

Our pilgrimage journey exemplified by Job (Quality: Good)

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- [0 : 00] I ask your prayerful attention to the book of Job, chapter 1, and the question that the Lord said unto sight, Hast thou considered my servant Job?
- But applying it to ourselves as thou have I considered God's servant Job.
- It is our delight as it is with other ministers to speak of sin and salvation, of the malady and the remedy.
- We may, if it is upon our mind, come more especially to that this evening. But it is also necessary for us to consider the trials of the way, and especially the teaching of the pilgrimage path, and for us to each examine ourselves as to whether we know anything of the experiences of the Lord's people of our lives.
- It is said that the New Testament is in the Old concealed, but the Old is in the New revealed.
- [1 : 33] Now, we have not, and trust that we shall not have, the great trials that Job had.
- But Job proved that God's grace was sufficient for him. Though as we may see, for a time he was left to self-righteousness, Job is thought to have lived somewhere either in the time of Moses or possibly in the time of Abraham, because after his trial he lived 140 years, so his life must have been of the order of 200, which was the age of which people were living in the time of Abraham.
- Also, there is no mention of the law having been given, and Job offered sacrifices, which later were for the priesthood only.
- And so, there is no mention of the law having been given, and often lands were named after the head of the tribe that first inhabited it.
- But so much for that. But what do we read about Job's soul and his conduct? He was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and hated Eve.
- [3 : 17] How short one feels we come ourselves. Indeed, we read in Ezekiel how that when the Lord spoke to Ezekiel and wanted to describe the three most upright characters, and how that though they were righteous, their sons and daughters could not be delivered by their father's righteousness.
- In the 14th chapter of Ezekiel, God said, Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in that city, as I live, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter.
- They shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness. Grace is not inheriting.
- It is indeed a great privilege to have God-fearing parents and those who pray for us as Job prayed continually for his children, as we do for children and grandchildren.
- Not a day passes without. And it is a great privilege. And we trust if the Lord's will, those prayers will be answered in his way and in his time.
- [5 : 02] But Job lived an upright life. Later, he mentions as the psalmist did, Remember not the sins of my youth.

So what he had done in his youth, we are not told. He may then have gone outwardly into evil. But at this time, he was living a perfect and upright life.

And he feared God. Fear of the Lord is to hate evil, as Job did. But especially I think of Psalm 25, where we read, What man is he that feareth the Lord?

Him that man will he, the Lord, teach in the way that he, the Lord, shall choose.

And if you and I fear the name of the Lord, we shall be taught. But it will not be in a smooth and easy palm. It will be in the way the Lord shall choose.

[6 : 20] As Job was taught, as we come to consider at the last chapter. And it certainly wouldn't have been a way that he would have chosen.

not only to lose all his substance, and his cattle and riches, for riches were, of course, accounted for in those days by their flocks and herds.

But also, as in the second chapter, with those sore bones, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot.

If we have a sore arm, we lie on the other side. If our back is painful, we can lie on our face. But Job could not lie or sit in any position with comfort, without pressure on those sore bones.

But he feared God and hated Eve. And then this day came when the sons of God, which may signify angels who are continually in the Lord's presence, came before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

[7 : 44] And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou walking to and fro in the earth? And the Lord asked him this question, Hast thou considered my servant Job?

There is none like him in the earth. If he lived in the time of Abraham, well, Abraham, of course, we think of with his great faith.

If it was the time of Moses, Moses is spoken highly of his meekness. Solomon, of course, of his wisdom and so on.

But, as James writes in his epistle, ye have heard of the patience of Job and seen his end.

Job noted for his great choice and for his patience in them. As we come to consider in a moment, none like him in the earth, one that feareth God and is due with Eve.

[8 : 54] And then Satan assumed or said that it was only because God had made this hedge about him that he feared God.

Evil minds think evil things. When I did ten years of voluntary driving for the hospital, we sometimes took people to hospital who would just not believe that we did that work voluntary.

The sort of people who wouldn't do anything themselves unless they were paid for it, didn't believe that other people would. And then the Lord said to Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power only upon himself, but not forth thine hand.

