

A 5 year old girl rushed into the kitchen all excited about the story that she'd heard at school. It was about a beautiful young woman, a princess, who'd fallen into a deep sleep. But along came a handsome prince who kissed her – and she suddenly awoke.

"And do you know what happened next?" she asked her mum.

"Why yes – they lived happily ever after," her mum replied.

"Oh, no – that's not right," the little girl corrected, "They got married."

We might laugh at this – but there is truth here. Not that marriage isn't great, but that there is a difference between fantasy and reality.

Many of us grew up on stories

- That started with "Once upon a time..."
- And finished with the words, "And they all lived happily ever after."

But that is not real life in this world. Even those who have an amazing life and a wonderful marriage, don't live happily ever after! Not even Job.

During our study of his life

- We saw how blessed he was as a man who lived a blameless and upright life before God.
- We saw this life disintegrate when God allowed Satan to take away his wealth, family and health.
- We heard his heart-wrenching agony as he tried to cope with that loss and the struggle of why God would let this happen.
- We rejected the answers of his friends who blamed him for his own suffering.
- And finally last week we listened as God confronted Job, revealing his awesome power and wisdom and bringing Job to renewed reverence and repentance.

And this week, we're going to see how his situation was remarkably transformed again through God's blessing. But although it was an incredible turn around, this was not Job's 'happily ever after'. It didn't solve all of Job's pain or struggles.

But it does point to the ultimate happy ending that comes to all those who trust in the one that Job's life has pointed us to!

Job 42:7-17: "After the Lord had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." ⁸ So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." ⁹ So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the Lord told them; and the Lord accepted Job's prayer.

¹⁰ After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

¹¹ All his brothers and sisters and everyone who had known him before came and ate with him in his house. They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the Lord had brought upon him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.

¹² The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys. ¹³ And he also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴ The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch. ¹⁵ Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.

¹⁶ After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. ¹⁷ And so he died, old and full of years."

1. Vindication

Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar thought that they understood what was going on. In their prosperity theology, God always punishes vice and rewards virtue. So, since Job was suffering so much, he must have sinned so much. That's why they criticised and condemned him so harshly.

But they were wrong. The Lord said to Eliphaz, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right." Job 42:7

God was angry with these miserable comforters. Not primarily because they'd upset and frustrated Job by falsely accusing him. But because they'd spoken wrongly about God.

Yes they'd said some things that were true. But they'd also said things that were not. They misrepresented him. They preached a false gospel.

a) Anger

And to do that is a serious thing. Paul strongly condemned those who preached a false gospel to the Galatians: "If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!" Galatians 1:9

So we need to be careful in how we speak about God. We don't have the right to just say what we think is right, or what is more acceptable to others. We need to be committed to only speaking the truth about God as revealed in the Bible.

Paul warned Timothy that they'd be a time when people would reject the truth and instead only listen to people who'd tell them what they want to hear. But he challenged Timothy to "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction." 2 Timothy 4:2

b) Approval

So God expressed his anger towards the three friends. But he also expressed his approval of Job. "You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." Job 42:7

In some ways this is surprising. God had challenged Job about the wrong things that he'd said, how in his suffering he'd been tempted to discredit God's justice in order to justify himself.

And after listening to God, Job agreed and repented of what he'd said, "Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know." Job 42:3

But here God declared his approval of Job. Four times in v7 and 8, God called Job my servant, just like he had at the beginning when he'd asked Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job?" Job 1:8

So although in his agony and despair Job had said some things he shouldn't have, God was willing to vindicate him – to denounce his accusers and to declare his innocence.

This is what Job longed for all along. He'd rejected his friends' accusations and argued for his innocence. But Job knew that what mattered most was what God would say about him. That's why he'd longed to be able to defend himself before God: "If only I knew where to find him... I would state my case before him." Job 23:3-4

But Job here was given something better. He didn't need to defend himself, because God did that. God declared his approval.

And that is what matters the most. When Jesus was falsely accused on the night he was betrayed, he didn't defend himself, he didn't retaliate. "Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly." 1 Peter 2:23 Jesus knew that in his perfect timing, God would vindicate him.

And if we've trusted in Jesus, then we can trust God to do the same for us. God has forgiven our sins. He's declared us right in his sight. And one day that hidden reality will be clearly revealed "Now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2

And so when we're ridiculed or rejected, criticised or condemned, we don't need to panic. Instead, we can wait for God's vindication. Paul said, "I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself... It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes." 1 Corinthians 4:3–5

2. Mediation

So God expressed his approval of Job and his anger at this friends. But incredibly, he offered them grace through Job's mediation. God told Eliphaz, "Take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves." Job 42:8

a) Amazing Grace

These 3 friends didn't deserve forgiveness. They were guilty of speaking wrongly about God. And their theology was one of the law. To them God was a God of justice who always gave people what they deserved.

They believed that God should always punish the wicked. But in their guilt, they were offered amazing grace. But this grace came at a high price, an animal sacrifice.

But this could not pay for their sin. As we saw in Hebrews 10:4, “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”

So this sacrifice could only bring forgiveness because it pointed forward to the ultimate sacrifice, when Jesus “...appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Hebrews 9:26

This is the only way we can receive such incredible grace. Jesus paid the full price of our sins, so that we can receive the free gift of God’s salvation!

b) A Go-between

But incredibly God told these men to ask for that grace through the intercession of Job. “My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly.” Job 42:8

These men had listened unsympathetically to Job as he had cried out for a mediator to speak up for him before God: “If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both.” Job 9:33

Now, God called Job to step into that role for them. To be their go-between. To stand in the gap and pray for them.

