

The story of Ayub in Ayub 2:1-10 and its relevance in facing life's trials

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Abstract

The story of Ayub in Ayub 2:1-10 and its relevance in facing life's trials. *The aim of this research is to understand whether Ayub's life experience can be a weapon for us to face life's trials today. The research method used in this research is the theme of the story of Ayub in Ayub 2:1-10 and its relevance in facing life's trials. Life tests are a series of challenges and trials that we face in the course of our lives, because humans are God's most perfect creatures and are destined to face various life tests. When facing suffering or trials in Christian life today, the character of Ayub becomes an inspiration for those who face difficult and unexplainable situations. This suffering ultimately led to a deeper understanding of God as stated by Ayub himself. Despite experiencing tremendous loss, Ayub remained steadfast in his faith in God. His attitude of choosing to surrender himself to God's existence and trust in His better plans is an inspiration for believers today to remain strong in their faith when facing suffering. Suffering is not a sign that someone has been forgotten or punished by God, but is part of a test of faith that shapes character and increases spiritual maturity.*

Keywords: The story of Ayub, Ayub 2:1-10, Reflection on life today.

INTRODUCTION

Life tests are a series of events, challenges and trials that we face in our life journey, life tests are an inseparable part of life. The most important thing is how we respond to it. The way we face life's tests will greatly influence the quality of our life (Budiyono, 2023).

Humans are God's most perfect creatures, destined to face various life tests (Stevanus & Marbun, 2019). There is a lot of wisdom behind these life tests, some of which are, first, increasing our faith, where life tests often become a means for us to test the strength of our faith and obedience to God. In difficult situations, we are invited to surrender more and trust His will (Arifianto, 2023). Second, learning and growth: Every test is a valuable lesson that can shape us into better people. Through tests, we learn about patience, sincerity and mental strength (Stevanus & Marbun, 2020). Third, make us aware of sin: Life's trials can also be a means to make us aware of the sins we have committed, and want to ask God for forgiveness and change. By patiently facing trials, we seem to be making amends for the mistakes we have made (Reinhard Florentino Sirait et al., 2023a).

An example of a life test is losing a loved one. In mid-December 2024, there was an incident of faith that occurred in Batu Putih sub-district where there were 3 children who lost both of their parents simultaneously due to an

accident. The hearts of children who are not yet ready must be willing to accept the departure of their parents and live without them.

Ayub experienced the same thing as witnessed in the book of Ayub 2:1-10. Ayub experienced a very difficult life test. Ayub lost his wealth. Ayub also lost the children he loved. Even Ayub was abandoned by his wife. Apart from that, Ayub's friends took issue with him because they told Ayub to confess his sin. Ayub experienced a very difficult life test. Despite this, Ayub still surrendered and did not deny God.

The examples of the story of the child in Batu Putih and the story of Ayub above show that in whatever circumstances Christians must face the trials of life by: first, building fellowship with God through prayer. Prayer is the main means for Christians to establish a close relationship with God, especially in facing life's trials. Through prayer, believers can pour out their hearts, convey complaints, ask for strength, and obtain peace and comfort from God. Prayer is also a form of acknowledgment of God's sovereignty in life, recognizing that everything is under His control. By praying, believers strengthen their faith, gain divine wisdom to face problems, and direct their hearts to remain surrendered to God's plan, even though they do not always understand the reasons behind each test. Prayer done earnestly helps maintain inner calm and gives

courage to move amidst the storms of life (Stevanus & Marbun, 2019).

Second, believe truly. Big shocks can make our faith weak, shaky and wavering. If you look at the story of Ayub, any human being in this world can experience decline, doubt and weakness in faith, but still get up and rise and keep believing (Arifianto, 2023).

Third, faith. Faith is the key to victory, where everyone wants to come out and win from life's trials. This happens if you look at life's trials positively then there will definitely be a solution given by God (Stevanus & Marbun, 2019).

Thus, the purpose of this writing is to understand if Ayub's life experience can be a weapon for us to face the trials of life today?

METHOD

In carrying out this research, the method used in this writing is a qualitative research method with a library study approach which is a public study, especially Old Testament analysis.

DISCUSSION

To understand more deeply the message and meaning of the book of Ayub, it is very important to look at the historical, social and cultural context behind this story. By recognizing the situation surrounding Ayub's life, readers can gain a more complete perspective regarding the role and moral message that this story wants to convey.

Historical Context of the Book of Ayub

To understand further, we will discuss several important aspects including politics, social and culture in the story of Ayub. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the background that shapes Ayub's story, as well as how these various contexts influence the moral and spiritual messages contained in it.

Political Context

The political context in the story of Ayub depicts a very influential and powerful figure. With abundant wealth, which included ten children, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred pairs of oxen, and five hundred female donkeys, Ayub occupied a strategic position in his society. His wealth not only gives him economic power, but also

influences the social and political aspects around him (Lele, 2022).