We sometimes sing our sorrows in the scales he weighs and measures out our pains. And nothing can come but by the Lord's permission or sometimes by his sending.

And perhaps here we should be quite clear, why do troubles come upon the Lord's people? Because we read in Lamentations, He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

[10 : 27] Why do you and I have our trials, perplexities, persecutions, temptations?

If we know a little of our own backsliding heart, we shall know it is for the most part chastening because of our sins.

We read in the 107th Psalm, Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death being bound with affliction and on because, because, they rebelled against the word of God and condemned the council of the Most High.

Therefore, he brought down their heart with labor. They fell down and there was none to help. Then, they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he brought them out of their distresses.

So for the most part, our trials come as chastening. Another one is, especially of course, for the afflictions of old age, to remind us of our mortality.

[11 : 47] that we shall not live here forever. That we should remember our days are numbered.

We do not know the number, but we know there is naturally a limit. And there is no authentic case of anyone in this country living more than 117 years.

So we know that sometime this century, and the early part of it for some of us, we must pass from time to eternity.

And the failing of memory and faculties, the weaknesses of body, remind us of these things. And it is a mercy if we lay them to our heart.

But then the third reason, the third reason which applies to Job, and applies oft times to the Lord's people, is it to deepen their work, the work of grace in their hearts, that they may have a deeper understanding of their own foolishness and weakness, a greater understanding of God's mercy, and of His sovereignty in dealing with them, providentially, yes, but more especially spiritually.

[13 : 22] And it is a mercy if these trials do indeed ripen our souls for glory, and loosen our hold upon things below.

With a green ear of corn, you cannot readily separate the chaff from the grain. But when it is fully ripe, then the grain can easily be separated from the chaff.

And so it is with the Lord's people. Whether they are taken early in life or in great age, sooner or late, the hold upon the things of time will be loose.

There will be no reluctant saints in heaven. Well, let us consider then how the Lord taught Job.

We have these accounts now of how the various ones came and took away the flocks and the fire of God fallen from heaven, presumably lightning or something similar, or possibly volcanic eruption.

[14 : 40] We believe we do not know. But by one means or another, all his flocks and herds were taken away or consumed, and all those servants that kept them except one alone escaped to tell Job.

And how quickly they followed one after another. While he was yet speaking, there came another and some. And then lastly, there came a great wind from the wilderness.

We read of winds in the wilderness, winds that the Lord sent, and we read winds that Satan was permitted to send.

I mentioned chasing. In the case of Jonah, we read the Lord sent a great wind into the sea, into the sea that the ship was like to be broke.

God sent that as chasing upon a disobedient Jonah. But another instance of Satan raising a wind was when the obedient disciples went across the lake.

[16 : 03] They were in a path of obedience. The Lord said, let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. Four of them at least were fishermen. Might have seen the signs of approaching storm.

But they were given grace to obey. And so they went. And this wind opposed them in the path of obedience. We know it was a wind that Satan raised because the Lord rebuked the wind.

He would not rebuke that which his father sent. And there was a great calm. And so Satan was permitted to cause this great wind to come and fall upon the young men and presumably the daughters, though it doesn't actually say so.

And they are dead. And I only am escaped alone to tell you. Then Job arose and rent his mantle and shaved his head and fell down upon the ground and complained and rebelled and worshipped and worshipped.

What grace was given him at this time. What meekness under this great trial. We read in Romans how the apostle speaks of rejoicing in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

[17 : 56] I remind you of hymn 300 where the poet said, I fancied patience would be brought before my troubles rose and by such granted help I thought to triumph all my woes.

But he continues, but Christ has cleared my misty side and taught by him I find that tribulations working right produce a patient life.

when our dear Saviour would bestow much patience on his friends he loads their shoulders well with woe and thus obtains his sins.

And he said, naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither. and now notice the small print the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.

Human reasoning would say the Lord gave yes the Lord gave Job all that prosperity and Satan took it away. But that's not what Job said.

[19 : 23] Not what Job said. the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Do you say this in your trials when perhaps your health is taken away and affliction comes?

When perhaps natural prosperity is removed for a season and poverty comes upon you when perhaps there is some trouble do you say the Lord gave peace and Satan has taken it away?

