



NEWCASTLE DIOCESE GENEROSITY WEEK 2024

Sermon Starter

Job 1:1, 2: 1-10

‘He Gives and Takes
Away’

Job 1:1, 2: 1-10

1 In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.

2 On another day the angels[a] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. 2 And the Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?"

Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it."

3 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason."

4 "Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life. 5 But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face."

6 The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

7 So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. 8 Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes.

9 His wife said to him, "Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!"

10 He replied, "You are talking like a foolish[b] woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?"

In all this, Job did not sin in what he said

Notes

Some Christians believe that if you give money to God, He gives even more back to you! Not so for Job – he was a devout believer in God, yet things went wrong for him.

So why should we give? What might we get in return? Job himself answered that question [1:21]. We give from what He has given to us – and if He then takes away, we continue to bless his name.

It is tempting to “blame” God and withdraw from Him (and Church life) when things go wrong, as Job’s wife did [v9]. But we must accept difficult things in life as well as good [v10].

Of course God loves to bless us – and often does – including financially. But we shouldn’t see our relationship with God as transactional, in which I pay but get something in return. We can only find the answer to the question “How much should I give” by first understanding God has been generous to us. We are responding to that generosity.

But some people are struggling financially. The Bible mentions a number of instances where people gave despite extreme difficulty [2 Corinthians 8]. When times are tough, we get to make decisions that cement and affirm the faith that is within us. We cannot and should not say how much someone gives, but we do encourage people to meditate about it prayerfully and honestly.

Encouraging listeners not to turn away from God if going through a difficult time but instead join countless other Christians in the same predicament in saying: “may the name of the LORD be praised”.