Apart from that, Ayub was known as a pious, honest and God-fearing person. This character gave him a strong spiritual influence, so he was respected by society. He actively led religious rituals, including offering burnt offerings to his children, which demonstrated his dedication to religion and moral values. This further strengthens his position as a spiritual leader and expands his influence in the community (Stevanus, 2019).

In a political framework, Ayub plays an important role in society, both from an economic, social and spiritual perspective. He has authority as the family leader and is respected for his deep piety (Baskoro & Budiayana, 2021). Ayub's power reflects the patriarchal social structure of that era, where the head of the family played a central role in community life.

Ayub's piety and power also affected his relationship with God. He is considered a role model of piety and obedience, which further strengthened his spiritual relationship with God. Thus, the political context in Ayub's story does not only focus on worldly power, but also on a deep-rooted spiritual dimension (Stevanus, 2019).

Overall, the political context in Ayub's story highlights the close relationship between power, piety, and spirituality. These three elements reinforce each other, forming a person's position in the structure of society.

Social Context

The social context in Ayub 2:1-10 reflects a patriarchal society, where Ayub as the head of the family has authority over his family. Ayub's wife represents traditional women's roles as husband's companion and mother, indicating a strong family structure (Adam, 2018).

Ayub comes from an upper social class because of his wealth, which includes property and children. This wealth gave him influence and respect from society. Ayub's social relations with neighbors and the community are also very good, showing that he is a respected and liked person (Tolanda & Maiaweng, 2011).

In this context, the events of Ayub 2:1-10 show how hardship and suffering can affect social structures and family relationships. The

reaction of Ayub's wife and Ayub's own attitude illustrate the social and religious dynamics of that era.

Context of Faith and Religion

The belief and religious context in the Book of Ayub 2:1-10 reflects the deep belief in one God (monotheism), which is a characteristic of ancient Jewish religion. Ayub and his people believe that God is the creator and controller of the universe, has absolute power and is omnipotent. This belief became the basis for their piety and obedience.

Ayub is described as a pious, honest and God-fearing person. These traits reflect the piety and obedience desired in the Jewish religion (Reinhard Florentino Sirait et al., 2023a). Ayub's piety can also be seen from the burnt offerings he made for his children to atone for their sins. Prayer and praise are ways to express gratitude and obedience to God. Confession of sin is an important aspect of this belief, as Ayub acknowledged the possible sins of his children.

Religious practices, such as burnt offerings, prayer, and praise, played a very important role in daily life. Burnt offerings, for example, were seen as a means of repairing one's relationship with God and forgiveness of sins one had committed. Meanwhile, prayer and praise become media to express gratitude and obedience to Him. Confession of sins is also a crucial element in this religious practice (Rumbi, 2019).

This religious context has a deep impact on personal and societal life. Piety and obedience are the main foundations of the relationship between humans and God. Through religious practice, this relationship is strengthened, and piety can be maintained (Reinhard Florentino Sirait et al., 2023b). For example, the Book of Ayub shows how faith and the implementation of religious values influenced the decisions and actions that Ayub took in facing various difficulties.

This religious context reflects ancient Jewish traditions that placed great emphasis on piety, obedience, and reverence for God. This tradition teaches the importance of maintaining a relationship with God and carrying out His commandments (Susanta, 2019). The Book of Ayub is an important part of this tradition and

provides an example of how religious beliefs and practices can influence a person's life.

Cultural Context

In Ayub's time, language played an important role in people's lives. Hebrew is used as the main language in daily life, worship and communication. Meanwhile, Aramaic was used as a trade language to interact with other nations. These two languages help strengthen the cultural and religious identity of the community (Wenas & Darmawan, 2017).

In the context of clothing, people in Ayub's time wore long robes as their main clothing and turbans as their head covering. The design of these clothes is simple and practical, but has a significant role in worship and celebrations. The robe symbolizes purity and piety, while the turban implies respect for God (Wahyuningrum, 2005).

The staple food consumed by people at that time consisted of bread and wheat, as well as various fruits such as grapes and dates. They also consume meat from livestock such as cows, goats and sheep, as well as drinks such as water, wine and milk. This food diversity not only fulfills physical needs, but also contains spiritual meaning (Lasor, 2000).

Music and art became an inseparable part of the Ayub Culture era. Music is often used in worship, accompanied by songs, flutes, and harps, as well as traditional dancing during celebrations. Carvings and calligraphy also decorate buildings and furniture, reflecting the artistic abilities of the people. Through music and art, the sense of togetherness and piety in society is strengthened (Sirait, 2021).

Other cultures include simple architecture that reflects the values of simplicity and piety. Important celebrations, such as Easter, Sukkot, and Yom Kippur, are held to commemorate historical events in religion. The tradition of sacrifice and prayer is also an integral part of daily life (Yohanes, 2021). In the social aspect, the patriarchal system strengthens the role of the father as the leader of the family and society.

