



Did God Forget Me?

Focus Verse:

“Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He in anger shut up His tender mercies? Selah.”

(Psalm 77:9, NKJV)

Do the words from Psalms sound familiar—perhaps because you’ve said something similar to this yourself? When troubles come and we struggle to understand, it’s easy to ask, “Where are You, God? Are You mad at me? Or have You forgotten me?” God feels so far away, and we wonder if He cares what is happening in our lives.

JOB—A GODLY MAN

Even non-religious people are familiar with the story of Job. Say his name and the word that immediately comes to mind is *suffering*. Well, perhaps two words come to mind. The second is *patience*. Job was patient in his suffering.

Job lived many centuries ago, but we still glean valuable lessons from the example he left on how to go through great trials without forsaking God. What do we know about this man who has an entire book of the Bible dedicated to his story?

Job was very wealthy, AND he was godly.

- He was the wealthiest man in the East (Job 1:3).
- God said, *“There is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil”* (Job 1:8, NKJV).

Those two things alone would make others watch what Job did. If they were envious, and I’m sure many were, they would delight in watching him fall. And his true friends would delight in watching him succeed.

Life Reflection:

Thinking about life today, do you think it is possible to be successful and godly?

What are the pitfalls one would have to look for?

THE HEDGE

Before we continue with Job's story, let's cover a little more background. Satan accused God of having a *hedge*—or, as the New Living Translation says, “*a wall of protection*”—around Job so that nothing could harm him (Job 1:10).

In ancient times, hedges of thorn bushes were often planted to keep predatory animals away from dwellings and livestock. Wood to build fences was not plentiful, and stone walls would require hard labor to build. A fence must be very tall to keep wild animals away from homes and herds. Hedges of thorn bushes would be too dense for a predator to crawl through and too sharp to chew through. The thick bushes would also keep livestock from escaping.

God permitted the hedge to be breached, and trouble came to Job. Within one day, Job lost his children, servants, flocks, and herds. Everything was stripped away. He grieved, yet he still worshiped.

*“Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped.”
(Job 1:20, NKJV)*

Life Reflection:

How is it possible to worship while enduring such a severe trial?

Sometimes, things get worse before they get better. At first, God did not permit Satan to touch Job himself. Then God opened the hedge a bit wider, and Satan afflicted him with a painful skin condition.

The Lord demonstrated complete confidence in Job. He did not doubt that Job would come through the trial without failing Him.

“Satan replied to the LORD, “Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life. But reach out and take away his health, and he will surely curse you to your face!” “All right, do with him as you please,” the LORD said to Satan. “But spare his life.” So Satan left the LORD’s presence, and he struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot. (Job 2:4-7, NLT)



Life Reflection:

Satan said a man would do anything to spare his life. Job proved him wrong. Do you think you are strong enough to die for your convictions?

JOB'S PATIENCE

Look at some things Job had to endure due to this trial.

- His friends did not understand and thought he had sinned.
- His wife told him to curse God and die.
- Even Job said it would have been better to have never lived.



Have you ever wondered how long Job suffered? Days, weeks, months? I don't think it was a one-week wonder. When James 5:11 speaks of the "patience of Job," it is talking about his **steadfastness, constancy, and endurance**. This seems to indicate that his trial continued for a more extended period. Some think it may have been up to a year.

The Book of Job is the oldest in the Bible, and most feel it predates Abraham, the patriarchs, and the Law. That means Job did not have the written Word to encourage himself like we do today. His relationship with God was deep enough to sustain him during the most difficult times.

Life Reflection:

How difficult would it be for us to maintain our integrity before God if we did not have His Word or the fellowship of other believers?

I don't know why God permitted the gap in the hedge around Job. Was it to prove to Satan that one of God's children could come through victorious from the most calamitous of circumstances? Perhaps. What I do know is Job never gave up on God. And God never gave up on Job.

OUR HOPE

Job probably never understood why calamity after calamity happened to him, and we may never really know why difficult situations come our way. The one thing we can be assured of is that God will never leave us or forsake us. Whatever Satan brings our way, we can stay true to God and overcome every obstacle with His help.

First Peter 5:10 (NLT) gives us hope even when we go through severe trials.

"In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation."

Whatever trials come our way, we can be confident that God will see us through. He will place us on a firm foundation. We are safe and secure because He is with us.

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