

Job

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Preacher: Elsom, Thomas Cousins (1910-1988)

[0 : 00] It is alive and sleep When the poor prisoner threw far■■ Sees others walk at last Ere does he mourn his lonely state And long for a discharge Thus I confide in unbelief My loss of freedom more And spend my hair in frugly grace

Until my Lord returns to late night And I will be able to see you in the night And I will be able to see you in the night And I will be able to see you in the night And I will be able to see you in the night And I will be able to see you in the night In the night Hope you are doing the night And we are creating the happy■■Query And I will flee by your closed . . .

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[3 : 36] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

To help me, friends, I'll direct your attention to the book of Job, chapter 23, verses 3 and 4.

[5 : 47] Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat.

I'll take my cause before him, and fill my mouth with argument.

Is there someone here, is there, is there someone here, looking for the Lord, waiting for him to come, speak peace, to bless your soul, to make known, and to make known, and to make known, and to make known forgiveness, to manifest mercy?

Is there someone here, for this word is not left on record, just to read, as an account of a poor man in a past day, who traveled through a wilderness, and came to a place, and came to a place of the world, and came to a place of the world, and came to a place of real need, and then was delivered, and thus to tickle your ears with something that was interesting.

But it's been left on record, friends, as the experience of the children of God. It is to be your pathway, if you belong to Christ, according to eternal purpose.

[7 : 55] Not to your choosing, but set in him by a triune Jehovah, in a day gone by, before you were born.

Here we have then, a record of a child of God, and the pathway, though not always the same in detail, runs the same throughout.

It leads to Christ, and out of self. And this is the whole object of salvation, that sinners shall be lifted out of themselves, to consider themselves as naught, but to crown the dear Son of God, King of Kings, Lord of Lords.

And so today, my friends, if the Lord will be pleased to help me, I'm going to try again, and trace the way.

The way the children of God do come, that there might be encouragement for you, and for me also. That the Spirit of God will lift up his own truth, and sear it in our hearts.

[9 : 17] That the enemy may not have that power to keep us walking in darkness, but that we may find him, who is, and ever will be, Jesus.

The friend of sinners. Who's the character then? Well, first of all, friends, the character is a sinner saved by grace.

And the character recorded in this book of Job is a sinner saved by grace, but loved of God and precious in Christ.

It's a strange pathway. For we find in the opening of the book of Job, the Lord speaking of this man in such a way, a wonderful way.

Satan was there. And Satan was endeavoring to make accusation against Job and against God too.

[10 : 22] For God says to Job, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and assureth evil.

So here we find at the very onset of this character is one whom God speaks highly of. One whom he is perfectly satisfied with.

But the satisfaction is not in Job the man, not in his flesh. The satisfaction God finds in Job is in those perfections that he finds in his own dear son.

But he sees Job in Christ. So he sets before Satan this man, an upright man. But look what he allows to come to pass.

Satan says to him, to God, doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not thou made an hedge about him and about his house and about all that he hath on every side?

[11 : 37] Thou hast blessed the work of his hands and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now and touch all that he hath and he will curse thee to thy face.

Now here we find the enemy endeavouring to belittle what God had said. Endeavouring to prove that Job wouldn't stand the test.

And so this account is left on record for you and for me. For our pathway will be much the same, friends. The Lord in his sovereignty saw fit to put Job into that condition where he hath to lean upon his God.

There was nowhere else to look. And this is the reason for this record. Because you will come in just the same place providing you're found in the same condition as Job was found.

What is this? A child of God, my friends, found in Christ before you were born. No making up to it now.

[12 : 54] No in this time state saying, as many do, Ah, it is a good thing to accept Christ. It is a good thing to have a religion.

Why, you get on in life too. You get on with people if you've got a good religion. Nay, my friends, this character, a child of God, according to the eternal purpose of God, is a sinner.

A sinner called by grace. And here then we must examine ourselves. Are we in the way? For Job was brought into a dreadful place.

He lost all that he had. He lost his loved ones. He lost all that meant something to him with regard to the comforts of this life. All the material things were taken away from him.

And then the Lord saw fit to lay upon his body that curse of Boyle. He was brought very low physically.