One of our hymns is based upon a psalm when men of spite against me join theirs is the sword but the hand is the eye.

The Lord may use men as it were to smite us but look up higher to see who holds the hand up. Nothing comes by charge.

The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. we find others had this spirit Eli said it is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good.

[20 : 55] Even when he was told his two sons would be saved it is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good. And that which was so much on my mind when I had cancer in fact one of the first text I preached from here afterwards the words of David when he fled from Absalom behold here am I let him do unto me as seemeth good unto him.

But we can't give ourselves this spirit of resignation we certainly cannot left to ourselves we rebel we complain how great a sin is rebellion Samuel said to King Saul rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as idol well then briefly in the next chapter we read how then Satan had been proved wrong he was a liar from the beginning Job did not curse God to his face and then in the second chapter we read of how Satan said skin for skin yea all that a man hath will he give for his life put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face as he had said before and the

Lord said unto Satan behold he is in thy hand but but save his life save his life and so Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown and his wife came unto him and said curse God and die thou speakest as one of the foolish women shall we not receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil that is trouble God does not sin often trouble is spoken of as evil in all this did not Job sin with his lips he did not curse God well then his three friends came and as you know said many things that we won't dwell upon now but they did not say that which was right concerning

God's servant Job they said Job's troubles had come upon him because of his sins when God had said he lived a perfect and upright life we need to be very careful in saying something is a judgment upon a person on that well known day 9-11 when those planes were deliberately crashed into those towers in New York I was about to preach that evening at Barrow in Suffolk when I heard the news and spoke from that chapter where we read the Lord said think ye that they on whom the tower of Siloam fell were more wicked than others I tell you nay except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish

God does have judgments upon people and upon nations but we need to be very careful in apportioning this but that is what his three friends did in substance well moving on rapidly to the thirty first chapter I think it is where we read the thirty first chapter it is the thirty first chapter Job makes his final speech against his three friends but by now he was in a very self righteous spirit are you am I how easy to get into a self righteous spirit and Job briefly just reading the last verses if I have eaten the fruits thereof without money or of course the owners thereof to lose their life let thistles grow instead of wheat and cockle the wheat instead of barley the words of Job are ended the words of Job are ended so he thought and so he said compare

[26 : 20] Job's words with those of David the last words of David when he spoke of that everlasting covenant in all things ordered and then the next chapter commences so these three men ceased to answer Job because he was righteous in his own eyes in his own eyes he wasn't righteous now in the sight of God he had sin by his self justification then was kindled the wrath of Eli who the son of Baruchel the kindred of Ram against Job was his wrath kindled because he justified himself rather than God and also against his three friends was his wrath kindled because they had found no answer and yet had condemned

Job and clearly and clearly as a younger man he said he had kept silence while they spoke I said days should speak and multitude of years should teach wisdom but great men are not always wise neither do the age understand church well Eli who spoke as the Lord enabled him and then we read how God spoke out of the world in the 38th chapter then the Lord answered Job out of the world we have heard much of these whirlwinds or tornadoes in America and the great destruction they cause they move as it were slowly comparatively the wind rushes round in a circle of great violence we have little knowledge or experience of it in this country remember the force of wind varies as the square of the speed we get a 60 mile an hour gale and think how strong it is a 120 mile an hour wind will be four times as strong not twice four times and it uproots everything in its place first by flowing by blowing violently in one direction then as the eye of the storm passes over there is a calm then a violent wind in the opposite direction things loosened by the first wind and then upturned by the second do you know anything of that in your soul's experience when all things that seem so substantial are tossed as it were away in the whirlwind and you feel left destitute the lord answered job out of the whirlwind and set forth many things in the things of nature we often think of god's words when we look out of the window at night and see the stars canst thou bind the sweet influences of the pleiades that group of seven stars seen by the natural eye though of course hundreds seen with a telescope or loose the bands of a rye bring forth mazereth the planets in their seas and arcturus with his sons and so on of course joke but god does god does and many other things set forth in the things of nature and then in the fortieth chapter we read after the lord had answered job and said shall he that contendeth with the almighty instruct him he that reproveth god let him answer then job answered the lord and said behold i am vile what a difference between the thirty first and fortieth chapters there he was righteous in his own eyes just as you and i often get righteous in our own eyes but now after

