

Job

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- [0 : 0 0] The book of Job and the 25th chapter and some words you will find in the 6th verse.
That is the last verse of this short chapter. Job 25 verse 6. The Son of Man, which is a worm.
The Son of Man, which is a worm. I want to speak this afternoon on what may appear to some of you to be rather a strange subject.
I can assure you that it is a scriptural subject and a spiritual subject. But nonetheless, at the outset, you may feel that it is a strange subject for such an occasion as this.
Well, I am not ashamed to bring it before you. It is the subject of worms. A worm. The Son of Man, which is a worm.
- [1 : 2 3] I suppose most of you who are familiar with strict Baptist hymnology and with Gatsby's hymn book in particular will grasp the significance of what I have to say.
The very first hymn of our hymn book begins thus. Great God, how infinite art thou, what's worthless worm are we.
Let the whole race of creatures bow and bring their praise to them. But then, good Dr. Ross was not as strict Baptist.
He was a churchman. Would to God there were more like him in the Church of England today. Worms then. The hymn book abound in such expression.
A guilty, weak, and helpless worm. On thy kind arms I fall. Be thou my strength, my righteousness, my Jesus, and my all.
- [2 : 3 9] The Son of Man, which is a worm. Let me tell you what brought this subject to my mind. A little while ago, a good lady came to me and said, I do not like those hymns that you sing which have this expression, worms.
Worms. She said, I am not a worm. I am a human being. And I consider that this language is degrading. I consider it is wrong to use such expressions when speaking of human beings.
It was too much for her. She attended one of our chapels. And yet, she said, whenever there is a line of a hymn containing this expression, I immediately stop singing.
I will not acknowledge myself to be like a worm. Well, the good lady should have thought a little more before she spake.
It promoted certain thoughts in my own mind because I can remember when I too would have wholeheartedly agreed with her. I would have said, and I don't want to sing about worms or hear about worms either.
- [4 : 0 0] But then, when the Lord deals with us, we begin to look at things in a different way. I will touch on this in a moment. But this is what started it off, you see. Someone openly said, and honestly said, I do not like to be turned a worm.
A worthless worm. A guilty worm. A helpless worm. I do not want such things said about me. Well, listen. And every one of you in this chapel listen.

And listen to it well. The Bible says you are. Would you quarrel with the word of God? How much less man? That is a worm.

And the son of man, which is a worm. Oh, but you say, this was only Bill bad speaking. No.

This is the Holy Spirit speaking. These things are written for our learning. All scripture is given by inspiration of God.

[5 : 02] This is the language of God himself. Man, which is a worm. Supposing I had said to that good lady, you don't mind being called a lamb, do you?

Or a sheep of the flock of God and of Christ? Oh, she wouldn't have minded that a bit. You don't mind being thought of as a member of the body of Christ?

A hand? A foot? A finger? No. This would be acceptable, no doubt. You don't mind being considered a living stone in the building of God?

No. Quite nice to be thought of as that of stone upon the foundation, a part of the building of God. You don't even mind being described as a branch of the living mind.

You hope indeed that you are fruitful and not one to be cut off. Well, this term here is no less spiritual, no less biblical, no less applicable than those which, to some extent, we are prepared to accept.

[6 : 08] How much less man that is a worm and the son of man which is a worm. So I've now laid the foundation of the subject and introduced it.

Now, I am not here to give a natural history lesson. Indeed, I don't know enough about this aspect of the subject to give a natural history lesson.

But nonetheless, I have a pair of eyes. I read the book of nature to some extent and the observations I make are backed up with some reference to books which one is able to read from time to time.

Well, now, let me say a word or two about a worm as many people would regard such a creature. For a start, a worm is something which is very much associated with the earth.

It's something which is weak. It's something which is helpless. It's something which is repulsive to many people. Personally, I know there are many exceptions.

[7 : 16] Personally, I do not like touching a worm. I'm speaking of a normal earthworm. I know in the Bible, the word worm often refers to a grub or a caterpillar.

But here, I am thinking in terms of the ordinary earthworm earthworm that we find in our gardens or upon our lawns, I say there's something to me at any rate repulsive about catching hold of them.

So here is something that's repulsive. Again, may I say this about a worm, that it is blind. It has no eye.

It is blind. It's a creature that is blind and yet strange to relate. Though it is blind, yet it hates light. It will not come up out of its burrow, out of its little hole when it's daylight, unless it has to.

It reacts to light in that it turns away from it. Now do you begin to see where I am taking you? Here is man in the sight of God.

