

**Read These Bible Passages**:

Job 1:6-22

Job 2:1-10

\*\* At the end of this lesson, you will find a two-page handout that corresponds with this teaching. Contact your campus leader and ask them to print it out for your class.

(HINT: Ask them to print one page, two sided)

**Focus On This Theme**:

If you are drawing breath (I’ll wait if some of you need to check your pulse- especially if you have teenagers) then it is safe to say that you have experienced a storm in your life. Better yet, a more accurate statement to make is that you most likely have been face to face with several. Life is full of twists and turns like a tornado that twirls its way through Kansas. They are inevitable and unavoidable. Today’s teaching will be based on the first two chapters in the unique book of Job, a biography that depicts a life of suffering and endless trials. As we lay out Job’s life in front of us like an architect who sets before him the blueprint, we will touch upon five different kinds of reactions in the face of suffering. Just like we develop a plan and get ready for the dreaded hurricane season in Houston, this lesson is designed to help prepare us on how to respond for when the storm comes in our own life. So in preparation, lets go grab some batteries and get charged up to hear the Word!

**Introduction**:

“We’re off to see the Wizard, the wonderful Wizard of Oz!” Every time I turn my bible to the book of Job and my eyes fall upon the first verse, the melody of this once-so-famous song skips through my head like the ruby red slippers skipped down the yellow brick road. You see, the author who penned the first of sixty-six books to be written by inspired hands for the uniting of God’s holy Word, starts out by saying, “In the land of Uz.” Not to be confused with Oz! Think about this, if God decided to assemble His book in the ascending order of when it was written, then Job would replace Genesis and the first words would be, “In the land of Uz” instead of “In the beginning, God…”

All in favor of those who believe God knows what He is doing? That’s what I thought!

Now, “in the land of Uz, we learn about a man named Job (not about a woman named Dorothy). This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East” (Job 1:1-3). Think about the most significant title you have ever been given? Maybe you earned a title of, President, Vice president, Miss America, The Biggest Loser, PHD, Pittsburgh Stealer (that’s for you honey), Mother, Grandfather, Wife, or Husband. Job’s title was, “The greatest man among all the people of the East” (1:3). Could you imagine? What a title!

Often times when I specifically request for the church to turn to the book of Job, I witness a hesitation from the people because they wonder if God is preparing them for an upcoming season of trial and tribulation (you ladies know what I am talking about). The first thought that pops into their mind even before the pages of King James begins to find Job is, “What are you up to God? What are you preparing me for? Am I about to suffer?” Just know that each one of us, during this series, is being prepared for something through Job’s testimony. Whether your trials are around the corner or two years down the road, your Father knows that you will need to be equipped for the inevitable. He reminds us in James 1:2-3, “Consider it pure joy my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.” So yes beloved, God is preparing YOU for when the storm comes. You can either hit the snooze button and lie to your self that this category five hurricane will miss your house, or you can step into reality and prepare like we did for hurricane Alicia, Andrew, Katrina, Rita, Ike and many, many more.

Over the next six weeks, get ready to taste and see of a story that explodes with graphic detail and bursts with emotional drama. The flavor of this novel will keep your taste buds asking for more in order to satisfy the suspense. God displays Himself majestically in these pages just like a breathtaking peacock fluffs out his emerald feathers. The deeper we get into this book, the more the Father is quick to show off His splendor to His bride. As you study the life of Job through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, let’s us not just eat the Word but devour it.

**Background**

Job is the only book of its kind in the whole Word of God: a long dramatic dialogue in poetic form, set like a large multi-faceted diamond in between a historical prologue and epilogue. As originally written in the Hebrew language, the book was entirely in poetry, with the exception of chapters 1, 2, 32:1-6a, and 42:7-17. The great Reformer, Martin Luther, who was himself a gifted writer and translator, said that Job was “more magnificent and sublime than any other book in scripture.” Well said, Mr. Luther!

Not only do we pick up great insight into the human condition by studying Job’s testimony but also through dissecting the 1,070 verses, we find common phrases that are currently used in the English language that originated from this writing that transpired around 4,100 years ago. How many times have you watched a scary movie and said, “the hairs on the back of my neck stood straight up?” Well you can thank Job’s friend, Eliphaz, for giving us that great line. He was quoted in Job 4:15 by saying, “A spirit glided past my face, and the hair on my body stood on end.” A few other familiar expressions that might ring a bell would be; “I have escaped by the skin of my teeth” (19:20b), “I know that my Redeemer lives” (19:25), “My life is (but) a breath” (7:7a), “Put (take) my life in my hands” (13:14b). Of course I cannot forget the famous expression of “having the patience of Job,” although that comes from the book of James (5:11). So we now see that Job has been influential in our dialog and has left a mark in history!

