

# Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

April 29, 2020

Notes on John 3: 22 - 24

***22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.***

***23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.***

***24 For John was not yet cast into prison.***

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Pastor Tom began by posing 2 questions for us to think about as we study tonight and be prepared to answer them later on.

1. How are you being tested during this COVID-19 crisis?
2. How are you being faithful during this COVID-19 crisis?

After reading the 3 verses above, we then looked into the Old Testament:

## **Job 1:1**

*“There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.”*

\*This verse tells the character of Job - he walked with the Lord, he was perfect and upright, and he was wealthy and blessed.

## **Job 1:14 - 19**

*“14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:*

*15 And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*

*16 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*

*17 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*

*18 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:*

*19 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."*

\*Suddenly, in one day, Job loses everything he had. Like someone turned off the switch...

\*Which is not unlike our present situation of self-isolation, some losing jobs, schools readjusting...

Then we read Job's response:

**Job 1:21**

*"21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*

*22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."*

\*Even after all that happened to him, Job remained faithful!

Then back to the New Testament:

\*John was probably at the peak of his ministry, fulfilling his purpose to prepare the people for the coming Messiah by preaching repentance.

(His loyalty to this purpose will be tested in next week's study)

\* Then Pastor Tom drew our attention to some similarities of John and Job:

1. Both men had his faith tested.
2. Both men had questions.
3. Both remain faithful.

\*Next we shared how the pandemic has tested us and how we have been faithful as well in answer to the questions posed at the beginning of Bible Study.

### **Proverbs 28:4**

*“They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.”*

\*Pastor Tom noted that Mount Olive Church was comfortable before this COVID-19 situation hit...giving was good, attendance was good...but the attitude of “we’ve never done it that way before” was still prevalent at times. Boy, did that attitude ever get knocked for a loop! Now we are doing things like we NEVER have before!!

### **Romans 8:28**

*“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

\*This verse describes us, as the Church. God’s purpose is to bring people into His Kingdom, and since we love God, we are called to bring people into that Kingdom.

\*So...God is going to do something good out of this pandemic.

Do we believe this? Can we see how this may end?

Job and John the Baptist had 2 different endings:

### **Job 42: 12 & 17**

*“12 So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.”*

*“17 So Job died, being old and full of days.”*

\*Job was blessed in the end. He was richer than in the beginning of his life and he lived a long, Godly life. He had extreme temptations, but also received extreme blessings.

## **Matthew 14: 1 - 11**

*“14 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,  
2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.  
3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.  
4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.  
5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.  
6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.  
7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.  
8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.  
9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.  
10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.  
11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.”*

\*John the Baptist was imprisoned and then beheaded!

\*So was Job more faithful than John?

## **Matthew 11:11**

*“Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”*

\*Jesus is speaking in this verse about John the Baptist. Of all the people born, no one was greater than John but he was martyred for his stance.

\*Consider the Church again...

Some churches will be blessed through this whole ordeal we are going through.

Some churches will die.

Will our situation now be like the months after 9-11 when churches were full and people were asking God to bless America, then attendance and interest fell away?

And will our personal situations be as Job stated..."The Lord gives and the Lord takes away." Will some of us live through the corona virus or will some of us die from it? Will some of us become stronger spiritually through the corona virus or will some of us become weaker spiritually from it?

Another discussion time brought thoughts about troubling times, frustrating times, anger at times

### **Romans 8:28**

*"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

Look again at this verse and ask yourself:

Do you believe we will come out of this crisis stronger/better?

\*\*\*\*\*Spoiler Alert for next week!\*\*\*\*\*

### **John 3:30**

*“He must increase, but I must decrease.”*

\*This was John’s response to being tested: That Jesus must increase and I (John) must decrease. Jesus’ purpose was greater than John the Baptist’s purpose.

### **John 4:1-2**

*“1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,*

*2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)”*

\*Jesus prepared His disciples to baptize others but He did not baptize anyone.

\*Something to think about until next week:

If you think you are the center of the universe, then you have a lot to learn about Jesus’ leadership.

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Stay faithful and stay strong!