Overall, the culture of Ayub's day reflected strong values of piety, friendship, and togetherness. This cultural heritage not only strengthens the community's identity, but also preserves rich religious traditions.

The Situation That Occurs in Ayub 2:1-10

The meeting between GOD and Satan is the starting point of the conflict that occurs in the Book of Ayub. Satan arrogantly faced the LORD, trying to persuade Him to harm Ayub, a pious and God-fearing man. Ayub lived in the Land of Edom with his family, had seven sons, three daughters, and many possessions such as sheep, camels, oxen and female donkeys (Runesi, 2021).

Satan, known as God's enemy, accused Ayub of only being pious because God protected him and blessed his life. Satan asked for permission to harm Ayub, which GOD then granted with certain limitations. Satan then harmed Ayub by destroying his property and children. Despite this, Ayub remained loyal to GOD and did not blame Him. This meeting shows Satan's role as a tempter and tester of faith. Satan tried to separate Ayub from GOD, but Ayub remained steadfast in his piety (Sandrianto, 2020). This conflict also questions GOD's justice and wisdom, and emphasizes the importance of patience and trust in facing difficulties. In a theological context, this encounter shows the struggle between good and evil, as well as GOD's role as the controller of all things. Ayub is an example of piety and strong belief, while Satan is a symbol of evil and rebellion (Tolanda & Maiaweng, 2011).

Based on the explanation above, there are several important things that we can take away. First, the meeting between GOD and Satan. Satan tried to persuade GOD to harm Ayub, under the pretext that Ayub's loyalty to GOD was only because of the various blessings he received (Ayub 2:4-5). Second, permission from GOD. GOD finally gave Satan permission to test Ayub, with the limitation that Satan was not allowed to kill (Ayub 2:6). Third, the suffering experienced by Ayub. As a consequence of this permission, Ayub suffered terrible suffering, including terrible cancer, both physically and mentally (Ayub 2:7-8). Fourth, the reaction of Ayub's wife. In very difficult conditions, his wife suggested that Ayub curse God and give up (Ayub 2:9). Lastly, Ayub's faithfulness. Despite accepting this suggestion, Ayub refused and remained loyal to GOD. He shows that after

receiving goodness from GOD, we must also be ready to face various difficulties that may come (Ayub 2:10).

Text of Ayub 2:1-10 in Hebrew

א וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם—וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, לְהִתְנַצֵּב עַל-יְהוָה; וַיָּבֹאוּ
בְּגַם-הַשָּׁטָן בְּתוֹכָם, לְהִתְנַצֵּב עַל-יְהוָה.¹
ב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן, אֵי מִזֶּה תָּבֹא; וַיַּעַן הַשָּׁטָן אֶת-יְהוָה,
וַיֹּאמֶר, מִשָּׁט בְּאָרְץ, וּמִהִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּהּ.²
ג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן, הֲשִׁמֹּת לְבָבְךָ אֶל-עַבְדֵי אֵיבֹב—כִּי אֵין
קָמָהוּ בְּאָרְץ אִישׁ תָּם וַיֵּשֶׁר יָרָא אֱלֹהִים, וְסָר מִרְעֵ; וַעֲדוּבו
מִמְחֹזֵיק בְּתַמְתּוֹ, וַתְּסִיתָנִי בּוֹ לְבַלְעוֹ חֲנָם.³
ד וַיַּעַן הַשָּׁטָן אֶת-יְהוָה, וַיֹּאמֶר: עוֹר בְּעַד-עוֹר, וְכָל אֲשֶׁר
לְאִישׁ—יִתֵּן.⁴ בְּעַד נִפְשׁוֹ
ה אִוְלָם שְׁלַח-נָא יָדְךָ, וּגַע אֶל-עַצְמוֹ וְאֶל-בְּשָׂרוֹ—אִם-לֹא
אֶל-פְּנֵיךָ.⁵ יְבָרְכֶךָ
ו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-הַשָּׁטָן, הִנּוּ בְיָדְךָ: אֵךְ, אֶת-נִפְשׁוֹ שְׁמֹר.⁶
ז וַיִּצְאָ, הַשָּׁטָן, מֵאֶת, פְּנֵי יְהוָה; וַיָּבֹא אֶת-אֵיּוֹב בְּשַׁחֲיוֹ רָע, מִכָּפַר
וַיִּגְלוּ עַד וַעַד קִדְקִדּוֹ.⁷
ח וַיִּקַּח-לוֹ חֲרָשׁ, לְהִתְגַּרְדּוֹ בּוֹ; וְהוּא, יוֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ-הָאָפֶר.⁸
ט וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִשְׁתּוֹ, עַדָּךְ מִחֹזֵיק בְּתַמְתְּךָ; בְּרַב אֱלֹהִים, וַמֵּת.⁹
י וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, כְּדַבֵּר אַחַת הַנְּבִלּוֹת תְּדַבְּרֵי—גַם אֶת-הַטּוֹב
נִקְבַּל מֵאֵת הָאֱלֹהִים, וְאֶת-הָרָע לֹא נִקְבַּל; בְּכָל-זֹאת לֹא-חָטָא
{ אֵיּוֹב, בְּשִׁפְתָיו. }¹⁰ פ