Like many books in the bible, the man who is responsible for putting the ink to Job’s letter is anonymous. Although Jewish tradition chooses Moses as the author, other suggestions are Elihu, Solomon, Hezekiah, Ezra (a nameless Jew living somewhere between 500 and 200 B.C.), or Job himself. Since Job lived one hundred and forty additional years

(Isn’t that the age of Billy Graham- J/K) after the events in the book and he was the one who experienced everything, perhaps he is the most likely choice.

Many scholars believe that this book was written in the patriarchal era, which was 2100-1900 B.C. As to the events in this book, it is widely believed that Job lived prior to the birth of Abraham. Thus, the events in the book of Job would fall somewhere in the latter part of Genesis chapter eleven. There are several reasons why Job was assigned to this period in history. First of all, there is no undisputable mention in the book of him being a Jew. There is also no mention of the Exodus or Law of Moses. In fact, it is clear that Job was the priest for his own family (1:5), and this type of family priesthood belonged to the patriarchal period. The lifestyle characterized by wealth being determined by cattle and other animals is also largely patriarchal. One last clue I would like to point out is that Job lived for more than two hundred years, and this age span was characterized of the era immediately preceding Abraham.

Whew, with all of that background out of the way, we can now focus on drawing back the velvet curtains and begin to watch the anticipated first two chapters unfold, which in my opinion is the most dramatic scene of all forty-two chapters. Make sure to grab a bag of popcorn while you’re up because who likes a good story without a fresh salty snack? Extra butter anyone?

**Bible Passage #1**

**Job 1:6-22**

One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. **7**The Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the Lord, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.” **8**Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.” **9**“Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. **10**“Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. **11**But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.” **12**The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.” Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

**13**One day when Job’s sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, **14**a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, **15**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!”**16**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!”**17**While he was still speaking, another messenger came and 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!” **18**While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, “Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, **19**when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!” **20**At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship **21**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 the name of the Lord be praised.” **22**In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

**Illustration:**

How many of you remember the infamous trial acted out in the movie, A Few Good Men? How could anyone forget that nail-biting, teeth-grinding, edge-of-your-seat last scene with Oscar winning, Jack Nicholson and Tom Cruise?

Danny Kaffee (Tom Cruise) an inexperienced lawyer takes a chance and demands that Colonel Jessup (Jack Nicholson) feeds the court with truth about ordering an illegal “code red.” Danny assumes that in the Colonel’s pride and arrogance that he will confess right there on the witness stand and the two US Marines that are accused of murder will receive a lighter sentence because of his confession.

With a combination of passion and fury Danny shouts while abruptly pointing his finger at the accused, “Colonel Jessup, did you order the code red?”

With great arrogance the Colonel replies, “You want answers?”

“I think I am entitled,” the lawyer barks!

“You want answers,” he repeats.

“I want the truth,” Danny demands!

And without hesitation, before his confession, Jessup roars with the voice of a lion, “You can’t handle the truth!”

**Commentary (Bible Passage #1):**

Just like this famous scene acted out in a Hollywood courtroom, our eyes are forced to see the truth in the first chapter of Job that there is another trial being played out, except this one is not pretend.

“*One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and* ***Satan*** *(Ha-Satan) also came with the*m.”

Ha-Satan (**הַשָּׂטָן)** is Hebrew for “the accuser.” Interestingly, the enemy is referred to “Ha-Satan” (the accuser) in only two books of the Hebrew bible. Ha-Satan (**הַשָּׂטָן)** is used ten times in Job chapter 1-2 and three times in Zechariah 3:1-2.

