

May 9, 2020

My Servant...

What happens when your world is turned upside down?

Is this something you are able to prepare for?

To some extent you can prepare for a rainy day by saving funds and stock piling supplies. You can have enough to “ride out the storm” so to speak.

Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of `Utz whose name was Iyov. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.

Job 1:2 Seven sons and three daughters were born to him.

Job 1:3 He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 pairs of oxen and 500 female donkeys, as well as a great number of servants; so that he was the wealthiest man in the east.

You believe that you have insulated yourself from a financial disruption due to your planning for the future, savings, retirement, etc...

Let's look at Adonai's servant Iyov who was well off.

Adonai had most certainly blessed Him, further substantiating that wealth does come from Adonail

Deu 8:11 "Be careful not to forget Adonai your God by not obeying his mitzvot, rulings and regulations that I am giving you today.

Deu 8:12 Otherwise, after you have eaten and are satisfied, built fine houses and lived in them,

Deu 8:13 and increased your herds, flocks, silver, gold and everything else you own,

Deu 8:14 you will become proud-hearted. Forgetting Adonai your God - who brought you out of the land of Egypt, where you lived as slaves;

Deu 8:15 who led you through the vast and fearsome desert, with its poisonous snakes, scorpions and waterless, thirsty ground; who brought water out of flint rock for you;

Deu 8:16 who fed you in the desert with man, unknown to your ancestors; all the while humbling and testing you in order to do you good in the end -

Deu 8:17 you will think to yourself, 'My own power and the strength of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.'

Deu 8:18 No, you are to remember Adonai your God, because it is he who is giving you the power to get wealth, in order to confirm his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as is happening even today.

So, he is most certainly blessed. In a moment we will see how Iyov is identified by Adonai.

Job 1:4 It was the custom of his sons to give banquets, each on his set day in his own house; and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

Job 1:5 After a cycle of banquets, Iyov would send for them to come and be consecrated; then he would get up early in the morning and offer burnt offerings for each of them, because Iyov said, "My sons might have sinned and blasphemed God in their thoughts." This is what Iyov did every time.

In a phrase...”Life is Good” for Iyov and his family. All was going along famously, no major problems on the

surface. Iyov as head of his family, priest of his family, he would continually intercede to Adonai on their behalf.

Then, dialog you are not privy to, a conversation that is about you, yet you are not part of, will ultimately impact your life. Circumstances that are out of your control to where no amount of planning you have done will be able to address what is to come.

Job 1:6 It happened one day that the sons of God came to serve Adonai, and among them came the Adversary [*Hebrew: Satan*].

Job 1:7 Adonai asked the Adversary, "Where are you coming from?" The Adversary answered Adonai, "From roaming through the earth, wandering here and there."

Job 1:8 Adonai asked the Adversary, "Did you notice my servant Iyov, that there's no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil?"

Job 1:9 The Adversary answered Adonai, "Is it for nothing that Iyov fears God?"

Job 1:10 You've put a protective hedge around him, his house and everything he has. You've prospered his work, and his livestock are spread out all over the land.

Job 1:11 But if you reach out your hand and touch whatever he has, without doubt he'll curse you to your face!"

Then we see the fallout from this conversation that you were ex parte to.

Job 1:13 One day when Iyov's sons and daughters were eating and drinking in their oldest brother's house,

Job 1:14 a messenger came to him and said, "The oxen were plowing, with the donkeys grazing near them,

Job 1:15 when a raiding party from Sh'va came and carried them off; they put the servants to the sword too, and I'm the only one who escaped to tell you."

Job 1:16 While he was still speaking, another one came and said, "Fire from God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants; it completely destroyed them, and I'm the only one who escaped to tell you."

Job 1:17 While he was still speaking, another one came and said, "The Kasdim, three bands of them, fell on the camels and carried them off; they put the servants to the sword too, and I'm the only one who escaped to tell you."

Job 1:18 While he was still speaking, another one came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,

Job 1:19 when suddenly a strong wind blew in from over the desert. It struck the four corners of the house, so that it fell on the young people; they are dead, and I'm the only one who escaped to tell you."

One catastrophe after another, four in total, basically wiping out his family and wealth with the exception of his wife and four of his servants who were witnesses to all that had transpired.

How did Iyov respond...

Job 1:20 Iyov got up, tore his coat, shaved his head, fell down on the ground and worshipped;

Job 1:21 he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will return there. Adonai gave; Adonai took; blessed be the name of Adonai."

Job 1:22 In all this Iyov neither committed a sin nor put blame on God.

You survive all this and your faith and trust in Adonai remains firm. You believe you have overcome the worst that you will ever experience, You can't imagine your faith enduring any greater test than what you have just gone through.

That is until the next wave finds you...

Unbeknownst to Iyov, unbeknownst to you...

Job 2:1 Another day came when the sons of God came to serve Adonai, and among them came the Adversary to serve Adonai.

