

# The Worst Day of My Life

## Job: View From The Ashes series #1

by Chris Famisaran

What's the worst day of your life? I had to think about that. And if I'm being honest, I can't remember because I stuffed it so far down I don't want to remember it. There have been hard days though. Recently, in the last couple of years, I won't get into it because it's too emotional. Losing two close friends I've shared before was, in particular, one of them, it was one of the hardest days of my life. Because as I've shared, without him, I wouldn't be here, literally. Maybe, okay, I'll try to share what I can. My friend, Dwayne, he was an older youth group member of mine, or I should say he was older than me. He was like my big brother. I was a weird, awkward child, but he saw something in me. He thought, oh, Chris needs a job. And by that, I was able to start working at the place where I would eventually be able to meet my beautiful wife. who I managed to trick into marrying me. And she's still with me, praise the Lord. I never would have had the opportunity, at least that I could see, to become a pastor and eventually being here. And I remember that morning, it was about six o'clock in the morning, it was a Wednesday when Lisa told me she'd heard it from somebody else. I was in shock.

And she left and she came back. And she started to hold me. And I felt this sadness. and probably anger at myself. Perhaps even at God, why? Many of us ask that three-letter question, why? Why does this happen? Why, God, do you allow certain things to happen? My friend Dwayne was one of the good guys. I was upset at myself as well for not taking the time to reach out more to him, to have that one meal that we've been talking about. Conversations lost, not being able to get to meet his wife. And sometimes in our lives we have difficult times.

Now, we're going to start a new series on the book of Job, where if you've read Job, you know there's some challenging issues. One of the questions that we ask is, why did God allow Job to go through so much suffering? Did he enable this suffering? The question, the answer to that question will not be revealed

today. You're going to have to journey through this series. And I think we'll see that God will be vindicated. So what is the worst day of your life?

Father in heaven, thank you for the opportunity to gather together today. As we start a new series, a new small group series, Lord, on the book of Job, a view from the ashes, be with us in Jesus name. Amen.

It was the fall of 1986, it was game six of the World Series, it was the Red Sox and the Mets. And one particular player who had, overall you would consider a great career, Bill Buckner was the first baseman, oh you know where I'm going. Oh, he was the first baseman and an outfielder. He played over 22 years in the major leagues. He led the doubles twice, he finished top 10 for stolen bases twice as well. He was the National League Batting Champion in 1980 and he was also an all-star. And I believe it was 1981. However, Bill Buckner's career is defined by one play. As great as a career as he had, he was defined by one play. It was game six, three, two. The Red Sox had the lead. It was the 10th inning. There was a runner on third, a Mets player. And I believe it was Mookie Wilson was batting. And all the Red Sox needed to do was get one more out and they would clinch the World Series. Wilson stepped up to the plate. He was able to connect and the ball started to bounce the Buckner who was playing first base. He was ready for it. He had his glove ready. He was able to catch ready to catch it. And just as he thought he had it, the ball went right through his legs and into the outfield. And at the same time, the runner at third. Scored home plate. At that point, the locker room was ready to be celebrated. Everything was set to celebrate a World Series. And if you understand the Red Sox culture, they didn't win a World Series for almost two more decades. They'd gone years. And if you know anything about Boston, they loved their baseball. At that point, Boston fans enraged after he finished up his career. He had to leave Boston to go back to Idaho because there was so much vitriol placed on him. Everybody hated Buckner. Just one lousy thing, one little thing, just one thing. You had one job, catch the ball and tag the base. The Mets would go on to win game seven and eventually the World Series. Now, the Red Sox in 2004 and I believe 2007 eventually did win that World Series, two titles. And over time, things had changed. Their hearts had softened. In the beginning of 2008, a home game, they invited Buckner to come back and throw first pitch out. Tremendous amount of grace. But in

those two decades was a lot of anger, a lot of shame, a lot of disgust on both sides.

Now as much as I love baseball, I cannot see how you could be angry at somebody for making a mistake on a play. Okay, let's be real. As much as I love my Dodgers, okay? As much as I love my Dodgers, are we not all human? And it wasn't until 2008 that Buckner said, OK, I'm a person of faith. It's life. Everybody has to deal with something you've got. You're talking about cancers and those things that are much more important than baseball and spiritually that helped me. I've had a lot of people call me and thank me for giving them directions to make through. And towards the end of his life, unfortunately, he passed away in 2019, I believe, at the age of 68, he says, our hearts are broken, but we know that he is at peace. Now. That one play was probably the worst day in Buckner's life. One of, amen?