[8 : 19] That's what this chapter is about. How then can man be justified with God or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?

Behold, even to the moon and it shineth not. Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man that is a worm and the son of man, which is a worm.

A worm, I say, hates the light. And men love the darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil.

A worm, I say, is blind. The God of this world hath blinded their eyes. You see, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, but they are foolishness unto him.

What about what a worm feeds on? Why, it feeds upon soil. It feeds upon refuge. Its total delight is to feed upon such things.

[9 : 21] And what is the appetite of the natural man? You know what that appetite is. He feeds upon those things which are corrupt. He feeds upon those things which are repulsive and which are obnoxious in the sight of a holy God.

So in regard to its appetite, a worm feeds upon corruption. Indeed, it is depicted in the Scriptures as feeding upon death and upon the dead.

Oh, how repulsive. But then, when you consider the natural appetite of man, do I need to draw a picture of this country today? The things that are displayed publicly upon hoardings, the things that people are seeing on television sets, the vileness of the cinema and the stage in the day in which we live.

Yes, and the public press too, to show you that man by nature is as a worm in matters of his appetite. It needs no further amplification.

Here is man then. And yet a worm is weak and helpless. Can you, why the world I know has a saying that even a worm will turn.

[10 : 40] I've not seen it happen yet. A worm is defenseless. A worm is weak. A worm is puny. Can you imagine a worm standing before you and defying you?

Yet such a creature stands before the eternal God and declares, I defy. This is fallen man. With his fallen appetite, with his blindness, with his hatred of life, as he turns from it, yet he has the audacity, though he be but a worm, in the sight of the eternal God, to stand and to defy him.

This is human nature. I don't believe I'm exaggerating. I don't believe I'm going outside of the pages of God's word in depicting man who is a worm.

So helpless, so weak, so easily crushed. I wonder how many have been crushed during this past week. Have you stopped to consider that since last Lord's Day, when you gathered here in God's house, if you gathered here, how many have been ushered from time into eternity in a moment, whose lives have been terminated, who could do nothing more about it, with all modern science, medicine and so on, in which people play such confidence, man has not yet conquered death.

Man has not yet escaped his pronounced judgment of God, and he is still a weak and helpless worm. So there is the first section of this object.

[12 : 21] This afternoon. Man who is a worm. But now let me take it a stage further. I would turn for a moment to the 22nd Psalm.

Because I don't want to leave you here any longer. We may spend some time, too much time perhaps, speaking of our malady, our illness, our disease, our state, and not enough perhaps in pointing sinners to the remedy.

Well now, I have something else to say about this subject of worms, which you will find in Psalm 22, a very solemn psalm, and again in the sixth verse.

Psalm 22. But I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

You will note that this psalm is a psalm of David. And it would appear then that David, the man after God's own heart, the man who had done such great things in the Lord's name, the man whom God so exalted and set the people under him, David, it would appear, was not ashamed to make this statement concerning himself as in the sight of God.

[13 : 51] I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of all the people. But then, may I ask this question?

Who is it that David truly speaks of? Of himself, or some other man? The Lord Jesus, when speaking of the Scriptures, and of the revelation concerning himself in the Scriptures, referred not only to Moses and to the prophets, but to the Psalms.

Now, if this psalm, Psalm 22, does not depict Jesus Christ, then we do not read our Bibles accurately. We do not read our Bibles rightly.

We have scales upon our eyes. Listen to the very opening of this very solemn psalm, which deals with the sufferings of not merely David, though he may have suffered much, but of great David, greater son.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me? And from the words of my roaring. When is that Scripture quoted again, I ask you?

[15 : 10] It is quoted as the Son of God himself hung upon the cross. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Read this psalm through. Read of one that cries, I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

My strength is dried up like a pot's hood, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me unto the dust of death, and so on. They part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture.

But be not thou far from me, O Lord, O my strength, haste thee to help me. I say, here we have a picture of a suffering Savior in all his humiliation and degradation.

What does he say? I am a worm and no man. Ashamed to be called a worm, the Lord Jesus himself became as a worm, came down to hold converse with worms clothed in such feeble flesh as they.

[16 : 29] My friends, turn again to those passages of scripture that speak of the Lord Jesus Christ in his humiliation. Think of the one who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation.

You're troubled, aren't you, when your reputation is being discounted? But he made himself of no reputation. You say, well, he took upon himself the form of a servant and so on.