“*Then he showed me Joshua the High Priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan (Ha-Satan) standing at his right side to accuse him*” (Zechariah 3:1). I believe you are beginning to get the point here! Satan is our accuser, he stands in front of the Righteous Judge and he accuses us and points out our faults as if we are on trial. Under the New Covenant, anyone who “*confesses with their mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believes in their heart that God raised Him from the dead, will be saved*” (Romans 10:9). Through faith and by Christ’s stripes our penalty has been paid in full and the blood of the Lamb covers us. “*We have an advocate with the Father- in Jesus Christ, the Righteous One*”

(1 John 2:1). This way when the accuser (Ha-Satan) shows up to oppose us in front of the Judge. Our loving Father looks upon us and only sees His Son’s DNA pulsating through our veins and the words “Not Guilty” ricochets throughout the region while shaking the foundation of the heavenly courthouse. The blood once again takes away the curse and all of heaven roars His name! King Jesus!

**Illustration:**

September 18, 2005 was a day that had you committed to the couch, tuned into the weather channel, and biting your fingernails down to the bloody skin, especially if you lived anywhere on the Gulf Coast. The different news channels fought to be the first to report that a category five hurricane was fast approaching and concerned homeowners anxiously awaited to see if they would be the city to experience the catastrophic hit. If you were in the red zone, you secretly prayed to the One in control that it would miraculously shift at the last moment and instead eat your neighbor for lunch. What made this particular storm so intense, was one month earlier Katrina made her presence known with wiping out four states in one fail swoop! She had gotten our attention! Now Hurricane Rita was being birthed in the Gulf and all eyes were on her! At the last minute my husband and I decided to pack up our family and our keepsakes and hit the road, except we were not the only one with that plan. Two million other residents decided to do the same thing and the streets were crawling with tired, aggravated, irritable, hungry, terrified people and no gasoline to fill our tanks! Try that concoction on for size. It took us fourteen hours to drive the journey from Houston to San Antonio, which would have otherwise only had taken three hours on a regular day. If you lived in Houston on that day, you know exactly what I am talking about; you were most likely on the road with me!

**Commentary (Bible Passage #1):**

Unlike today with technology and media, Job’s children did not have any warning like we did with Rita. There were no tornado sirens blasting throughout the city or that awful, repetitive, ear piercing beep that the Broadcasting Network interrupts your television program with. Instead Job’s seven sons and three daughters were instantly killed by what is believed to be a tornado. “*While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, “Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, when suddenly* ***a mighty wind*** *(tornado)**swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you”* (Job 1:18). When reading this verse, there is a question that pops out like an old wound up Jack-in-the-box. The teacher inside me is itching to bring it up with wonder if you had the same thought. Can Satan actually control the weather? Did the enemy command the wind to cause destruction and kill Job’s children? Wasn’t it Jesus who rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still” (Mark 4:39)? I don’t remember Satan being in that boat! We also read in Job 1:16, “*While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, “****The fire of God*** *(lightening) fell from the heavens and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!*” Um, I thought that the lightening bolts reported to God and said, “Here we are” (Job 38:35). Did I miss something in between verses 1:16 and 38:35?

Lets look back at our bible passage and be reminded that God gave permission to Satan by saying, “*everything Job has is now in your (Satan) hands, but on Job himself, you are to not lay a finger” (1:12).*  Then we will see it again in chapter two after Satan has completed round one and is ready for round two. The roaring lion seeking to devour, ups the ante and accuses Jobs loyalty and God grants the opposer permission once more by saying, “Very well then, Job is in your hands; but you must spare his life” (2:6). The hedge of protection that God once put around Job, his household and everything he owns, (1:10) has now been removed by the mere breath out of Yahweh’s mouth! Satan has been given the power to:

1. Command the Sabeans to steal five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred female donkeys [the donkey were prized possessions because of their milk, it was a delicacy] (1:15).
2. Command lightening to destroy seven thousand sheep, as well as the servants who were tending them (1:16).
3. Command the Chaldeans to steal three thousand camels and kill the servants who cared for them (1:17).
4. Command a great wind (tornado) to collapse a house and kill Job’s children (1:18).
5. Afflict Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head (2:7).

Keep in mind that these five tragedies were completely Satan’s idea on how to destroy Job and attempt to bring him to a place of cursing God to His face. Not only do we have a greater insight as to the conversations between the Devil and God (how does something so detestable stand in the presence of something so Holy), but we now come into a full awareness, **that if given permission**, Satan and the demonic hordes can command the weather and inflict sickness on the human race.

Yet don’t forget for one minute that it is God, not Satan, who ultimately controls the weather (Exodus 9:29; Psalm 135:6-7; Jeremiah 10:13).