It must’ve taken incredible grace for Job to do this. These men had treated him shamefully. They’d been such miserable comforters to him in his time of greatest need. We would’ve understood had he held a grudge against them.

But Job had received so much grace from God, and so he was willing to express this grace to others. He prayed for them and they were forgiven!

But this is again a foreshadow of the one true mediator, the only one who can truly bridge the gap between us and God. “There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men.” 1 Timothy 2:5-6

3. Restoration

Job was blessed with vindication. And he was called to the ministry of mediation. But then he experienced an incredible restoration – although this wasn’t a happy ever after!

a) Finance

Firstly, there was a restoration in his finances: “The Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.” Job 42:10

Before he had 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen and 500 donkeys. But now he had double this: “Fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys.” Job 42:12

Job went from incredible wealth to desperate poverty and back to even more incredible wealth again. And the Lord was the one who was graciously in control in all those times.

b) Fellowship

He also experienced a restoration in fellowship. “All his brothers and sisters and everyone who had known him before came and ate with him in his house.” Job 42:11

These are the people who abandoned him when he need them most. But Job didn’t hold grudges. Instead, as a man of grace, he welcomed them into his life again – and they blessed him with friendship, comfort and generosity. “They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the Lord had brought upon him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.” Job 42:11

I think this shows us that Job didn’t just automatically bounce back from the trauma of what he’d been through. But through the help of his family and friends he experienced some measure of healing from it.

c) Family

And then Job also experienced a kind of restoration in his family. “And he also had seven sons and three daughters.” Job

42:13.

In chapter 1 we saw that previously Job had 7 sons and three daughters. But these all died when the house they were in collapsed. But now Job was blessed with another 7 sons and 3 daughters.

This was an incredible gift, and his daughters were incredibly beautiful and unusually they were given [“An inheritance along with their brothers.”](#) Job 42:15.

But if we think starting to raise another 10 kids can be described as happily ever after, then I think Job’s wife would have something to say about it!

And of course, none of this undid the loss that Job and his wife experienced. His first 10 kids were still dead and the pain of that would never leave them. This was not their happy ever after. Not yet anyway.

I think God understood this. Although he gave Job double the livestock that he had before, he only gave him another 10 kids – as the 10 he lost were still his, and he was still waiting for the restoration of those relationships. That was still left undone.

d) Future

But Job did have a restored future. [“After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation.”](#) Job 42:16

Some people think that this means that Job was 70, and received twice as many years as he had before. But whether that’s true or not, Job certainly was blessed by two times a regular lifespan. (Psalm 90:10) And so he had the incredible joy of seeing his great-great-grandchildren.

But again this was not a happily ever. The book ends, [“And so he died, old and full of years.”](#) Job 42:17 Job was gifted a full and blessed life. But that life ended the way that everyone’s life does. He still experienced the tragedy of death!

4. Resurrection

But I think this helps us to make sure we learn the right lesson from this.

a) Not for Relationship

This was not a bribe so that Job would come back and trust in the Lord. That’s what Satan accused God of doing at the start – blessing Job so that he’d worship him. [“Does Job fear God for nothing?”](#) Job 1:9

But Job was restored into a right relationship with God at the start of this chapter when he still bankrupt, bereaved and broken, when he said, [“I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”](#) Job 42:6.

We shouldn’t worship God if he blesses our lives – but because of who he is!

b) Not as a Reward

But neither was this a reward for Job’s repentance. Job’s friends were wrong when they preached a prosperity gospel that said if you trust God enough he’ll make you healthy, wealthy and happy.

Job was right when he said that [“The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.”](#) Job 1:21 God’s plan for his people in this life includes times of suffering and blessing.

c) But God’s Ultimate Rescue

But rather this represents God’s ultimate rescue. James wrote: [“You have heard of Job’s perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.”](#) James 5:11

Job persevered in faith, even in intense suffering, and finally he experienced the fullness of God’s compassion and mercy. And James encouraged us that this will also happen to us, if we hold on in faith.

But this will happen in God’s timing. Just before this verse, he said. [“Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming.”](#) James 5:7 This is when we will experience our restoration. Not now as a happily ever after on earth. But on Resurrection Day, when Jesus will come back for all those who have trusted in him.

On that day we'll share in the glory that Jesus experienced when he was raised on the third day and "God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name." Philippians 2:9

Jesus had to go through suffering, before the exaltation. And we're called to follow in his footsteps. Suffering now, but knowing that one day, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." Revelation 21:4

And if we hold onto that unshakeable hope, then it won't protect us from pain and suffering, but we will be able to persevere in that pain and suffering. We'll be able to keep on going, keep trusting in the Lord. We'll be able to say with Paul, "We do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." 2 Corinthians 4:16-17

Conclusion

The transformation in Job's life at the end was incredible. It wasn't a happily ever after. But it does foreshadow that incredible day that lies ahead for all of us who've trusted in Jesus.

- When we'll rejoice in the fulness of the vindication we have in Christ.
- When we'll be brought into the intimate presence of God through the mediation of Christ.
- When we will experience the fullness of the restoration we have through the cross of Christ.
- And we'll live with him forever, because we'll share in the resurrection of Christ!

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