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Week 3 Activity

The Story of Job

The book of Job tells a powerful story about a man, Job, who struggles to find answers to his most valuable question of reason. On his quest for answers a relationship is challenged. This relationship between God and Job is familiar by the nature of their connection and how it is fostered and maintained. The natural course of their connection has strengths and weaknesses like any relationship. At the end of the journey their relationship appears stronger than ever before. Job and God's relationship is fascinating in how there up and down patterns appear so similar to the relationships we have with God today.

Job is first shown as a wealthy man who has everything he needs: a family, land, and fortune. His character is unique from the beginning as he is seen as "blameless and upright and feared God and shunned evil." (JOB 1, Pg, 193) He does no wrong by God's eye. Then an adversary visits and brings attention to God the thought of Job being blameless because he has no suffering to endure. And so God bestowed suffering upon Job as an ultimate test of his faith.

This did not anger Job, as he "did not offend with his lips." (JOB 2, Pg. 194) Instead this made Job question why God was allowing him to suffer. As the suffering continued, he began to wonder what he did to deserve this infliction of punishment. As he questions God, "I shall say to God: Do not convict me. Inform me why you accuse me." (JOB 10, Lines 4-5) This yearning for an answer directly from God is the journey he sets out on.

Job approaches God to hopefully receive a reason for his suffering and instead God says to him “Where were you when I founded earth? Tell, if you know understanding.” (JOB 38, Lines 5-6) As God begins to express that Job does not have the authority to question the events that happen on earth. God had created earth all on his own and for that no one can question why things happen, not even Job. As God describes there is no reason for good or evil on earth, it is simply an imperfect world. God talks about birds, such as an ostrich or stork, “For she leaves her eggs on the ground, and in the dust she lets them warm. And she forgets that a foot can crush them.” (JOB 39, Lines 27-29) This gives insight on how the ground created by God can provide a viable environment for the eggs to grow and hatch, but it also comes with the dangers of being stepped on or eaten perhaps.

God ultimately says to Job, to trust in his wisdom as he says, “He has no match on earth, made as he is without fear.” (JOB 42, Lines 49-50) And Job rescinds his integrity of putting God into question “Therefore do I recant, and I repent in dust and ashes” (JOB 42, Lines 10-11) and accepts the advice God offered. Once Job accepted the advice given to him, God gave him back all his fortunes and more than he had ever before and he lived a long, joy-filled life. He was rewarded for listening to God and believing in the nature of how the earth works.

Job did not get the answers to his question of why perhaps he was brought suffering but it provided a deeper insight on how one individual’s journey with God transpires. Suffering is intentionally brought to people who are bad, like criminals who are imprisoned. But suffering is also found in those undeserving of punishment, such as a child that develops cancer. The takeaway from this story of Job is that there is no

rationale for the happening of bad and evil; all you can do is have wisdom in God and believe. When something bad happens we hope for the best because this world is imperfect and bad things happen in nature.

Works Cited:

From Job. Alter, Robert. *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*. Gen. ed. Martin Puchner. 3rd ed., Vol. A. New York: Norton, 2012. 193-218. Print.