

The Book of Job: A “Good” Man Suffers / January 2, 2025 / Lesson 1 of 5

Happy New Year! Thank you for inviting me back to Emerald Heights for this my twelfth year.

Let me start by introducing myself. There are always a few new folks — and the rest of you could probably use a refresher. My name is Dick Sleight and four years ago I retired from college teaching — 12 years at the University of Washington followed by 32 years at Seattle Pacific University.

- I blame this group for seeking ordination last year. My seminary studies were 41 years ago. But better late than never.
- When I’m not here, you might find me in my garden in West Bellevue.
- And though I’m retired, I’m the newsletter editor for the emeriti faculty at SPU.
- My biggest responsibility in retirement is being grandpa — now to these eleven grandchildren, all under eight years old.

But beyond all this, I accepted Jesus Christ into my life on May 18, 1980. If that date sounds familiar, that was the day Mt. Saint Helens erupted.

For these next five Thursday mornings my job is to introduce you all to perhaps the oldest book in the Bible — and easily both the most unique and complex 42 chapters you will find there.

Those of you who have been with me before, know that I can’t change my ways after 44 years of college teaching — so that’s why my lessons feel like a university lecture.

● As we jump into the Book of Job — we don’t travel alone. Let’s invite the Holy Spirit — our resident Truth Teacher to join us on this journey.

Our Gracious Heavenly Father —
O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is **Your** name in all the Earth.

We ask your care and comfort on all those here at Emerald Heights.

And as your Son Jesus promised His friends at the Last Supper — we invite Your Spirit to guide us into all truth as we learn this morning about your tested yet faithful follower Job.

We pray this at the invitation of your Son —
Amen.

- The Book of Job is unique in all of Scripture.
 - It contains the longest section in the Old Testament where God himself speaks. Chapters 38-41 that we’ll focus on at the end of the month.
 - It also includes the longest lines from our adversary Satan.
 - This book’s 42 chapters use more Hebrew words not found elsewhere in the Old Testament.
- It is most likely the oldest piece of Scripture as its story pre-dates the time when Moses wrote his five books. Clues we’ll see throughout the book place Job as living during the time of the Patriarchs (Abraham, Issac, and Jacob) or likely even earlier.
- Wisdom is timeless, and the Book of Job is typically placed first among the books called the “Wisdom Literature” of the Bible. The others are the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In fact, the Book of Job is foundational to the others, because it is doctrinal. The Psalms are devotional. And the Book of Proverbs is more practical. Chapter 28 of Job is actually a lesson on godly wisdom.
- The English poet Sir Alfred Lord Tennyson called the author of this book the Shakespeare of the Bible — in fact, many

commentators write that what Shakespeare was to the English language, the Book of Job was to the Hebrew language. Despite this, we'll see that our protagonist Job was not a Hebrew. The National name for God, "Yahweh" appears in the brief bookend chapters of Job, but in the great majority of the book, the generic names for God — variations of Elohim or simply El are used.

● And the form of the book itself is unique. The first two chapters which form its prologue, and the concluding chapter 42 which provides the epilogue, are written in prose. But the 39 chapters between these bookends are all in Hebrew poetry. Not poetry like you may have studied in school, but the kind that we find in the Psalms, usually with paired lines which reinforce each other or sometimes contrast with each other.

● Before we jump into the text itself, there are a number of questions to consider. Most of these fall into the category of study theologians refer to as Higher Criticism. Higher Criticism is a branch of Biblical study that examines the historical and literary origins of the Bible. Questions like "Who wrote Job?" "When was it written?" "Was Job a real person or is his account an allegory like John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* or C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* stories, or perhaps an extended parable along the lines of Jesus' Parable of the Sower or the one about the Good Samaritan.

The problem with Higher Criticism is that there is little to nothing in the text itself to answer these questions. Like the Book of Hebrews in the New Testament, we have no clues as to who (exactly) wrote down Job's story. Some have speculated that it was Moses, others Solomon, and still others the scribe and priest Ezra. I like the suggestion that it was first written down by an eye-witness of the whole proceedings,

the young Elihu we'll meet in a few weeks. But the truth is, nobody knows for sure.

Oh, and if there's a field of study called Higher Criticism, there's also its counterpart — Lower Criticism.

That's for the scholars who deal with the Biblical text itself, working in the area of Bible translation, trying to determine the most accurate meaning of the ancient texts, especially since we lack the original versions of the Scriptures.