More than that, he cries out, I am a worm and no man. Well, you say, I know that this dear man, this God man hung upon the cross of Calvary.

I know that they spat upon him. I know that they plucked out his beard. I know that they crowned his head with thorns. I know that they pierced his hands and his feet. I know that they thrust that cruel spear into his side.

I know they did all these things. Then, my friend, have you considered why they did it? God hath made him to be sin for us. He who knew no sin.

[17 : 55] He was not a worm in this sense that he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. He had none of those vile characteristics of which one has spoken concerning fallen man.

And yet, it pleased the Lord to bruise him. Thou hast made his soul an offering for sin. For man, O miracle of grace, the sinless saviour, died.

Have you been taught by grace that you are a worm, the son of man which is a worm, in the sight of a holy God, that you cannot make yourself clean, that you cannot make yourself right, that you are under condemnation?

Then, may that same teaching of grace and the teaching of the Holy Spirit lead you to this, that God in his infinite mercy and the Son in his infinite love condescended to come just where you are, just where I am, that he may lift up poor worms, that guilty worms might rise.

Did the sovereign of the sky, says the hymn writer, stoop down, to wretchedness and dust, that guilty worm might rise.

[19 : 23] You say I'm a poor, helpless, sinful, hell-deserving worm. Then look upon what God has done in Christ. See him in the sinner's place.

Oh, for a look of faith there. Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth. It's a very solemn thing, but a very wonderful thing.

Take that psalm home and read it. It makes deep reading. It needs to be read prayerfully. But consider there a suffering saviour that cried out, I am a worm and no man.

Of course he could have come down from the cross. Of course he could have called those legions of angels. Of course he could have dealt with them in a moment by the breath of his mouth.

But he submitted. I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down. I have power to take it again.

[20 : 29] And in all that degradation, in all that humiliation, the hatred of man and the rock of God who viewed him in that solemn moment, I believe, as the sin bearer of his people, he cries out, I am a worm and no man.

For all incarnate God could bear with strength enough and none to spare. the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

His death was substitutionary. His death was sacrificial. And he is the great justifier who suffered the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

How then can man be justified with God? It is God that justifies it. How does he justify it? How does he make a sinner right in his sight as though he never sinned? Why?

Because he puts his own dear son in a sinner's place. And those who look to him by faith are saved with an everlasting salvation though they feel in themselves as weak as worms.

[21 : 38] It's a good hymn, I say. In themselves as weak as worms. How can poor believers stand? tell them. can you say that? Lord, I have felt to be a worm but great and infinite is thy mercy.

Now then, lastly, thirdly and lastly, let me tell you something else about the worm. I've spoken of the degradation of fallen man. I've spoken of one that came from above and stood in a guilty sinner's place that helpless worms might rise.

Now let me speak of another matter which you will read of in the chapter that I read by way of lesson. There you will read this. Fear not thou worm Jacob and ye few men of Israel.

Here is a message to the people of God. This Jacob, this Israel is not merely relative, it is relative to the Lord's ancient people Israel but it is also relative to the spiritual Israel, to the people of God in every day and generation of whatsoever nation under heaven they may belong.

They are Jacob, they are Israel and the word to them is fear not thou worm. By whom should Jacob now arise?

[23 : 05] For Jacob's friends are few and watch and strike us with surprise they seem divided to. What a poor weak thing the church of God often seems to be.

How futile seem to be the people of God. How small and insignificant appear to be the forces of good and godliness.

then let this message come down through the ages. It's still the word of God. Fear thou not for I am with thee. Be not dismayed for I am thy God.

I will strengthen thee yea I will help thee yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. The church of God in the sight of the world is as a worm.

Crush it, trample it, cut it in two. You know it still lives. You know that about a worm. If you cut one in two inadvertently with your spade, the two halves still live, still reproduce.

[24 : 10] The worm is a very wonderful little creature. Let me say something now in favour of the worm. The good poet Cowper, you know, he said something like this, that he would not number on his list of friends a man that could carelessly and lightly trample a worm under foot.

He had a regard for worms. Well, so have I in a way. Listen to this now. Let me just tell you a few facts. You know, young people, there are 150,000 worms to every square acre of ground.

At least, that's what the Children's Encyclopedia tells me. So there are a great many worms to every square acre of ground. But then that goes all over the world.

You know that. There's worms all over the world. Millions and millions of worms. They're working away out of sight. They're working away and no one ever thinks of them.