When we look at the book of Job, let's go to Job chapter one, and we're gonna focus primarily on the first two chapters today. It's a prologue, a prologue that will help us to understand what Job is about, okay?

So Job chapter one. Starting at verse one, are we there? Here we go. In the land of Uz, there lived a man whose name was Job. And this man was blameless and upright. He feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people from the East. So, he's a faithful man, sounds like, right? His sons, however, used to hold feasts in their home on their birthdays, and they would invite their sisters to eat and drink with them. And when a period of feasting had run its course, Job would make arrangements for them to be purified. Early in the morning, he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, not just one, but each of them, thinking, perhaps my children, have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. This was Job's regular what? It was his custom. He did something regularly. In a sense, he was the priest for the family. He was a faithful man. He was committed. He was convicted. He did not want to dishonor God. And so we see that here, again, excuse me, he's from us. He's a father of seven boys, three children. He's got a lot of sheep, camels, oxen, and donkeys. And he had a number of

servants. Job was well to do. Amen. He was considered the greatest among the people of the East. Now, that's the first part. Okay, the first part helps us to understand how the story will play out.

Drastic change now, starting at verse six. Let's go. The second part will reveal whether Job will be able to continue to be faithful and serve God with or without his family and possessions. Let's see how he responds to this. Verse six. One day, the angels came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan also came to them. And the Lord said to Satan, Where have you come from? Satan answered the Lord, from roaming through the earth, going back and forth on it. And then the Lord said to Satan, have you considered my servant Job? What? God, what are you doing here? Are you setting Job up for failure? There was no one on earth like him. He's given him a high regard. He's blameless, he's upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. Does Job fear God for nothing, Satan replied? Have you not put a hedge around him in his household and everything he has? You've blessed his work of his hands so that his flocks and herds have spread throughout the land. But now, stretch out your hand, strike everything he has, and surely he will curse. to curse you to your face. And the Lord said, very well, then everything he has is in your power. But on the man himself, do not lay a finger, no touching. Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

And here, Job's life is about to get turned upside down. Verse 13, one day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, a messenger came to Job and said, The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, and the Sabeans attacked and made off with them. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you. While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, the fire of God fell from the heavens and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you. While he was still speaking, okay, round three. Another messenger said, the Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and made off with them. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you. And while he was still speaking, yet another messenger, the fourth one, says, Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house. And when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the

desert, struck the corner of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead and I am the only one to escape to tell you.

If you were Job, how would you be feeling at this point? Hopeless, disappointed, sad, angry. Why? Devastated. Do I want to continue? Everything I have is lost. What point? Here's how he responds, verse 20. At this point, Job tore up his robe, shaved his head, then he fell down to the ground in what? Worship?! and said, Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. May in the name of the Lord be praised. In all of this, Job did not what? He did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

How many of you think you could do the same thing? I don't know. Man, that's a tall order. Because it's so easy when something goes wrong in our life, we want to what? We want to assign blame right away. Is that fair? Now, sorry, the proogue is broken up into four parts, which we're going to continue. First impressions are not always what? Not always reality. We're quick to want to assign to blame.

Now, parents, especially of multiple children, when you are dealing with your children and maybe somebody does something to the other child and one child is crying and the other one's looking upset or whatever, you kind of feel like You figured out what's happening, right? But you gotta do a little sleuthing. I know that's an old term. You younger people probably have no idea what I'm talking about. It's detective work. And you gotta understand, you gotta ask, what happened here? And so both kids, or multiple kids will give their story and you gotta figure out what's going on. Hopefully you have a third child who maybe will tell you what actually happened. Or maybe sometimes you have to decipher, is your child trying to tell you the truth or are they trying to hide something in the hopes that they would not get punished even further? Right? Or how many of you have, unfortunately, how many of you have ever experienced watching a car accident? You could have 10 people all see the same accident, but are they all going to come away with the same perspective? No. In fact, sometimes even as you experience and watch the accident, what you think is true, even maybe an hour later, you may not

remember everything unless you write it down. So first impressions are not always reality. We don't always know and we don't always understand.

So Job, he's lost his stock, his product, his wealth, his serfs, a number of his servants. And most importantly, he has lost his children. I'm guessing maybe the apple of his eye. Are we done though? We're not.