[14 : 03] But he didn't lose his guard. You've got, my friend, something far deeper than all that, haven't you?

Do you know it? You've got a wicked heart, haven't you? What about that? For the word of God declares, The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

But deeper than this, perhaps more clear, The wicked shall be turned into hell. What need there is to know this God?

The character in our text who seeks to know where this God is, Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

That this character is brought out of nature's darkness by this God in the first instant. There is an appointed time for this character is seen before he was born to be a sinner, born in sin, chafed in iniquity.

[15 : 25] It isn't like today, is it? People don't want to hear about sin today. So much easier to have a comfortable religion to talk about Jesus and what he's done for sinners, but not to talk too much about the sinner side of it.

Talk more about the love of God. My friends, the Lord, when he calls his people by his precious grace, he convinces of sin.

You come there. He brings one into a dark place. He gives him to know, not by theory, but by practice.

Practice that is an understanding that he is a sinner. For he reveals to him he has got a wicked heart. He reveals to him that unless he's kept, he'll go just the same as anyone else does.

He'll run in those things that please his flesh. How far? A long, long way unless the Lord keeps you just as far as the worldling does.

[16 : 44] Are you any better? Can you manage your life any better in your own strength? The Lord convinces them of sin and he teaches his people how to pray.

Do you pray? How many pray in themselves? Look again into the word of God, my friends.

Remember the parable of the two men who went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a Republican. Do you pray like the Pharisee?

You do, unless the Lord helps you. Your prayers don't reach heaven, my friends, unless the Spirit of God be in them, not to obtain mercy.

The children of God pray because the Lord teaches them how to pray. And he brings them at this time of calling when he opens their eyes to see their wretched condition, he brings them into the experience of the public and God be merciful to me, a sinner.

[18 : 04] You pray like that, not yesterday, but today as well, for this one, separated from a dying world by the living God, taught to know without this God he must perish.

He can't find much help in himself as the days go by. Again and again there is that need, Lord, help me.

Lord, help me. You come that way. Well, my friends, if the Lord has indeed brought you this way, you'll have some troubles.

Not necessarily Job's troubles, but you'll have some. You won't be able to run with the world as easily as the world runs with itself.

You won't be able to do those things that men do continually without much concern. You'll have a conscience.

[19 : 19] Why, you had one before, you say. Ah, it'll be a softer one now. There'll be anxiety at times, real concern at others.

So did not I because of the fear of the Lord. This will be your way to bring you into trouble. Men won't like you.

You'll find a greater trouble than that, though. This great adversary who came in and spoke to God about Job, Satan.

He knows you, but he knows too much about you. That's where the trouble comes in. He knows you've got no strength in yourself to fight this battle, the battle of life, to continue in that pathway.

The Lord has decreed you shall walk in that narrow path. It's not the broad way that leads to hell. It's the narrow path that leads to heaven.

[20 : 39] Satan will be a menace. He knows what's in your heart. My friends, it is easy to read the word.

It is vastly different to walk in it. And there were a people in days of old who said, we will not have this man to reign over us.

And the child of God in his flesh at times says, it isn't the way I'm going. That way, I'm going my own way.

As the battle goes on and Satan says, it is the best way. He encourages one to walk in those ways that are wrong and they bring trouble.

Circumstances in one's life from time to time are all upside down. And if you and I were prepared to examine ourselves closely, we would find for the most part we brought it upon ourselves.

[21 : 55] But we don't look always. Sometimes don't want to. Sin, the bottom of it all. Trouble.

Other times, of course, they come. We can't put our finger to them. But they come. you need the Lord to undertake.

There's someone here this morning who carries a cross. The Lord knows about it. The flesh doesn't like it.

Do you pray about it? Job's great trouble and the Lord was in the midst of all these things that were laid upon him.

He got no friends either. Those three friends, he said to them, miserable comforters are ye all.

[22 : 59] There's only one friend, my friends, that is Jesus. Jesus. You've got a case for him. And are you walking as Job walked?

Oh, that I knew where I might find him. You don't walk alone, you walk with Job. The psalmist was there in the 42nd psalm.

Oh, he says, as the heart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. This way you are. Why is it?