For the same reason, we don't know when the book was written — but there are clues to give us a general idea about when the events took place and certainly where Job lived.

And as for the question of, "Was Job a real person?" I have to side with Scripture and say, yes absolutely, he was. Job was a real historical figure — a godly man, prominent and influential — patriarch and priest to his large family, and enormously wealthy by the standards of his day. His great wealth and social prominence alone would have done much to ensure his sudden riches to rags descent followed by his eventual restoration would be long remembered.

If you believe that ancient Noah, and the much more recent Prophet Daniel were real, then you have to give Job the same benefit of the doubt.

● The Prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, wrote in Ezekiel 14

¹² **The word of the LORD came to me: ¹³ "Son of man, if a country sins against me by being unfaithful and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its food supply and send famine upon it and kill its men and their animals, ¹⁴ even if these three men - Noah, Daniel and Job - were in it,**

they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

James the half-brother of Jesus mentions Job in James 5:15, “... **You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about.**” And the Apostle Paul quoted from the Book of Job twice — in 1st Corinthians 3:19 (Job 41:11) and in Romans 11:35 (Job 5:13).

● We'll discover a lot more about this unique book as we race through it over these next five weeks. But we'll only lay the foundation today — covering chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Then we'll cover at least ten chapters each hour over the next three Thursdays. We will finish up with the last five climactic chapters on January 30th.

Most of the dramatic action comes in these first two chapters, the prologue that introduces all but one of the characters we'll meet.

Let's meet that cast of characters.

● The first five verses of Chapter One introduce Job himself.

Toward the end of chapter 1, four of Job's servants bring him unwelcome news. And Job's wife makes a memorable cameo appearance toward the end of chapter two.

Chapter one surprisingly spends nearly as many verses with God in his heavenly realm as it does with Job. There God and Satan engage in a brief debate with tragic consequences for Job.

In the Book of Job, the first two chapters and chapter 42, the final one, use Israel's national name for God — Yahweh — the name that appears 6,824 times in the Old Testament. So, we know that at least these short prologue and epilogue chapters were written by some Jewish scribe.

But the great bulk of the book, all 39 chapters of Hebrew poetry, avoid the name “Yahweh” and refer to the Supreme Deity as El or Elohim (2,750), (more generic words for god), or Shaddai (the Almighty). This is to be expected because...

- First, Job and those he spoke with were not Hebrews themselves — except perhaps young Elihu.
- And second, they lived long before Moses learned God's name revealed to him at the Burning Bush on Mount Horeb (also called Mt. Sinai).

● The other speaker in the scenes in Heaven is Satan. By the way, the word “Satan” was not originally a proper name but rather a title or angelic office — the word means Accuser. Our “adversary the devil” as the Apostle Peter calls him in 1 Peter 5:8, acts as God's Prosecuting Attorney — seeking to convict us all for our many sins.

The remaining characters are Job's three old friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar and an enigmatic young man named Elihu who manages to hold his peace until all of his elders have had their say.

So, with that long introduction, let's meet the hero of our story — Job the righteous — soon to become Job the suffering and bewildered.

- Reading from Job chapter 1 verses 1 to 5.

There was a man in the land of Ūz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

² Seven sons and three daughters were born to him.

³ His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

—
⁴ His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

⁵ When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

- First of all, the general region referred to as the “**Land of Ūz,**” that I’ve marked here in red, is that area in Arabia north-east of the Gulf of Aqaba and just south-east of the land of Canaan, shown in blue, that God would later promise to Abraham and his descendants.

Job is first described exactly as God Himself will soon refer to him: “**blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.**”

Now be careful. The word **blameless** does not mean **sinless**. Job is no different in this than any faithful believer. God declares Job righteous just as He later will declare Abraham — on the basis of his faith in God

— a fact which will jump out at us, especially in two weeks when we reach chapter 19.

I’ll assume that all ten of Job’s children had the same mother, or that Job’s current wife had no competition in her relationship with Job, because in the next chapter she’s described as his wife, not ‘one of his wives.’

He’s described as “**the greatest of all the men of the east,**” but that’s certainly relative. By our standards, he was no Bill Gates or Elon Musk. His wealth was calculated in the livestock he owned. The numbers of the sheep (for wool and food), the camels (for transportation), the oxen (for food, plowing, and threshing), and the especially valuable “female” donkeys are appropriately approximations because the actual numbers would fluctuate daily as does our modern Stock Market.