Job 2:2 Adonai asked the Adversary, "Where are you coming from?" The Adversary answered Adonai, "From roaming through the earth, wandering here and there."

Job 2:3 Adonai asked the Adversary, "Did you notice my servant Iyov, that there's no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil, and that he still holds on to his integrity, even though you provoked me against him to destroy him for no reason?"

Job 2:4 The Adversary answered Adonai, "Skin for skin! A person will give up everything he has to save his life.

Job 2:5 But if you reach out your hand and touch his flesh and bone, without doubt he'll curse you to your face!"

Job 2:6 Adonai said to the Adversary, "Here! He is in your hands, except that you are to spare his life."

Job 2:7 Then the Adversary went out from the presence of Adonai and struck Iyov down with horrible infected sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

A second challenge to your faith has found you.

In both situations, Iyov could not have prepared for what was to befall him. There was no "bailout" for Iyov in this matter. He lost all of his material possessions and that of his family, his children, likely his most precious of all treasures.

Then upon all the loss, Iyov lost his health. Can you truly prepare for the onset of a disease or ailment? You can do your best to prevent it, by staying healthy, yet even that is not an absolute solution.

In May of 1990 I was finishing up my sophomore year of college. 24 and healthy, vegetarian, competed in Racquetball tournaments. I was planning to take some courses in the summer, that was until I began experiencing shortness of breath and severe night sweats. Later I would be diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. There was nothing in my life at the time that would have presented any sign of warning.

This was not something I could have prepared for or even envisioned happening. There was no history of cancer in my immediate family. This was a surprise to everyone in my immediate family.

Note: I had not yet found Yeshua, so my idea of faith at the time was more from the perspective of humanism, strength from within.

So with Iyov, was he expecting not one, but two extreme tests of his faith and trust in Adonai. Could he have prepared for what was to befall him, having never known such devastation before.

What had impacted him was assumed to have come from Adonai. We hear Iyov's wife...

Job 2:9 His wife asked him, "Why do you still hold onto your integrity? Curse God, and die!"

Iyov speaks in response to his wife's response to what has transpired.

Job 2:10 But he answered her, "You're talking like a low-class woman! Are we to receive the good at God's hands but reject the bad?" In all this Iyov did not say one sinful word.

Next, Iyov is visited by his three friends who visit him after hearing about all that befell their friend.

Job 2:11 Now when Iyov's three friends heard of all the calamities that had overwhelmed him, they all came. Each came from his own home — Elifaz from Teiman, Bildad from Shuach and Tzofar from Na'amah. They had agreed to meet together in order to come and offer him sympathy and comfort.

Job 2:12 When they saw him from a distance, they couldn't even recognize him. They wept aloud, tore their coats and threw dust over their heads toward heaven.

Job 2:13 Then they sat down with him on the ground. For seven days and seven nights, no one spoke a word to him; because they saw how much he was suffering.

Throughout the next 35 chapters we experience a dialog between Iyov and his friends regarding his current state.

Consider this summary of Iyov from the Complete Jewish Study Bible...

Iyov's (Job's) sudden unexplained and unmerited suffering tests his motivation for worshipping God and causes him to question God's justice and rule of the world.

Iyov's friends attempt to defend God, but they do so by offering faulty and simplistic explanations of God's dealings. Their theology is driven by the dogma of divine retribution, which teaches that God rewards the just with prosperity and punishes the wicked with calamity. But it is clear that Iyov's suffering does not originate in specific sins. Although divine retribution is a general principle of God's dealings, it does not explain all of them; and when not balanced by other operative truths or when taken to the extreme, it leads to erroneous representations of God's governance.

Iyov's perception that he is suffering unjustly causes him to seek a confrontation with God. God does respond to Iyov's challenge; but rather than Iyov questioning God, God questions Iyov. God's questions demonstrate that Iyov lacks knowledge, power, and concern to rule over various parts of God's creation. If Iyov, because of these deficiencies, is not qualified to rule over less sensitive parts of God's creation, how much more disqualified is he to ascertain how God should rule over humanity?

Neither the narrative portions of the book nor the speeches of God reveal why God allows Satan to test Iyov, except to prove that Iyov would worship him even in the face of suffering. God does respond to Iyov's challenge, but God's questions to Iyov imply that he prefers not to reveal all the reasons for suffering and that people would not be able to understand all the reasons if they were given. Yet God asserts that the presence of suffering in no way impinges upon his righteous and loving dealings with humanity, which sometimes includes severe suffering. It is perhaps in the tension of this unanswered question where faith is to function.

On March 14th we were having our Purim celebration, a banquet, just like Iyov and his family had prior to what befell them. We were anticipating being off the following week due to the school's annual Open House, and would be together for Shabbat again on March 28th. That didn't happen.