Why are you in this condition? Is it to clear up a trouble, to do with this life? Or is it because there's something within deeper than that?

[24 : 08] Sin lies heavy upon your soul. The psalmist says, my tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually sound to me, where is thy God?

Who said that? The enemy oftentimes says it. You're in darkness, you're in trouble. where's your God?

Where's your religion? I remember, friends, something very personal it is. I don't know whether I've told you before, but my dear mother, now in heaven, had a life extremely hard.

My father, brought up under the sound of truth, turned away from it, never returned back. And he oftentimes sneered at my dear mother over her religion.

She knew what it was to have that where is now thy God. And there was an occasion when, through lack of money, there was a time when the rent ran long, so long, not paid, there was an eviction order.

[25 : 44] My father said, see what your religion now will do for you. Just the same, friends, where is now thy God?

But the children of God are able to say, my God is in the heavens, he who made heaven and earth.

The children of God are able to say, the Lord God omnipotent, reigneth. The children of God are able to say, Jesus lives.

Ah, but far more than this, men oft times say things about natural things. Men who talk about natural things are only natural in their thought, but they come to nothing.

nothing. But when the children of God express these things, they are living realities, and the Spirit of God sets in their hearts faith in the declaration of them.

[27 : 02] It was so with my mother. There never was an eviction order. The money came, the way was made. But Satan says again and again, where is now thy God?

You in such a place as that? An exercise in heart, something that is found among the impossible things with men.

Jesus said, the things that are impossible with men are possible with God. there's nothing too hard for the Lord.

Your case too hard oft times is considered so by self when found in this condition.

Oh, that I knew where I might find him. But you know, my friends, you and I have to learn continually never to learn in this time state to rest on it, but have to learn again and again.

[28 : 16] God is a sovereign. His ways are past, finding out. God, in that psalm we read together, that 77th psalm, the psalmist says, thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

He's a sovereign God, God, but he will not permit his people to fall into black despair. He'll never come into their place of destruction, for again, the eternal God that he is, has left on record through his servant, the poet, his eternal thought moves on his undisturbed affairs.

He's made a way already. The way was made for Job, although he walked in this pathway of darkness.

The Lord was simply bringing him into an experience where he couldn't lean upon himself, he must commit all his way unto his God, but the way had been prepared as the morning, for Job was to come into their place of deliverance ultimately.

He was to be brought even in this chapter to a place of sweet, gracious submission, for he says further on down the chapter, but he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold, but it's the walking out of this dark place, oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even unto his seat.

[30 : 23] Have you got that case this morning? So deep it is that man can't help you, only the Lord in his appearing can bring forth light in your darkness.

Who gave you the exercise? Oh, it is sweet friends, it is a mercy to be able to examine our condition in this way, for man naturally has no time for God.

Man doesn't continue in such an exercise as this, unless it be God inspired. Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

And I've said sometimes as I've proved it in my own experience, the Lord isn't like man. He doesn't dangle things before another just to tease.

He doesn't then bring his people into this place of exercise and concern about himself and about his appearing without he has a purpose in view.

[31 : 33] And that purpose always is his own glory. And the outcome then must essentially be deliverance. He causes his people to walk in these dark places that they shall cast all their dependence upon him, that they shall give him no peace.

And they brought forth those words of the Lord Jesus. Shall not God avenge his only left to cry day and night unto him?

I tell you he will avenge them speedily. There is an appointed time. Oh, that I knew where I might find him.

Friends, he's keeping your soul alive. Could you do it yourself? Again, I remember my dear mother saying that she looked back into her life, I'd never had anything any different.

She did have a hard life. Why? Because of the goodness of the Lord. Because of the strengthening of faith.

[32 : 45] Because in all these things the Lord keeps his people alive, he keeps them near himself. How soon we would turn back.

It is that this God will have his people endure to the end. And so by these things men live. It isn't easy, is it, to walk in darkness without any light.

But here again the experience of the Lord's people we find recorded in one of the Psalms, in one of the prophets, it's Isaiah. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, who obeys the voice of his servant, who walketh in darkness and hath no light?

Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his guard. It is looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

How difficult it is to believe when one's in this condition can't find your guard. But surely it is, the evidence is there, that yours is the right way, and you should give up.