That fact that Job’s grown children celebrated their birthdays each year is completely understandable to me. I am the patriarch to five families which include ten adults and eleven grandchildren. We have only two months in the year, April and July, when we don’t celebrate birthdays with big parties. And, on those two months with no birthdays, we often have big Easter gatherings and always Fourth of July celebrations.

(Jehovah’s Witnesses who forbid celebrating birthdays could learn something from these first verses in the Book of Job.)

That Job was the patriarch of a large clan is clear, but that he also served as the priest to his family is also shown here. He took the salvation of his children as seriously as he did his own. He consecrated them, he interceded for them before God, and he offered ample sacrifices for them — from his numerous flocks — just in case.

That he made sacrifices many hundreds of years before Moses spelled out God's requirements for such sacrifices is not especially surprising. Adam and Eve's son Able certainly made similar sacrifices, presumably learned from his parents, our original ancestors.

Having introduced the righteous Job, chapter one makes a sudden and surprising scene change to a different dimension of Reality altogether. The author takes us directly into the throne room of God.

There are precious few sections of Scripture which give us glimpses into Heavenly realms. Verses 6 through 12 is one of those passages.

● **6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.**

7 The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?"

Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."

8 The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil."

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰ "Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

¹¹ "But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face."

¹² Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him."

So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

One of the features you'll soon see in chapters one and two is the repetition of terms and descriptions. This tells me that this writing is especially old. I am reminded of the style of writing found in an even older secular story — the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, an ancient Mesopotamian poem.

By the way, were you aware that the story of King Gilgamesh mentions Noah, albeit by another name, including his long life, his ark, and the animals he rescued?

As Matthew Henry says of this passage, "...the affairs of this earth are very much the subject of the counsels of the unseen world." While we long to know what transpires in Heaven — what happens down here is an open book to Heaven's residents.

The "sons of God" are the angels, our Adversary being one of them. Again, the word Satan literally means "the Accuser." In time, that Hebrew word took on the form of a proper name.

We should not be surprised to find Satan in conversation with God Almighty.

Are there any Lutherans here?

In Luther's view, Satan is not nearly as powerful as one might think. Instead, Satan's power is limited by God's will and therefore Satan is only able to work in the world in very specific ways. He is only able to work where and when God allows. These passages in the Book of Job support this view. Martin Luther famously claimed, "**Sogar der Teufel ist Gottes Teufel**," which is to say, "Even the devil is God's devil."

[Well, what was the point of all that Junior High, High School, German if I can't use it?]

See how I've highlighted the phrase **“put forth Your hand.”** First Satan asks it of God, then God orders it of Satan.

Remember — Job is oblivious to what goes on in Heaven. He won't believe what is about to happen to him as being caused by Satan — but rather by the Almighty Himself.

And Job will not be wrong in that opinion. This follows from the legal principle of “agency.” Satan is the implementing agent, like a hired hit man — the devil pulls the trigger. But God is the authorizing agent, the One who allows or authorizes the impending series of catastrophes that ruin our hero Job.

We'll now see why the author threw in that odd observation that the sons of Job used to gather for each-other's birthdays. Satan bides his time until the next of those gatherings of siblings.

● ¹³ **Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ and the Săbē'ans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."**

¹⁶ **While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you."**

¹⁷ **While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the**

sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

¹⁸ **While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, — and I alone have escaped to tell you."**

Satan staged his attacks on Job's livelihood and his offspring for maximum effect — thereby daring him to curse God. Two different bands of neighboring raiders rustled the oxen, donkeys, and camels. And two apparent (“quote”) Acts of God, claimed the sheep and all of Job's ten children. Surely, Job was *emotionally* devastated by these sudden losses. But *spiritually*? Here's his response.

● ²⁰ **Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground — and worshiped.**

²¹ **He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."**

²² **Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.**

Job lost his wealth and his livelihood, and to add the greatest pain — his final loss was his legacy — all of his children.

This series of tragedies remind me of the similar words of King David when he learned of the death of his first son born to Bathsheba.

He wept and prayed when his infant son was sick. (By the way, Bathsheba's next son was someone named Solomon.) But after the child's death? What then?

