation presents this at the end of the book.

God is Omnipotent -- powerful over sinners.

- Genesis 45:7 But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.
- Genesis 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.
- Exodus 4:21 And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. [God predicts what God will do.]
- Joshua 11:19-20 Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle. For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. (Oppression by Israel's enemies)
- Judges 14:2-4 When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me." (His parents did not know that this was from the LORD, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines; for at that time they were ruling over Israel.)
- Amos 3:6 When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?
- Luke 22:22 The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him."
- Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

- Acts 4:27-28 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.
- Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.
- Proverbs 20:24 A man's steps are directed by the LORD. How then can anyone understand his own way?
- Psalm 33:10-11 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.
- Romans 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."
- Don't forget regeneration as well.
- Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.
- Ephesians 1:3-6 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will -- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
- 2 Timothy 1:9 [God] ... who has saved us and called us to a holy life -- not because of anything we have done [including placing faith and trust in Jesus Christ] -- but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.
- 1 Peter 2:8 "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message-- which is also what they were destined for.

God is Omnipotent -- powerful over storms.

- Lamentations 3:37-38 Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and good things come?
- Isaiah 45:6b-7 ... I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things ...
- Isaiah 50:2 ... Behold, I dry up the sea with My rebuke, I make the rivers a wilderness; Their fish stink for lack of water, And die of thirst.

God is Omnipotent -- powerful over sickness

- Ruth 1:21 ... I went out full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has witnessed against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?"
- WCF 2.2 God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them; he is the alone foundation of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom, are all things; and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth. In his sight all things are open and manifest; his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands. To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience he is pleased to require of them.
- WCF 3.1 God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.
- WCF 3.2 Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions; yet hath he not decreed any thing because he foresaw it as future, as that which would come to pass, upon such conditions.
- WCF 5:1 God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.
- WCF 5:2 Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.
- WCF 5:3 God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure.
- WCF 5:4 The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first Fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends; yet so, as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God; who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin.
- WCF 9:1 God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor, by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good, or evil.



God is Mysterious. He is under no obligations to give a “*why*.” He is in no hurry to give a “*why*.” Sure, he has given a general “*why*,” but he has most often chosen not to give a specific “*why*.” Neither has he given a “*what’s next*” or a “*how long*.” James Dobson writes, “Clearly, unless the Lord chooses to explain Himself to us, which often He does not, His motivation and purposes are beyond the reach of mortal man. What this means in practical terms is that many of our questions – especially those that begin with the word *why* – will have to remain unanswered for the time being.”<sup>iii</sup>

- Ecclesiastes 11:5 As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.
- Proverbs 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.
- Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.
- Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

God is Purposeful. Just because something is pointless to me does not mean it is pointless. Tim Keller states, “If you have a God great and transcendent enough to be mad at because he hasn’t stopped evil and suffering in the world, then you have (at the same moment) a God great and transcendent enough to have good reasons for allowing it to continue that you can’t know. Indeed, you can’t have it both ways.”<sup>iv</sup> At this point, humility is required.

God is Gracious to some. Some graciously suffer little today. (Common Grace) Some graciously suffer no more in the afterlife. (Paradise)

Emotional groaning is allowed

- Psalm 42 As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, “Where is your God?” 4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival. 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation 6 and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar. 7 Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. 8 By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. 9 I say to God, my rock: “Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?” 10 As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, “Where is your God?” 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

- Jeremiah 20:14–18 Cursed be the day on which I was born! The day when my mother bore me, let it not be blessed! 15 Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father, “A son is born to you,” making him very glad. 16 Let that man be like the cities that the Lord overthrew without pity; let him hear a cry in the morning and an alarm at noon, 17 because he did not kill me in the womb; so my mother would have been my grave, and her womb forever great. 18 Why did I come out from the womb to see toil and sorrow, and spend my days in shame?
- Mark 14:33–34 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”
- Luke 22:44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Verbal questions are allowed

- Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Wrestling is allowed. Remember Jacob.

Faith is righteous.

- Job 1:21 ... The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."
- Job 2:10 ... Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.
- Job 13:15 Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face.
- Remember David
- Remember Esther.
- Remember Jesus.
- Remember Paul. (Romans 5:3-5; 2 Cor. 4:7-11; 2 Timothy 2:3)
- Remember Peter. (1 Peter 4:12–16; 1 Peter 4:19)
- Remember Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley. Burned at the stake at Oxford in 1555, Latimer said, “Be of good comfort Mr. Ridley, and play the man.” We shall this day light a candle by God’s grace, in England, as I trust never shall be put out.”
- Remember Joni Erikson Tada
- Hear Oswald Chambers, “It is a great thing to see physical courage, and greater still to see moral courage, but the greatest to see of all is spiritual courage; oh, to see a person who will stand true to the integrity of Jesus Christ no matter what he or she goes through!”
- Hear Laura Story, “We pray for blessings, we pray for peace; Comfort for family, protection while we sleep. We pray for healing, for prosperity. We pray for Your mighty hand to ease our suffering. And all

the while, You hear each spoken need, yet love us way too much to give us lesser things. 'Cause what if your blessings come through rain drops? What if Your healing comes through tears? What if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know You're near? What if trials of this life are Your mercies in disguise? We pray for wisdom, Your voice to hear. We cry in anger when we cannot feel You near. We doubt your goodness, we doubt your love -- as if every promise from Your word is not enough. And all the while, You hear each desperate plea, and long that we'd have faith to believe. When friends betray us; when darkness seems to win; we know that pain reminds this heart that this is not our home. What if my greatest disappointments or the aching of this life is the revealing of a greater thirst this world can't satisfy? What if trials of this life – the rain, the storms, the hardest nights – are your mercies in disguise

- Will we hold on to God when there are no external benefits, or will we only love God for what he has / or will do for us? Is God alone worthy of our love and allegiance?

Wise compassion is righteous. Less counseling because we do not know the “why,” the “what now,” the “how long,” or the “what next?” More Jesus. He is the Wonderful Counselor who suffered, finished, understands, intercedes, and helps. More connection. Just be there!

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<sup>i</sup> Harold Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, 148

Are you capable of forgiving and loving the people around you, even if they have hurt you and let you down by not being perfect? Can you forgive them and love them, because there aren't any perfect people around, because the penalty for not being able to love imperfect people is condemning oneself to loneliness?

Are you capable of forgiving and loving God even when you have found out that he is not perfect, even when he has let you down and disappointed you by permitting bad luck and sickness and cruelty in his world, and permitting some of those things that happened to you?

Can you learn to love and forgive him despite his limitations, as Job does, and does you want to learn to forgive and love your parents even though they were not as wise, as strong, or as perfect as you needed them to be?

<sup>ii</sup> Article recommending Kushner's view    <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Christianity/2005/09/Katrina-Not-Gods-Wrath-Or-His-Will.aspx#>

<sup>iii</sup> James Dobson, *When God Doesn't Make Sense*, p. 9

<sup>iv</sup> Tim Keller, *Reasons for God*, 25

<sup>v</sup> Tim Keller, *Reasons for God*, 28-29