[34 : 08] again, and many times I felt it to be an apt illustration, the thirsty man wouldn't again and again go to a tap where there was no water.

He found there was no water there, after a time he'd seek someone else, wouldn't he? But you don't. You must find your guard.

It is because the Lord is in it, because he's bought you with a price, and that price is the blood of Jesus, precious in a living Jesus.

Because of that, the Lord will see to it that you continue in that right way. He led them forth by the right way, the psalmist says, that they might come to a city of habitation, and this right way oft times to the flesh is a pathway of trouble.

You can't manage the way, and it is because Jesus must be supreme. He must be the very essence of your life.

[35 : 19] He must be the goal. Nothing else will do, and so the Lord will see to it that you're kept near himself. The flesh doesn't like the way.

But can we continue then? The psalmist says, my tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually sound to me, where is thy God?

But then he says, as if to find a reason for this, when I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me, for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude, the kept holy day, I've walked in the right way.

I've been walking with thy people, I've kept to those things that are according to thy will, yet I'm in so much trouble.

The psalmist now endeavours to encourage himself, why art thou cast down, O my soul? This case is such a real one that he emphasises it, O my God, my soul is cast down within me, not just something that passes, perhaps tomorrow, it's something real, it's a deep place.

[36 : 52] Then he's able to say, therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan. Here it is, friends, if the Lord has indeed opened the door of his mercy to you, made known in your heart what you are in your flesh, opened that door and shown you the way to Jesus, in the past there have been some visits, haven't there?

there have been some times of liberty, some times of deliverance from trouble, can't you look back?

Were there no places where the Lord upheld you that can't be obliterated? Neither man nor devil can rub them out, you know the Lord did help you?

Can't you look back to some of those places? Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it, who bless you again.

The psalmist at the end of this psalm repeats it, why art thou cast down, O my soul, hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.

[38 : 23] In our text, Job says to his God, he'd know what he would say unto him, do you?

I would order my cause before him and fill my mouth with arguments. Do you really know this God, friends?

you who have indeed got a case for him, the living God? You who walk in darkness at the moment, in trial, time, things, or soul trouble, or both?

In our second part of our text, my friends, we now can prove whether it be right or not, that we do know this God, that he is our God.

Job says I would order my cause before him and fill my mouth with argument. What can you please? His faithfulness, here it is, Job could.

[39 : 39] his mercy not cut off, in between the call, in between the time the Lord made known to you what you were and revealed even in measure what he is in salvation, the preciousness of Jesus, the atonement, his precious, precious blood to put away sin.

What has happened since then? Have there not been times when you've fallen back, fallen by the way? Have there not been fresh sins?

Has he cut you off? Has he dealt with you according to your iniquities? Nay, well then, are you able to say, Lord, tis all of mercy, tis all of mercy, I've come thus far, in spite of all my changes, my back slidings, my wicked heart, thou hast had mercy.

Are you able to say, my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus, blood and righteousness? I would order my cause before him, Lord, thou art a merciful God, Lord, thou art my God, here it is, the children of God have that gracious ability given them at times to tell him he is the God.

Could you speak that way? My friends, there is a need to be right today, that there's plenty of fleshly religion about.

[41 : 50] This God has an appointed time for you to die too. Will you stand the test?

Here's the way, self examination, is this God my God? The psalmist said, this God is my God forever and ever.

He will be my guide even unto death. yet, we find him in that 77th psalm speaking in a different way.

He says, will the Lord cast off forever? Is his mercy cleaned on forever? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? See, how one thing set against another, an unbelieving heart, God?

My friends, there must be times of assurance. You must be able from time to time to speak before this God as your God and to tell him he's a faithful God.

[43 : 10] You must be able to tell him that Jesus died. You must be able to say my Jesus died for me.

Does it come too close? My friends, would the Lord have done anything at all for you unless he were your God in Christ? Would he have stood for you so long in the many things that you've done out of the way?

are you any better than anybody else? Are you able to withstand the taunts of the adversary? Does he never come to you?

Do you never find him in his subtlety suggesting evil ways to you? Have you never fallen? Why then has this God holy, holy, holy, glorious in three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, why has he born with you so long?