2 Sam 12:22-23 **"While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.'** ²³ **But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."**

Like Job's assertion of faith, **"Blessed be the name of the LORD,"** David's **"I will go to him"** attests to his own faith in God.

Can you identify with David who lost an infant child, or Job who lost his fortune and all of his children at a single blow?

● Sadly, while I was beginning to prepare this first lesson, back on October 25th, I got a call from my eldest nephew and learned that my oldest brother and his wife had both passed on suddenly that morning. They were both 82 years old. Their three grown children were devastated. But — perhaps surprisingly — my faith softened the blow of that sudden tragic news. I guess like Job, I knew, **"The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."**

The last lines of Martin Luther's hymn *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*, penned in 1529, encourages us to hold the things of this world very lightly as we cling instead more tightly to what's eternal.

**Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever!**

—
Satan had clearly lost round one. But he was not one to give up easily. Chapter two continues the contest between God and Satan.

● Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

² The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, **"From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."**

³ The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause."

We eavesdrop again on the heavenly debate between the Judge of all the Earth and His angelic prosecuting attorney. Like the nearly identical lines from Chapter One, God calls Satan's attention to Job — who God still claims as, **"My servant."**

In later chapters we'll see that Job attributes his dire condition to the will of his God, not to some malicious angel. And here we see that with God, like with Harry Truman, "The buck stops here."

"You incited Me against him," is God's admission that He afflicted Job at the goading of Satan.

But by calling his attention once more to the suffering yet faithful Job, God has given leave for Satan to reply.

● ⁴ Satan answered the LORD and said, **"Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life.**

⁵ **"However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face."**

⁶ **So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."**

7 Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

Last March, I led you folks through the *Book of Galatians*. I failed to give Satan his due. The Apostle Paul gives a summary list of many of the ways Satan tempts us. ^{Gal 5:19-21}
“...sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.”

Job is being tempted to curse God. He’s been made a miserable chess piece in a contest being played out in the Heavens.

As tragic as financial ruin or the loss of loved ones is, the loss of one’s own health seems perhaps the most effective path to personal despair. Like God, Satan knows us better than we know ourselves. His emphatic answer, **“Skin for skin!”*** makes a strong case. But as we’ll see, however well Satan thinks he knows mankind, God knows us infinitely better. Our Father in Heaven knows the intangible yet immense power of faith in Him.

● **8 And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.**

9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!"

10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

This is the only slide in my presentation where I’ll depict Job at his most miserable. Scraping his boils and sitting among the ashes shows that Job had hit rock bottom. What does he have left? His own house, a handful of servants, and a contentious wife that’s cast her vote with Satan.

“Curse God and die!” is her faithless advice. But recall that she too has lost her husband’s livelihood, all their children, and likely expects to soon become a destitute widow.

In chapter one, Job’s response to financial and family tragedy was still to *worship*. Now here in chapter two, Job responds with wisdom that would escape most men and women. **“Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?”**

In the next chapter we’ll get the poetic picture of just how miserable Job was. But here — what Job said — instead of what he could have said — is theologically profound. The opposite of good is bad or evil. But Job does not accuse his God of doing evil or any wrong for that matter. He may be bewildered, again because he has no knowledge of the contest over him going on in Heaven, but he calls all the awful things that have befallen him — **“adversity”** — mediated by a loving God — not evil inflicted by a capricious deity.

Chapter two concludes with the final pieces which lay the foundation for the many chapters of Hebrew poetry which follow.

* **“Skin for skin,”** is explained in lesson 2.

● ¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, they came each one from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Nāāmāthite; and they made an appointment together to come to sympathize with him and comfort him.

¹² When they lifted up their eyes at a distance and did not recognize him, they raised their voices and wept. And each of them tore his robe and they threw dust over their heads toward the sky.

¹³ Then they sat down on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights with no one speaking a word to him, for they saw that his pain was very great.

If you ask the typical Christian what they know about the *Book of Job*, what you are likely to hear are bits from this prologue in chapters one and two, and from the epilogue in chapter 42. But the bulk of this book — chapters 4 through 31 — cover the discussion — really the debates and arguments — between these three older men, true friends of suffering Job, but men who are at different places in their understanding about the God they all claim to know and serve.