And no one ever notices them. No one ever takes any notice of them. The only thing you think about is sometimes you squash one under your foot and then it doesn't worry you because it's so worth that.

[25 : 11] But you know that the worms are a very wonderful little number of creatures appointed by God. If there were no worms, there would be no fertility.

If there were no worms, we should soon begin to starve. There would be no trees, there would be no grass, there would be no living vegetation because of the activity of the worm, because he's delving down and aerating the soil, because he's carrying down the vegetation into the ground and making it fruitful, unseen, unknown, unnoticed, despised.

Thou worm Jacob, doesn't that remind you of those who are the salt of the earth? Doesn't that remind you of the despised children of God in every day and generation?

Thou worm, let the world treat you as a worm, let the world trample you under its feet, let the world despise and hate me, I will glory in thy name.

Listen, if you're one of God's worms, you're one of those poor helpless things that says in yourself you're as weak as a worm, fear not because you know the Lord uses worms, he maintains the fertility and the fruitfulness of the world by worms and he carries on his work in this world, the work of God, the work of grace by worms, Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees, the treasure is in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

[26 : 53] Of course you feel like a worm, God has taught you to feel like a worm, but how wonderful is the work of the worm. Now listen to what we have here. I'm not taking the scriptures out of context, listen, I could never quite understand this passage of scripture until one day I did read about the wonderful work of the worm.

Areas of the world that have been completely devastated by war, areas of the world that have been completely ruined by man's greed and over cultivation and have been left as wildernesses, then the worms have moved in, the worms have delved, the worms have worked in darkness and in blindness and yet they have worked and continued to work and those areas have become fertile again.

the mighty worm. Fear not thou worm Jacob and ye few men of Israel. I will help thee saith the Lord and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel.

Behold I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth. My margin says having mouths. Having mouths.

The mouth of the worm. It takes the soil. It also takes little tiny bits of stone and these mingle in its little body and wonderfully the soil is ground up and then it is cast up upon the surface.

[28 : 24] You know what a worm cast is? And there is new revigorated soil simply because the worm has taken it into its mouth. It moves tons and tons and tons of soil every year by the mouth of worms working quietly.

Oh behold I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having mouths. Thou shalt thrash the mountains and beat them small and shalt make the hills as char.

The work of worms as leveled ground that has been raised up in thumps and mountains and so on. Made the soil of pine made it fertile. Thou shalt fan them and the wind shalt carry them away and the whirlwind shall scatter them and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

Many a poor preacher has felt himself to be a worm in the sight of God and in the sight of man and yet has gone forth and through his mouth the Lord has converted sinners and brought them unto himself.

The kingdom of God has been extended. The light of divine truth has shone forth. the strongholds of Satan have been overthrown. Fear not thou worm Jacob.

[29 : 45] You know if it wasn't for such a word as this I wouldn't be in this pocket this afternoon because that's where I feel to be. Oh to be numbered amongst one of these favoured worms.

These worms of Jacob who see in themselves they have nothing. They are easily crushed. They have no strength. They have nothing. All is nothing worth.

What if a worm came to you and said look I'll give you all I've got for this or that. You'd laugh at him. That's if he could say anything I mean. Why you'd say you're only a worm.

What have you got? What can you do? You poor weak helpless thing. And then the Lord he takes such creatures as this. Weakness, helpless, helpless sinners.

And through his own dear son who himself became as a worm. He reconciles them unto himself. He breathes his Holy Spirit into their hearts.

[30 : 39] He puts his life within them. And though they still may appear to be worms to those that hate them, yet they are the very instrument of God and of righteousness.

Oh, you say, well, I haven't got a very bright pathway. Never mind, the worm works best in the dark. You say, well, I just seem to have a constant daily round and common task.

Never mind, so has the worm. Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them, not remember the worm. God does a wonderful work, I say, in nature through this humble creature.

And God does a wonderful work amongst men and nations by those who walk humbly with their God. Well, now, I've finished my subject here.

There are other things one could say, but the time is gone. I hope I've not left you without a profitable thought or two. So don't despise the hymns anymore about the worms.

[31 : 39] Don't be afraid to sing about them. It's scriptural. I've quoted you three good scriptures on it. And may the Lord teach you on the one hand what you are by nature.

May he show you the solemnity yet the wonder of the sufferings of his son who was brought into such degradation. And may through his mercy help you so to walk humbly with him that though you feel in yourself your all is nothing worth yet the Lord in his mercy may condescend from time to time to use you as a member of his living church while here be loved.

May he add his blessing. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.