

## **“Food For Thought”**

For quite a few years, I've been enrolled in Voice of the Martyrs weekly email prayer requests. As I was praying over them the other day, one of the requests was for protection for their “front line workers” in a dangerous area of Lebanon. One way I prayed was for God to place a “hedge of protection” around them just as He had for Job. I had prayed that same prayer the week before, for a similar need.

This time, the Holy Spirit stopped me and had me reflect on what happened to Job, and when I did, I realized God had to REMOVE the hedge around Job, otherwise, Satan could not have stripped him of all his livestock, his servants, and even his children! Wow! But it didn't stop there! Satan approached God again and asked to afflict Job's body, and once again God allowed it, but said to spare Job's life.

So ... this caused me to wonder if God removed His hedge from possibly the most righteous man who ever lived, why would we think we would be exempt from suffering? Who do we know that lost all Job did, plus had the terrible affliction he had? One former Pastor I sat under shared that NOTHING ever comes our way until it first passes through God's hands - He has to allow it, even though we probably won't like it, or even begin to understand why He's allowed it to happen to us.

The comments in my Bible explain what happened to Job (in a nutshell) was to test Job's faith, and to strengthen it, and to demonstrate to the enemy how our unwavering faith in God is one of our most powerful weapons against his attacks. Job, after losing everything... *“Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and **worshiped**. And he said: “Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.” In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.*

When Satan afflicted Job with head to toe boils, making him suffer agonizing pain, his wife said: *“Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!”* Job replied: *“You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.”*

When we are confronted with tragedy or sickness, we might want to take a lesson from Job and consider using our two most powerful weapons - worship and faith. Our worship is a magnet that attracts God's attention (and sends the enemy fleeing), and our faith in God to see us through our “fiery trial” will sustain us until God intercedes on our behalf! There's some food for thought. Amen!