An unplanned disruption occurred. The impact was not the same for us as it was for Iyov. The impact we would experience would be slow and delayed whereas what happened to Iyov was swift and devastating.

Even something that is slow and delayed offers its own set of challenges. The slow methodical drip, drip, drip, where isolation amplifies our circumstances. Stay at home orders restrict our ability to live as we were created to do...through the live interaction of other people. The longer it goes, the greater the impact we experience.

For many of us, this time has most certainly challenged our faith.

I have seen things written such as...

“why hasn't God stopped this yet?”

To me this question implies one who challenged by what is happening and their faith lies in the balance and is based on Adonai's response.

Not even a question Iyov asked.

Adonai identified Iyov as His servant. Today, and moving forward I want you to look at yourselves as Adonai's servant...

Moshe encountered many challenges while he served Adonai, and yet this is how Adonai saw him...

Num 12:7 But it isn't that way with my servant Moshe. He is the only one who is faithful in my entire household.

Num 12:8 With him I speak face to face and clearly, not in riddles; he sees the image of Adonai. So why weren't you afraid to criticize my servant Moshe?"

My Servant Moshe

David, himself encountered many challenges in his life while he served Adonai...,

Psa 89:20 I have found David my servant and anointed him with my holy oil.

Psa 89:21 My hand will always be with him, and my arm will give him strength.

Psa 89:22 No enemy will outwit him, no wicked man overcome him.

Psa 89:23 I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.

Psa 89:24 My faithfulness and grace will be with him; through my name his power will grow.

Psa 89:25 I will put his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

Psa 89:26 He will call to me, 'You are my father, my God, the Rock of my salvation.'

to where he shared the following:

Psa 25:1 *[By David:]* I lift my inner being to you, Adonai;

Psa 25:2 I trust you, my God. Don't let me be disgraced, don't let my enemies gloat over me.

Psa 25:3 No one waiting for you will be disgraced; disgrace awaits those who break faith for no reason.

Psa 25:4 Make me know your ways, Adonai, teach me your paths.

Psa 25:5 Guide me in your truth, and teach me; for you are the God who saves me, my hope is in you all day long.

Psa 25:6 Remember your compassion and grace, Adonai; for these are ages old.

And then we have Yeshua, the servant of servants of Adonai who would experience the ultimate of challenges, not for Himself, but for us...

Isa 42:1 "Here is my servant, whom I support, my chosen one, in whom I take pleasure. I have put my Spirit on him; he will bring justice to the Goyim.

Isa 42:2 He will not cry or shout; no one will hear his voice in the streets.

Isa 42:3 He will not snap off a broken reed or snuff out a smoldering wick. He will bring forth justice according to truth;

Isa 42:4 he will not weaken or be crushed until he has established justice on the earth, and the coastlands wait for his Torah."

As a servant of Adonai, know that He remains with you as your rock, your firm foundation.

2Ti 2:11 Here is a statement you can trust: If we have died with him, we will also live with him.

2Ti 2:12 If we persevere, we will also rule with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us.

2Ti 2:13 If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

2Ti 2:14 Keep reminding people of this, and charge them solemnly before the Lord not to engage in word-battles. They accomplish nothing useful and are a catastrophe for the hearers!

2Ti 2:15 Do all you can to present yourself to God as someone worthy of his approval, as a worker with no need to be ashamed, because he deals straightforwardly with the Word of the Truth.

2Ti 2:16 But keep away from godless babbling, for those who engage in it will only become more ungodly,

2Ti 2:17 and their teaching will eat away at people like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus are among these;

2Ti 2:18 they have missed the mark, as far as the truth is concerned, by saying that our resurrection has already taken place; and they are overturning some people's faith.

2Ti 2:19 Nevertheless, God's firm foundation stands, stamped with these words: "The Lord knows his own," and, "Let everyone who claims he belongs to the Lord stand apart from wrongdoing."

Let's look at this time we are currently in the midst of as a time of taking stock in our faith and trust towards Adonai. Call it a test allowed by Adonai, though He is not the facilitator. Call it a midterm exam. The intent of a midterm exam is to gauge your progress in the course, your understanding of the material you are studying.

Currently you are a student at Kingdom University.

Commencement will not begin until The Dean of Dean's returns.

Let this be a time where you focus on further strengthening your faith and trust in Him.

Yeshua conveyed something similar...

Mat 6:31 "So don't be anxious, asking, 'What will we eat?', 'What will we drink?' or 'How will we be clothed?'"

Mat 6:32 For it is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all.

Mat 6:33 But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Mat 6:34 Don't worry about tomorrow — tomorrow will worry about itself! Today has enough troubles already!

You are His servant!!!

So in this time we are living, we need to amplify our trust in Him even more. For if there is one thing we need to know, Adonai is faithful to His servants. Therefore, A servant, His servant is to remain close to the one whom they serve. In remaining close, provides the servant with protection, His Master's protection.