Let's go to chapter two, okay? Chapter two. Here we see that again, the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan also came. And the Lord said to Satan, where have you come from? And he said, from roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it. And the Lord said, have you considered my servant, Job? What is God trying to do to Job? There's no one on earth like him. He builds him up again. He stands up, gives him a great reference. Then in verse four, sorry, no, actually this. Verse three, then the Lord said to him, Satan, have you considered my servant Job? There's no one on earth like him. He's blameless. He's upright, a man who fears God, shuns evil, and yet he still maintains his integrity. Though you incited me against him to ruin without any reason. How does Satan respond? Skin for skin. A man will give all he has for his own life, but now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones and he will surely what? Curse you. Lord said, very well, he's in your hands, but spare his life. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with what? Painful sores, okay, from where? The soles of his feet to the top of his head, his whole body. Now we don't know exactly what that means medically, but let's just say he was gonna be uncomfortable, okay? And then... Then Job, verse eight, took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes.

And as it says here, this is a key verse that I think, you know, that's where the title of our series of View from the Ashes. Has Job perhaps hit rock bottom in his life at this point? Could he possibly only go up at this point? Or is he going to have to journey a little bit more? Because the story is not over. There's, I think, 42 chapters in the book of Job. And so then, verse 9, his wife says, are you still maintaining your integrity? She starts to question him. He's sitting down in ashes. He's mourning. He's torn his robe. He's done all the things properly that you're supposed to do when you're grieving. And she says, are you still maintaining? Curse God and die. And he responds, you're talking like

a foolish woman, and he's not referring to the fact that she's not she is not intellect. She does not lack intellect. There are children here, so I can't say certain words. So, you know, that's a joke. He's not calling out her intellect. He's calling out her lack of belief. OK. Shall we accept good from God and not trouble? And again, in all of this, Job did not sin in what he said.

So the first round of pain that Satan dished out was external. Everything around him, his home, his children, his livestock and everything was gone. He essentially had, let's just say, a billion dollars to maybe ten dollars. Right? It was all gone. And here he is, he's at rock bottom. He's sitting in the ashes wondering what is my life going to be like? Have you ever been so despondent, so depressed and wondering how can I move forward? I still believe in God. But where do I go from here sitting in the ashes? It's hard to sometimes understand, but Job was complaining, what happened to me? Did I do something? No, God is faithful. I'm not going to curse God. Mrs. Job tells him to curse God. Does he have anything left to live for?

So hindsight now, good old hindsight gives us clarity when we don't understand life's curveballs. Sometimes can't understand. Job could not see this heavenly conversation between God and Satan. Eventually though, he will understand.

Now there's a story told of a man by the name of Brian Knight. In 2019, he was the captain on a Southwest flight flying into Love Field. Well, what's unique about this story is that 52 years earlier, in 1967, he was at that same airport where he watched his father, Major Roy Knight, Lovefield to go over to Vietnam to serve as a pilot. And you can actually Google this. Google Brian and Roy Knight, Dallas or Southwest, and it'll pop up and it'll share his story. Major Roy Knight was flying. His plane was hit. And he crashed. And they couldn't find him for over 50 years. until finally 52 years later, when Brian had the opportunity to be able to fly the plane that carried his father's ashes home back to Dallas. As a five-year-old, Brian couldn't understand why is my father getting on a plane to go to Vietnam at five years old? Why is my father never going to come back at five years old? Some of you can probably relate to this. how crushing it is to lose a parent at that age. He didn't understand, but 52 years later in 2019, he had a better perspective, amen? So life sometimes has

its moments, it has its curve balls. Sometimes closure won't come until later when we can better understand.

Now, sometimes when we have difficult times, Often times we respond to situations based on the influence of others. Do our friends and family, our loved ones have the ability to influence our outlook? They could, positively or negatively. As you read Job, he has some of his friends who come and visit him. In fact, let's go to verse 11. It says, when Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite heard about all the troubles that had come upon him. They set out to their homes to meet together and by agreement go and sympathize with him and comfort him. And when they saw him from a distance, they could hardly what? [recognize them] And they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their faces. Job looked so horrible, maybe so haggard, they could not even recognize him for who he was. And it broke their hearts, because they mourned with them. They cared for him.