* God controls the skies and the rain (Psalm 77:16-19).
* God controls the wind (Mark 4:35-41; Jeremiah 51:16).
* God upholds and sustains the universe (Hebrews 1:3).
* God has power over the clouds (Job 37:11-12, 16).
* God has power over lightning and Satan (Psalm 18:14).
* God has power over all nature (Job 26).

**Bible Passage #2**

**Job 2:1-10**

On another day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. **2**And the Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the Lord, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.” **3**Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.” **4**“Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. **5**But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.” **6**The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.” **7**So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. **8**Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes. **9**His wife said to him, “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!” **10**He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” **In all this, Job did not sin in what he said**.

**Illustration:**

For this next illustration, you will need to play this video for your class. If you do not already have video equipment in you classroom, contact your campus leader and ask them to provide one for the day you teach this lesson.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ7ZpLgkVxA>

As I was preparing this lesson, the Lord faithfully laid this tear-jerking scene on my heart. He compared Job’s story of the battle that was waging over his head, to this true story of the triumphant Notre Dame tackle that stole our hearts. Rudy spent his whole college career dreaming of having one chance on the field with his teammates during a game. Instead he was granted four years on the bench. During the last game he would ever attend as a student at Notre Dame and a few seconds left on the scoreboard, out of compassion, the coach finally decided to let Rudy in the game on the last play. The whole crowd erupted with cheers and continued to chant, “Rudy, Rudy, Rudy!”

Can you already predict what the Lord showed me? You see Job was finally being called off the bench and placed into the game after all these years of walking safely with God. He had one assignment and that was to tackle the enemy to the ground by not cursing God. All the angelic hosts cried out over his head, “Job, Job, Job!” Cheering and waiting to carry him off the field and into victory!

Then with one single moment in time, we are told that “*Job did not sin in what he said*” (2:10) and the game had been won! Hallelujah!

**Life Application**:

Beloved, how do you know there is not a “deal” between heaven and hell in regards to you? What if the next storm you encounter is because the enemy has rolled the dice and bets that you will curse God and die? Just remember, your Father and all of heaven are chanting your name while you step foot into the game! “Rudy! Rudy! Rudy!” How will you choose to act when the storm comes?

**Five Reactions to The Storm:**

Everyone handles trials and tribulations differently. According to the book of Job, I jotted down five different reactions that a person might experience when the storm comes. See if you can pinpoint which one best describes you or better yet you may see a piece of yourself in all of them.

In the face of suffering….

1. **Do you immediately drop to your knees in worship?** “At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship” (1:20).

This was Job’s reaction to losing all of his livelihood and ten children in one day! He worshiped! If you are like me then you are wondering what that kind of worship could possibly sound like in such heartbreak. Well, here is our answer…

“Naked I came from my mothers womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised” (1:21). One word to describe the sound of that: **Incredible**! That kind of worship is music to God’s ears!

I believe we can all agree that none of us envy Job’s life, but his response in the face of suffering is where we aspire to be. Peter understands this kind of worship when he says, “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed” (1 Peter 1:6-7). Or the great apostle Paul who echoes the same response in Romans 5:3, “We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance.”

(Illustration)- Kent Whittaker comes to thought as I scroll through the Rolodex in my mind of stories where people suffered great lost, and immediately chose to worship. On December 10, 2003 the Sugar Land police department got a disturbing call to the Whittaker house in the affluent neighborhood of Sugar Creek. The Whittaker’s had just returned home form celebrating their son, Bart’s, graduation from Sam Houston State University. A gunman was in their house and shot Kent’s wife, Tricia, and their son, Kevin, in the chest and killed them dead on the scene. Kent tried to come to their defense and was shot in the shoulder and Bart, not far behind his dad, took a bullet in his leg. Father and son were rushed to the hospital to begin the process of saving their lives. The paramedics raced through the streets of Houston as Kent laid on the gurney. While the sirens repeatedly blasted in and out of his ears, Kent began to pray (worship) while bleeding profusely. He came boldly to the Throne of Grace and asked Jehovah Jireh to bestow upon him forgiveness towards whoever killed his family. He cried out to the Lord and sought refuge from Him before ever even getting to the hospital. Kent said that he miraculously forgave the killer at that moment!

Kent and Bart survived, although as the story turned, Kent soon found out that the person who he was praying for strength to forgive was his only surviving son, Bart!