Eli who and the lord had spoken behold i am vile not my three friends i am vile he had said sarcastically to them no doubt wisdom will die with you but i am as righteous as you are and so on but now i am vile have have you been brought to that experience only the lord by his spirit's teaching can reveal to us the poet said since i can hardly bear what in myself i say how black and vile must i appear most holy god to they to they i am vile christ came not to call the righteous the righteous in their own estimation but sinners to repentance sinners can say none but they how precious is the save and then the lord again spoke out of the whirlwind in that fortieth chapter and then coming to the last chapter that we read then job answered the lord and said i know that thou canst do everything and that no thought can be withholden from thee oh how close this comes we may by god's grace be living an upright life we may not go with the wicked in their sinful amusements and sinful paths but as the lord as samuel said to jesse the lord seeth not as man seeth for the lord looketh at the heart the heart of course meaning our emotions our desires our motives our affections where are your affections set set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth no thought can be withholden from that it is said the eyes of the light of the soul and we can see perhaps by a person's eyes that they are unfriendly when they have a smile on their mouth but some may be able to conceal their emotions completely but the lord sees their thoughts and job said i have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth as instructing in the army on technical subjects this proverb was quoted to us i hear i forget i see i remember i do i understand so when we demonstrated the way of clearing faults on the equipment first of

all they heard it and they saw it but then they were made to do it themselves yes it is when you do something yourself that you understand whether it is making a cake or making a bicycle puncher you then remember when you do it yourself and job had to pass through these experiences but how much more we do understand by seeing as distinct from merely hearing now mine eye seeth them i spoke to you not so long ago from the words of those greeks when they came to philip saying sirs we would see jesus oh may that be our great desire to see him as i think i touched upon in prayer that when we have a loved one we like to hear their voice perhaps on the telephone but how much better when we see them face to face now mine eye seeth thee and what was the effect what was the effect what is the effect upon you and upon me when we see not of course to see god with our natural eyes but see his sovereignty his teaching especially in our trials and the effect will be wherefore because of that i abhor myself and not my three friends now i abhor myself and repent over his self righteousness i repent in dust and ashes what grace was given to jones now yes satan could not take his life his life had to be spared to learn god's sovereignty and to be taught by his trials we do not learn god's sovereignty in ourselves in our families in other ways by reading a book about it by the far side aaron learned god's sovereignty very solemnly aaron had four sons elysia and ithamer who were raised up to be priests nadab and abai who were slain by the lord for offering strange fire and when that event took place we have a short but significant sentence and aaron held his peace he did not rebel against god's sovereignty in slaying two of his sons as it was with jacob and is one an elect vessel of mercy one hated by god before they were born before they had done any good or evil it was said jacob have i loved and esau have i hated and in passing when the twins

struggled together within her what did rebecca do did she go and inquire of isaac did she go and inquire of abraham but abraham lived until the twins were fourteen years old she did nothing of the soul she went to inquire of the lord only the lord could have given her that answer i abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes and so the lord said how his wrath was kindled against those three friends because they had not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant job and he said go and offer up these burnt offerings and my servant job shall pray for you and him will i accept and the lord turned the captivity of joe when he prayed for his friends do good to them that persecute you and despitefully use if you do good to those that do good to you what reward have you said the lord when he prayed for his friends and what did the lord say when he was upon the cross father forgive them but they know not what they do referring of course to his people for whose sins he suffered and died and rose again the lord turned the captivity of jer when he prayed for his friends and then the lord blessed the latter end of joe more than the beginning twice as much in substance the same number of joe well we come to this text again as thou considered god servant joe paul writes to the romans his servant his servant ye are to whom ye yield obedience are we god servant doing his will obeying his commandments through love through love not through fear of punishment or judgment his well we leave it perhaps an unusual way to speak but it was upon one's mind may the lord bless our considerations of god's servant joe and make it a personal matter as thou you and me considered god's servant jire and the teaching in that book amen