The Relevance of Ayub's Story in Facing Life's Trials

Life trials from a Biblical perspective

The trials of life expressed from a Biblical perspective, especially through the story of Ayub in Ayub 2:1-10, offer a deep understanding of the suffering and trials faced by godly people. The story of Ayub is one of the oldest and most moving stories in the Bible, which illustrates dramatically how difficult a test must be passed by someone whose life is righteous (Yulius, 2016).

In this chapter, we see how Satan again tests Ayub's faith after previously taking away his wealth and children. Now, Satan attacks Ayub's body with a very terrible disease. The suffering that Ayub experienced came repeatedly and was very unexpected. From here we learn that tests in life can appear in various forms and at times that we least expect.

Unfortunately, there are still believers who have a mistaken understanding of suffering. There are those who think that people who fear God cannot possibly experience suffering, because it is considered contrary to God's will (Bora, 2020). Some people conclude that any suffering must be the result of sin. However, the Bible gives us a different understanding. Ayub's story clearly provides evidence that a pious and honest person, who fears God and shuns evil, can still experience suffering (Ayub 1:1).

Although universally, suffering is often considered a form of God's punishment for human sin, as Ayub's three friends emphasize, on a personal level, the suffering experienced by believers is not always caused by their own fault. Ayub is a clear example that suffering can occur without any underlying sin. In His sovereignty, God allowed Ayub to experience all of this to express His purpose and will. The Bible clearly shows that even though Ayub lived in righteousness and feared God, he still experienced suffering, teaching us that trials in life do not always reflect a person's spiritual condition (Stevanus, 2019).

Believers must understand the issue of suffering objectively and honestly. And the Book of Ayub brings an objective and honest understanding of suffering, that suffering is an integral part of human life. No one is spared from suffering. Likewise, believers must have the correct paradigm regarding suffering. Suffering must be interpreted and accepted as an integral part of human life without exception (Stevanus & Marbun, 2019).

Therefore, when believers face life trials, they must interpret the suffering as an unavoidable reality of human life on earth and that God will not give life trials or suffering that exceed their abilities.

The story of Ayub 2:1-10 teaches us about how Ayub faced life's trials such as:

Tested Faith: Even though he was very sick, Ayub still maintained his faith in God. He did not curse God, even when his wife advised him to do so (Reinhard Florentino Sirait et al., 2023b).

Deep Questions about God's Justice: Ayub's story raises fundamental questions about why godly people should suffer. This question

continues to be a struggle for humanity throughout history (Stevanus, 2018).

God's Sovereignty: Even though Ayub did not understand why he had to suffer, he still believed that God was in control of everything (Adam, 2018).

Our attitude as Christians is the right one in facing life's trials

As a believer, an attitude of rejection, let alone blaming God when facing suffering, is something that cannot be justified (Gea, 2020). Suffering is a reality that can be experienced by anyone, including those who believe. So, we can understand that suffering is an inseparable part of a Christian's life, as seen in the story of Ayub. He was a man who feared God, was pious, and shunned evil, but still experienced various trials.

As believers, we will definitely face various tests in life. However, the Bible provides clear instructions on how to respond to these challenges, especially in the story of Ayub 2:1-10.

Ayub's righteousness in the Bible is a great example of how a person can defend his guilt to God in the midst of extraordinary suffering. Ayub, a pious and rich man, experienced the loss of his possessions, children, and health in a short time. Despite experiencing such severe trials, Ayub remained firm in his faith and never doubted God's justice and wisdom (Reinhard Florentino Sirait et al., 2023a).

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that Ayub's life experiences contained in Ayub 2:1-10 have deep relevance for Christians today in facing life's current trials. Even though Ayub experienced extraordinary suffering, he never blamed God. Instead, he chose to remain faithful and recognize His sovereignty. For Ayub, the most important thing was not how great or how long he experienced difficulties, but how deeply he could feel God's presence in these difficult situations. Ayub's confession illustrates a valuable lesson for us in this era. The life trials we face are not intended to make us give up or blame God. On the contrary, through the suffering and various tests we experience, we are invited to remain faithful, trust Him, and deepen God's purposes for our lives. In this way, we can

use Ayub's experience as a source of strength and inspiration to face challenges in everyday life.

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