

Job and Revelation

As we read through the poetry of the wisdom literature in the Bible, we see the questioning thoughts of men trying to understand God. Sometimes they are interpreting God's wonders in light of their knowledge of the world around them. At times, the wonders of creation caused them to be amazed and view God as one beyond understanding. Today, people ask the same questions as daily life's comforts and pleasures are interrupted with disaster and pain. The joy surrounding a new birth is swallowed up, eventually, in death. Does God care about people, or is He an impersonal observer of His creation?

There is an overall lesson in the discussions recorded in the Book of Job. God is the sovereign planner and creator of the universe, with mankind being one important but small portion of that creation. Humanity is often consumed with thoughts and efforts centered on self without considering the natural world's continuation. The accidents of falling and being hit by falling objects are common to all living and moving members of creation. Famine affects all that depend on the earth's bounty for food. The adverse effects of weather and disease cause problems and can kill both animals and humans. But people seem to take it personally and ask, "Why me?"

The story of Job tells of a man that endured tribulation far worse than we may ever know. Through all the physical and emotional suffering that afflicted Job, he remained faithful in believing that God did not punish him for any sin. Job's main complaint was that he did not fully understand why God did not answer him immediately. Eventually, God did answer Job. The conversation pointed out the complete knowledge of the creator and the minimal knowledge of the creation. Along with the knowledge God possessed was the wisdom to apply that knowledge as needed to benefit all His creation. In the end, Job humbled himself before God and received great riches and honor.

In the Revelation of Christ, chapter seven is an analogy of people in time awaiting God's final answer. It is a vision of *"A great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb'"* (Revelation 7:9-10). One of the elders nearby asked John who the ones in white robes were and from where did they come? John said he did not know. The elder told him, *"These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"* (Revelation 7:13-14).

Looking back at Job, all of the trials and tribulations that happened to him were caused by Satan, the great accuser, using seemingly natural events. The Sabeans took the oxen and donkeys. They also killed the servants that were with the animals. A fire burned the sheep and their shepherds. The Chaldeans took away the camels and killed the herdsmen. A great wind destroyed the house where Job's children were eating, killing all of them. Finally, Job was stricken with boils all over his body (Job 1:13 – 2:7). In all that happened, Job did not curse God.

As God begins to answer Job, God asks, *"Who is this that darkens counsel By words without knowledge?"* (Job 38:2). We do not know what God had revealed to the patriarchs. There is little said about instructions and explanations given to Job, Melchizedek, and even Abraham. But we see each of these men remaining firm to their faith that God is and is to be revered. Job did not know God's full power, majesty, and sovereignty. God's questions concerning the creation of the universe and the

establishment of physical forces in nature were far beyond human understanding. But they did understand that God exists and is in control. The questions also illustrate the care God has for His creation. The summation is, *"Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let him who reproves God answer it"* (Job 40:1-2).

Knowledge today is much greater than in Job's day. Our understanding of the forces that control the planets and the rain cycle is enough to place objects in orbit and forecast weather, sometimes. We have medicines to cure some diseases and lessen pain, but we still have afflictions for which there is no cure. Jesus asked, *"And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?"* (Matthew 6:27). The old accuser of Job is still active today. *"Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8; Job 2:2; Revelation 12:12).

Just as God heard Job, He hears and cares for us. *"Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down"* The faithful and reserved in heaven having, *"overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death"* (Revelation 12:10-11).

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?