

August 1, 2021

Worship

Job 1:8-20

Not to be melodramatic, but have you felt at all like Job over the past 12-15 months? Maybe disaster didn't come all at once like it did for him, but I bet you (or someone you know) has lost a lot this past year. Maybe a loved one was sick or you lost your job or your child suffered from the solitude and lack of routine. Maybe you are experiencing a kind of empathetic grief with the rest of the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has been traumatic. It has destroyed so much. Maybe it wasn't as dramatic as fire falling from the sky or strong winds tearing houses apart as in Job, but COVID took a lot.

The student book author writes, "We have lost old ways of doing things; and in some cases, we have literally lost people. If we do not stop to acknowledge that and bring it before God, we will miss a crucial step in our process of healing from it. We cannot move forward on the new if we do not recognize, honor, and memorialize what came before. And we need to stop and wail at what is gone so we can know what foundation we stand on going forward."¹ We must lament what we lost this past year. How will you choose to do that?

As we see in today's Focal Passage, God has faith in God's people. We will all experience loss and grief, but how we deal with it reflects our character. Job had every reason to lash out at God for his troubles, but when trouble came, Job fell to his knees to worship God. God was a part of his life for better or worse, in good times and bad. God believed that Job would turn to his faith in times of trouble, that he would rely on the comfort of God in his lamentations. Job did, and so should we. No matter what the world takes away from us, God is there in love and faith to hold us until our tears dry.

1. What are some things you lament because of the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Have you ever turned to God in anger over your personal circumstances? How would you change your actions now if you could?
3. How can you rely on God when grief and sorrow come your way?

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¹From *Adult Bible Studies*, Summer 2021, by Michelle Morris (Cokesbury, 2021); pages 93-94.