1. **Do you hold onto your integrity?** “Job’s wife said to him, ‘Are you still holding onto your integrity” (2:9)?

Integrity is a word that is not used much in today’s English. One definition of integrity is, “The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness.” Often times while suffering we might think we get a ‘free pass’ to abandon our integrity and mistreat others because of what we are going through. We justify that it is okay to act out because we are hurting. Another words, if I am hurting than I am allowed to hurt others. I can say whatever I want and act however I choose and this should be acceptable by others. Job’s wife mocked her husband because he decided to hold up his integrity in the face of suffering. She gave herself a pass to ditch her integrity because of what she had been through. Two different people, two total different choices. Proverbs 28:18 says, **“**Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered, but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall.”

Stay tuned over the next six weeks to watch how Job, who is full of integrity, gets delivered.

1. **Do you injure yourself?** “Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes” (2:8).

This is the first time in history that we see a record of someone cutting themself. This current generation has brought more attention to this epidemic than any other generation before. “A cutter” is one who cuts their body to be relieved from an emotional pain. Cutting is a self- injury and is not something that a person advertises. When they cut they are generally ashamed and hide it as well as they can. Maybe you are thinking to yourself that you don’t cut, but that does not exclude you from being one who injures himself. Some people may begin to self medicate with prescription drugs or they “checkout” by drinking heavily. There are all types of ways a person can hurt themselves through self-medication, while choosing to abandon their source of security and comfort that comes only from their intimate relationship with Christ. The person who injures himself or herself, chooses to put their confidence in the injury before putting their confidence in Christ. The Lord has a message for you,

“Do not throw away your confidence (in Christ) for it will richly be rewarded. You must preserver, for when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised you” (Hebrews 10:35)!

1. **Do you sympathize and comfort the one in need?** “When Job’s three friends heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize and comfort him” (2:11).

Later in the book of Job, we learn that these three friends do in fact come to accomplish their original plan. But after sitting in complete silence for seven days with Job, they decide to open their big mouths and begin to play God. Instead of sympathizing and comforting like they agreed, they intern infuse a bomb of guilt and condemnation. Which God deals with them later over this huge error that they inflicted on Job. It is important that we know our place and boundary when a loved one is experiencing pain. I once heard a teacher tell a story about her and her friends that she grew up with. They were very close and did everything together. Each week they would huddle around a table and drink coffee while their children played. They laughed, cried, prayed and carried on into a deep relationship that bonded them in a special way. One of the ladies in the group lost her young daughter and at the funeral this group of friends were in the corner sobbing and crying in shock for their precious friend. They could not control themselves as they were struck with grief. Until the mother who lost her daughter came over to these women and said, “Pull yourself together! I have to attend a few things and when I get back I can not hear all this crying anymore!” I never forgot that story. The lesson here is that when comforting our friend in need, don’t cry more then them. Don’t steal their thunder. Wait until you get home if you have to.

1. **Do you curse God?** “Job’s wife said to him, ‘Curse God and die” (2:9)!

No wonder the enemy decided to keep Job’s wife alive! Have you ever questioned why she was the only one Satan didn’t kill? I think that is pretty obvious! She was a great tool for the Accuser, although she was ineffective.

Can you believe this whole entire story boiled down to one thing, cursing God! I would have to say that this is obviously a HUGE deal to God! So much so, that He would allow something this tragic take place to His beloved, all in the name of “it!”

Lee Trevino, a professional golfer who won six major championships over the course of his career, had to learn the hard way about cursing God. In complete arrogance he shook his fist at God while on the golf course and mocked the Almighty because the officials were shutting the game down due to a lightening storm. One week later Trevino was struck by fire from heaven (lightening), and never recovered to his full golf game. Trevino was later quoted as saying, “I deserved to get hit.”

**Conclusion:**

Out of all the five reactions, worshipping God, in the midst of suffering (regardless of how we feel) is the number one remedy to our pain. Worshipping and praising Him infuses a supernatural healing bomb that explodes within us and activates a unique closeness with the Lord that can only be accomplished through this kind of season. I can look back and say that over the years, it is by far the difficult seasons that have deepened my relationship with the One who has suffered the most! If you have walked with the Lord and worshiped Him through the hardships, than you know what I am talking about. It is only during those times that Psalm 23:4 illuminates on the pages of your bible and speaks to you in ways that you have never been spoken to before,

 “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

 I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”