Why has he made ways for you again and again? Why has he given you ability in private to pour out your heart before him even if that pouring out has been but Lord help me the whole of your experience found in those three words Lord help me why has he done this for you?

[44 : 48] Here's the answer it is because Jesus stands between because the dear Son of God came into this lower world to suffer bleed and die for you here's the assurance friend having then brought you thus far made ways for you there's no license here we don't say well you can do as you like you can go on walk whichever way you like nay it will bring about that which is found in our text you walk in wayward places if you attend to those things that the adversary suggests as an easy way in your life there'll be darkness for the Lord chastens for sin he'll hide his face come into this place then through mercy oh that

I knew where I might find him for God is angry with the wicked every day there's no mercy there with the wicked he's angry with them whereas with his people tis recorded his anger endureth but for a moment in his favour his life weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning real things these are friends so there's going to be a turn though you walk in darkness now though it may be everything seems to be against you Jacob said that didn't he all these things are against me until he saw the wagons it is so with you it will change when you see his hands stretched out on your behalf which will most surely come for

Jesus sake we find in this chapter Job saying will he plead against me with his great power no but he would put strength in me when he opens the door of his mercy when he makes that way for you to plead again with him he'll give you power to plead will then be my Jesus has done all things well a precious Christ standing between a sinner and a holy God it is his wounded hands and rimside his wounded feet his precious atoning blood that makes that way of acceptance again and again before the Father oh that

I knew where I might find him is the one here at the ends of the earth the psalmist in that psalm we read the 77th psalm in this very place looks at himself now he says I will remember the years of the right hand of the most high I will remember the works of the Lord surely I will remember thy wonders of old how does he come to the conclusion then that this God will attend to his cry he says this is my infirmity looking at self you see and that's where you may be this morning found in this place of darkness whatever the trial is temporal or spiritual or both oh that

I knew where I might find him that I might come even to his feet in looking at self one of times comes to the conclusion there's to be no answer there's no mercy everything's against you and yet there will be that continuing exercise oh that I knew where I might find him as the one set against the other the spirit and the flesh they're at enmity one with the other but the Lord will bring about that which he has declared in his word the elder shall serve the younger grace will prevail at last you'll break through but Job says he is in one mind and who can turn him and what his soul desireth even that he doeth for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me and many such things are with him you see my friends there's no chance work in a believer's life nothing in your experience whatever it is has come by chance it is according to the appointment of the

[50 : 26] Lord what Satan comes in ever so quickly my sins the apostle in the eighth of Romans says and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them that are called according to his purpose even your sins my friends they're known to your God he knew you would come into this pathway he says of his people before they were born transgressors from the womb he knows where you are he knows where you been he knows where you will be nothing comes by chance then my friends all your life is in the hands of your God his purposes will ripen fast this great and mighty

God has said through his servant the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower he will come and bless you for Jesus sake in Job's case the end of Job is recorded his last his end was better than his beginning and it will be in your case so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning he took away all that he had at the beginning but he brought him into that pathway of committing all his way unto his God he brought him into that place of real desire oh that I knew where I might find him and if he brought you there poor sinner he most surely will bring you out for

Jesus waits to be gracious but I see our time has done I leave it now the Lord have his blessing his name is my praise amen let us conclude this morning's service with him seven hundred and twenty seven oh that I kneel the secret place where

I might find my God I spread my wants before his face and for my woes abroad I tell him how my sins arise what sorrow they sustain how grace receives and comfort day and leaves my heart in pain seven to seven and...

by well Amen. Amen.

[55 : 44] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. to his true love and to his love and to his love and to his love O Lord, help us to fall into thy gracious hands seeking mercy and forgiveness for anything thy pure and holy eyes have seen amiss this morning be with us in the interval of service and if it can please thee to gather us together again in the afternoon O lift up Christ, thou blessed Spirit of God cause him to be precious Jesus fill our waiting hearts, Lord with that joy that can never come from man but to know an interest in that full salvation through the life and death and resurrection of a precious Christ now may his grace and the Father's love the sweet union felt of the blessed Spirit to be with us now and forever then the Lord may the following document elven Start then the Lord

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