And so then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him because they saw how great his suffering was. And this was a common practice as well, Shavah of mourning for a week. But in doing so as well with these three guys joining him, those now called Siddi and Shiva, where they sat with them. Nobody said anything and they just were with him. And I think there's a great lesson in this part of Joe, because how many times have you gone through a hard time? But you had somebody to walk alongside with you and they didn't say anything, but you knew they were there. They didn't need to try to say anything. They just were there. Did that bring you great comfort? I think that's an important lesson for us as followers of Jesus, because sometimes when something horrible happens to somebody, when you lose a loved one or you get a diagnosis, you lose your job or whatever horrible thing happens, maybe the best thing to do is just not to say anything, but to just be with them. and allow them to grieve, knowing you're there. Oftentimes, when somebody's going through a hard time, we want to try to comfort them. And even in the best of intentions, we may try to say something. The common phrase is, well, he or she is in a better place. What are you doing? You're robbing them of the ability to finally grieve and let them

go. Now I'm not saying let them grieve forever, because at some point, if grieving is gonna define your life, you're never going to move forward.

But at that hard point, that difficult time, sometimes just being there is the best thing you can do. Or if you can't physically be there, send them a text message, give them a phone call, send an Uber Eats order to them. Go watch their kids for an afternoon so they can go do laundry or just take a really long nap. How can we be the body of Christ to positively influence our brothers and sisters in their time of need? So. Over the years, I've learned that less is more. I've attended a lot of meetings over the years. A lot of meetings. So unless I'm leading the meeting, I've tried to stay quiet because I've learned that when you speak less, then when you say something, it will mean something. Have you ever been in a meeting where the horse has died seven times already. And it's so frustrating. But when that one person who's been sitting and observing and usually tends to think through and deliberate, and when they say something, it resonates. When that person speaks, I've always tried to be that person. And I think it's important that when hard times come, when we're sitting with people who are struggling, just be there.

So another thing is that. Well, as we worship, one of the reasons why we're here today is we're not just here to worship God. Amen? We're here to be a part of the body of Christ. We're here to come together not only to worship, but to hear stories, to listen, to nurture, to comfort. And so, as we walk out, okay, as we walk out, I'm imploring, I'm exhorting, I'm encouraging you. to get to know one another better. That in the future, if something does happen, you have somebody to call, or you have somebody to say, text them and say, hey, please pray for me. I want you, as you leave, to find somebody you don't know well, or if you don't even know, find out their name, how long they've been attending this church, and why you love this church. And maybe, just maybe, if you know somebody, ask them to go out to lunch or dinner. Get to know them. I want to encourage you. Because if we cannot rely on our brothers and sisters here, especially, who else can we go to? What was the hardest season of your life and did anyone walk alongside you during that time? Did you have somebody there with you or did you have to walk it alone?

This week I want you to write down the lessons that you learned from that difficult time and pray that as you apply them to your life, because there's always something to learn from everything, right? Especially we learn the most and our hardest times of our lives. But I encourage you that be like Job's friends. and just sit and listen.

Now, as we come back next week, Bill's gonna talk about Job's response. And as you continue to read the accounts, because all three of these guys are gonna have to say something, but the perspective, unfortunately, although they're trying to do a good thing, their perspective of what's happening is maybe slightly off. As you read Job, you'll get a better idea of what that means. But my friends, I encourage you. Reach out if you've lost a loved one, if you need to have prayer, or if you know of somebody who needs a friend, just to check on them. Every week I look forward, I know Johnny wherever he is, he's going to come and give me a hug. I look forward to that every week. I look forward to hanging out with Philip. We're going to fist bump. We're going to catch up on the glorious victory that we had last night over the Padres. Um, I look forward to seeing Tomas's smile the warmth I look forward to seeing all of you. I look forward to seeing where y'all where you all normally sit every week I can catch I kind of have memorized where y'all sit and we need to change that up just to make you a little more uncomfortable I look forward to seeing you all and I hope and pray that you have the same experience every week Knowing that your brothers and sisters in Christ are here for you. Amen Let's walk together And as we continue in Job, especially as we discuss, may your faith be further affirmed. May you grow in faith. And may we draw closer to Christ, be the servants and ambassadors that God has called us to be.

Father in heaven, thank you, Lord, for you are good and your mercy endures forever. Be with us as we go forth to do what you have called us to do, but more importantly, help us to grow in unity, to get to know one another and watch over us. In Jesus' name, everybody said. Amen.

Grace and peace everybody.