

Our Wise Friends Devotion 3: Job

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” - Mark 15:34

Have you ever felt forsaken by God?

Maybe it was a time when everything was going wrong and no matter what you did, things didn't seem to improve. Maybe others described it as a “rough patch.” But to you, calling it a “rough patch” would be greatly understating things.

Job absolutely went through a rough patch. No, far worse than just a rough patch...Job went through living hell.

His oxen and donkeys were slaughtered, his sheep and servants were consumed by fire from heaven (probably lightning), his camels which were used for commerce were slaughtered along with more servants, and worst of all his children were killed in a tragic “accident” in which the house fell in on them.

Then, to make things worse, Job was afflicted physically with painful sores from head to toe so that he couldn't even mourn without extreme physical pain.

We know that Job was being attacked and afflicted by Satan, but he didn't know for sure why these things were happening. But Job was not abandoned by the Lord. God had not forsaken Him. Throughout this time, Job kept looking to the Lord. He trusted that though he didn't understand, God had not and would not forsake him.

James uses Job as an example of enduring in the faith that we can imitate. *Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. (James 5:11)*

Job continued to look to the Lord in faith though all these hardships and in the end, Job was blessed even more greatly than he had been at the start. That blessing didn't take away his suffering, but it reminded him of God's goodness. Even when we doubt or struggle, our God forgives and remains for us. Our friend Job has lived through terrible things but found strength in the Lord. He is a faithful friend to keep pointing us to Jesus.

And truth be told, we've got an advantage on Job. We know that Jesus went through the hell of the cross for our sake so that we need never fear being forsaken by God. We know Jesus, who declared, “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20) We have the promise that God will never forsake us, as found in Hebrews 13:5 which says, *Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*

You are not and will not be forsaken by God. Look to the cross and know what Jesus did for you. Consider His nail pierced hands and what He endured for your sake. And rest in those nail pierced hands, no matter what you're going through, because He has promised to be with you always and give heaven and its riches to those who trust in Him.

As Luther wrote:

*And they our life,
Goods fame, child and wife,
Though these all be gone,
our vic'try has been won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.” (LSB 656:4)*

Prayer: Lord, lead us to call upon Your name in every trouble. Let the example of Job remind us to look to you in faith, trusting in Your promise never to leave us nor forsake us, but to be with us always. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Journal Questions:

- What is the hardest time you've gone through in your life? What did you think about God during that time?
- What confidence does it give you to know that Jesus is with you always?