We have broad difference of opinion and beliefs within the Body of Christ still today. Protestants and Catholics are still at odds over numerous issues. Reformed Calvinists and Methodists who follow John Wesley still can't agree on some gospel basics. The ancient heresies of Arius and Pelagius are alive and well in the 21st century church. We'll see these three friends, so respectful — at first — of Job's suffering, display their incomplete knowledge of God as they, each in his turn, debate with Job.

Chapter three is what sets Job's three friends off. Before they begin to question Job and try to school him about the nature of God, they sit quietly and listen to Job's pitiful laments.

Rather than read through all 26 verses of Chapter three, I'll summarize Job's three unanswerable questions he directs at God.

● Afterward Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. ² And Job said, ³ "Let the day perish on which I was to be born, And the night which said, "A boy is conceived."
⁴ "May that day be darkness; Let not God above care for it, Nor light shine on it.

Job's first lament asks God, *why was I ever born?* Wouldn't it have been better if I had never been conceived and brought to term? Might it have been better if that date was stricken from the calendar?

This shows Job's utter misery — yet he still has the strength to complain to God. Still, he doesn't take his wife's foolish advice and curse God. He imagines that never having been born would be better than his present suffering.

But anyone who has learned the lesson of George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*, knows that every life has a profound impact on everyone around a person. Do you remember what the angel Clarence said? **“Strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?”**

We'll learn in the next chapter that Job had a legacy of good works that blessed many.

God had a profound and positive purpose for Job's life — and his current suffering was very much a part of that purpose.

● ¹¹ "Why did I not die at birth, Come forth from the womb and expire?

¹² "Why did the knees receive me, And why the breasts, that I should suck?

¹³ "For now I would have lain down and been quiet; I would have slept then, I would have been at rest,

. . . (And speaking of death . . .)

¹⁹ "**The small and the great are there, And the slave is free from his master.**

Physical suffering can corrupt our thinking. In this second lament, if the day of his conception couldn't be wiped from the calendar, at least he could have died in childbirth.

How selfish toward parents who would cherish him, and how contrary to God his Maker.

There is a title for Jesus that appears only once in the Scriptures. It is found in the *Book of Acts*, chapter 3 verse 15. Peter says, ¹⁵ **You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.**

Be careful what you wish for Job. The fact is you didn't die at birth. Your God is indeed the "author of life." You may not be able to make sense of your current suffering, but the God you worship does not make mistakes. While Job imagined that rest was the expectation of the stillborn, despite his pain and confusion, he still didn't curse God.

● ²⁰ "**Why is light given to him who suffers, And life to the bitter of soul,**
²¹ **Who long for death, but there is none, And dig for it more than for hidden treasures,**

²² **Who rejoice greatly, And exult when they find the grave?**

. . .

²⁶ "**I am not at ease, nor am I quiet, And I am not at rest, but turmoil comes.**"

Job's third lament was the most dangerous. He couldn't deny his own conception. And God had not taken him at birth. But what was to stop him from ending it all even now? The grave was beginning to look like a viable alternative to his current plight. Destitute of his former wealth, bereft of the children he cherished, and painfully diseased with no cure in sight — Job considered his death even now to be a real option.

But enter Job's three friends. Job will debate with each of them in turn — and will then start over and argue with each of them again.

I suggest that their attempts to set Job straight — even given their own skewed knowledge of God — may have had a hand in distracting Job from suicidal thoughts.

Over the next three weeks we'll explore the back and forth between Job and his friends — and as we do we'll be challenged to discover why God said to Eliphaz the Temanite in the epilogue to the book, ^{Job 42:7b} . . . "**I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as my servant Job has.**

My closing prayer ends with the start of Psalm 41 and the end of Psalm 42.
Job could have prayed this prayer.

● **Heavenly Father,**

**It's no mystery that we live in a fallen world.
Disease, famine, social unrest, crime, economic upheaval,
political uncertainty, war, persecution — that's our daily news.**

But, still, blessed are those who trust in You.

Ps 41:1-5 **1 Blessed is he who has regard for the weak;
the LORD delivers him in times of trouble.
2 The LORD will protect him and preserve his life;
he will bless him in the land and not surrender him to the desire of his foes.
3 The LORD will sustain him on his sickbed
and restore him from his bed of illness.**

**4 I said, "O LORD, have mercy on me;
heal me, for I have sinned against you."
5 My enemies say of me in malice,
"When will he die and his name perish?"**

Ps 42:11 **11 Why are you downcast, O my soul?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.**

— Amen