



Job the Righteous

Submitted by a Mighty Arrow
St Mary Church, Pompano Beach, FL

"Blameless and upright." Very flattering words; adjectives of which we would all be proud, but these words came from the Almighty himself. There are many lessons we can learn from the life of the man we call Job the Righteous.

1) Fear of God. If we look at the eighth verse of the first chapter in the book of the Bible which was named after him, we find that God gives criterion for being "blameless and upright". Namely he says, "one who fears God and shuns evil." Fear of God, needless to say, is very important. Job exemplified it. Even after all his riches and ten children were taken away from him the Bible takes care to mention that, "In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong (Job 1:22)." In fact two verses earlier it says he fell to the ground and worshipped. We should all beware and try our hardest not to offend God regardless of our situation. For this fear will soon give way to love for our Creator, as seen in Job as well as all the Lord's saints. After all, "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 (Job 1:21)."

2) Shun Evil. The second criteria God demands of His children is to shun evil. Job had to do this from the most unsuspected of sources. His wife told him to "curse God and die". Her remark came from compassion; Job was inflicted with very painful boils and himself expressed the wish that he was never born. But he loved God too much to curse him. Likewise were his "friends" tools used by Satan. They tried to make him repent for something he didn't do. To which Job replied, "Let me be weighed on honest scales, that God may know my



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integrity (Job 31:6)." Even many years before David he understood the import of the first psalm which tells us "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly." Indeed, Job was wise enough to know what God wanted from His children. "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding (Job 28:28)."

3) Patience. The virtue probably most attributed to Job is patience. We are all familiar with how he did not sin when all of his riches and family were taken away. Who of us can hold his tongue the way he did? For my part, a funny look is enough to get me angry. But what did Job do? He waited the duration of the book to get the answer from God to his question of why all this had happened to him. God only answered that he wouldn't be able to understand the wisdom of Providence. Job was satisfied with this answer. After all that waiting and that was the response he received? We do well not to over-question God's wisdom.

One cannot underestimate what this man had to endure. The whole time he had his painful boils he had to put up with the condemnation of his friends who were supposed to be consoling him. When our friends are in distress let us be better than Job's buddies. We should be understanding and thoughtful, not critical and condescending.

4) Suffering and Reward. One question one often encounters when reading the book of Job is why God allows people, especially His own children, to suffer. This was the question for which Job was so patiently waiting the answer. God let Satan afflict Job, but only with His



permission. He put limits to how much Satan could affect Job. For God knows all our abilities and tests us accordingly. We don't understand the way God thinks, but we must know that all He does is out of His love for us. One must always remember that the reward for those who suffer is greater. "Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before (Job 42:10)." Well, Job passed

his test with flying colors; let us pray that we may share his fate and may also see the reward prepared for them that love the Lord.

Pray to the Lord on our behalf O blameless man, Job the righteous, that He may forgive us our sins. Amen.

Elisha the Prophet

**Submitted by a Mighty Arrow
St Mary Church, Pompano Beach, FL**

Elisha is a Hebrew name meaning "God is Salvation". Elisha was a prophet to the tribe of Issachar. He was an obedient disciple of Elijah the prophet. No other prophet performed more miracles than Elisha.

Elisha came from a wealthy family. He was invited by Elijah to become a prophet when Elijah saw Elisha walk through his father's field. Elijah put his cloak on him, and from then on, he became Elijah's disciple.

Before Elijah departed alive on the fiery chariot, Elisha asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit to dwell in him, as Elisha wished to always be with Elijah. He was granted this great blessing. Following this, Elisha crossed the Jordan River by hitting the water with the cloak given to him by Elijah, and the water split.

Elisha helped his people to be victorious over their enemies. He healed the leper (2 Kings 5), and resurrected the Shunamite woman's son from the dead (2 Kings 4:8-37). It was music which moved Elisha to prophecy.

Contrasting Elijah from Elisha, Elisha was bald, dressed normally, traveled from place to place, had his own house, and had a staff. Elijah did not travel but stayed on a mountain, did not own a house, and was not bald.

How can a person benefit from the blessed life of Elisha

the Prophet? Many ways. One can learn obedience to their masters (parents, father of confession, bosses at work, etc.), as Elisha was obedient to Elijah as his disciple. He also loved Elijah and wanted to be with him always.

We may also learn a lesson of respect towards elders and holy men of God. The youths that made fun of Elisha for being bald received their lesson the hard way when a female bear mauled them. We should learn to give due respect to all those it is due.

There is also the concept of discipleship. A bond between the disciple and the master is a strong one, especially as those we see between the Desert Fathers and their disciples. If one could learn from this and take and become a sort of disciple to their spiritual father, the results could be quite beneficial. Our spiritual fathers are our best sources of guidance, and we must learn as much as we can from them, love and respect them, and take their blessings just as Elisha did with his Elijah.

When Elisha's time for departure from this vain world came, he was sick with an illness. The king of Israel, Joash, was in conflict with the Syrians. He wept over Elisha on his deathbed, but Elisha gave him instructions to attack the Syrians and destroy them. When he finished, Elisha finally gave up his spirit and departed from this vain world (2 Kings 13:14-20).